

HOUSTON SYMPHONY

Position Title: Director of Special Events

Department: Development

Reports to: Chief Development Officer

Status: Regular, full-time, exempt from overtime

Salary Range: \$100,000 - \$115,000

To Apply, Click the Link Below:

<https://www.paycomonline.net/v4/ats/web.php/portal/5DF197CB483F38559B6F80A2C5C8B953/jobs/404153>

Position Overview

Reporting to the Chief Development Officer and serving as a key member of the Development team, the **Director of Special Events** will bring fresh, innovative thinking and a relentless commitment of excellence to every event and patron experience. This individual will work closely with board committees, event chairs, volunteer leadership, and cross-departmental colleagues to meet and exceed revenue goals while executing events that reflect the Houston Symphony's artistic excellence, sophistication, and community standing. This position is also the primary staff liaison between the Symphony Society and the Symphony League.

This role demands a strategic visionary who combines bold creativity with meticulous precision — someone who can conceptualize and design compelling, memorable experiences while simultaneously managing the complex logistical, financial, and relational details that ensure flawless execution. The successful candidate will serve as a proud ambassador for the Houston Symphony, advancing its mission, brand, and culture of philanthropy at every turn.

Essential Functions

Events Management:

- Oversee the full lifecycle — from creative concept through post-event evaluation — of the Symphony's major fundraising events: Opening Night Concert and Gala, Symphony Ball and Silent Auction and the annual Wine Dinner and Collectors' Auction in addition to the many donor and cultivation events that happen throughout the Season.
- For each event, the Director will bring imaginative, distinctive concepts to life while managing every detail with precision — from venue and vendor coordination to printed materials, guest experience, and sponsorship fulfillment.

Event Operations & Logistics:

- Develop and maintain detailed timelines, expense budgets, net revenue goals, and reporting structures designed to keep Symphony leadership and volunteer partners fully informed of each event's progress.
- Monitor contributions and maintain budgeted expenses for all events, demonstrating strong fiscal responsibility and cost-effectiveness analysis.

- Coordinate all event correspondence, including invitations, RSVPs, menus, presentations, and all printed and digital materials — ensuring accuracy, brand consistency, and a polished, professional presentation at every touchpoint.

Communications & Donor Relations:

- Coordinates all event correspondence, including invitations, RSVPs, menus, presentations, and all other printed materials
- Works with Symphony PR colleagues to ensure comprehensive post-event media coverage

Volunteer & Symphony League Engagement:

- Serve as the primary staff liaison to the Special Events Committee, working collaboratively with committee members to recruit and support event chairs and maximize volunteer engagement and contributed revenue.
- Cultivate strong, lasting relationships with Symphony League leadership and committee chairs to advance shared goals and to assist with their two signature events, Icon and Casino Night.

Qualifications

Education & Experience:

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree or relevant certification strongly preferred.
- Minimum of seven years of progressive experience in special events, preferably within a performing arts or cultural organization.

Skills & Competencies:

- Creativity: A proven ability to conceptualize and execute innovative, visually compelling, and emotionally resonant event experiences that reflect organizational excellence and inspire philanthropic investment.
- Attention to Detail: An exceptional and unwavering commitment to accuracy and precision across all aspects of event planning — from budget management and vendor contracts to printed materials and guest communications. Must thrive in complex, high-stakes environments where no detail is too small.
- Outstanding organizational and project management skills, with the ability to manage multiple events and deadlines simultaneously.
- Excellent verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills, including strong presentation abilities.
- Proven ability to work effectively with diverse groups of volunteers, donors, board members, and staff at all levels.
- Demonstrated leadership and team management experience
- Ability to analyze cost-effectiveness of programs and events, making data-informed decisions that optimize net revenue.
- Proficiency in CRM and donor database systems (e.g., Tessitura), Microsoft Office Suite, and event management software.
- Ability to work well under pressure, managing competing priorities with composure, professionalism, and good humor.
- Ability to lift up to 20 lbs.

Schedule Requirements:

- Ongoing availability to work evenings, weekends, and select holidays in a fast-paced environment.