



Development Director

The Organization

Mercury Chamber Orchestra is a dynamic, Houston-based chamber orchestra known for historically informed performances, innovative programming, and deep community engagement. Currently celebrating its 25th season, Mercury has achieved phenomenal growth over the last decade, presenting over 30 performances and reaching more than 30,000 audience members annually through distinctive concert series, community events, school outreach, and concert streaming. Under the artistic leadership of Antoine Plante, Mercury serves the community by celebrating the power of music—Baroque and beyond—by teaching, sharing and performing with passion, intimacy and excellence. Mercury has an annual operating budget of \$2.2 million.

The Opportunity

The Development Director leads Mercury's contributed revenue strategy across all fundraising streams including individual giving, major gifts, institutional funding, special events, and campaigns. Reporting to the Executive Director, this role sets and achieves revenue targets, manages a personal major donor portfolio, oversees the Gala and multi-year campaigns, and directly manages a growing development team. The Development Director partners closely with the Executive Director and Board leadership to build the donor pipeline and advance Mercury's long-term growth.

What You'll Own

Fundraising Strategy and Leadership

- Lead a comprehensive annual fundraising plan aligned with organizational goals.
- Set and achieve contributed revenue targets across all streams.
- Partner with the Executive Director and Board to drive major gift strategy and cultivation.
- Build a multi-year fundraising roadmap that supports Mercury's growth trajectory and Beyond 25 Campaign goals.

Individual Giving and Major Gifts

- Oversee a robust individual giving program with a focus on pipeline growth, donor retention, and disciplined moves management.
- Personally manage a portfolio of major donors and prospects.
- Partner with the Executive Director on top-tier donor strategy, solicitations, and stewardship.
- Expand leadership and planned giving initiatives over time.

Institutional Giving and Sponsorship

- Oversee foundation, corporate, and government funding strategy.
- Guide proposal development, reporting, and relationship management in partnership with Grant Writer.
- Align institutional funding opportunities with programmatic priorities such as concerts, education, and community initiatives.
- Build long-term partnerships with key Houston-based funders and national foundations.
- Partner with artistic, education, and marketing teams to translate Mercury's work into compelling funding cases and sponsorship materials.

Special Events and Campaigns

- Provide strategic oversight of Mercury's Gala and special events to ensure strong financial performance.

- Ensure events support broader donor engagement, stewardship, and pipeline development.
- Lead planning and execution of multi-year campaigns, including Mercury’s current Beyond 25 Campaign and future growth initiatives.
- Work closely with Board leadership to drive campaign participation and momentum.

Team Leadership and Board Engagement

- Directly manage Development Manager and contracted Strategist & Grant Writer.
- Build a clear structure that separates strategy from execution and focuses on growth.
- Set goals, provide coaching, and ensure accountability across the team.
- Foster a collaborative, high-performance culture aligned with Mercury’s culture and values.
- Partner with the Executive Director to activate the Board in fundraising.
- Develop tools and materials that make it easy for Board members to engage effectively.
- Help drive 100 percent Board giving and meaningful participation in campaigns.

What We Are Looking For

- At least 5 years of progressive fundraising experience, with demonstrated track record in individual giving and major gifts.
- Strong understanding of fundraising systems, pipeline management, and donor strategy.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills.
- Ability to operate at both strategic and execution levels.
- Familiarity with Houston’s philanthropic landscape.
- Experience managing staff and working with Boards and volunteer leadership.
- Experience in a performing arts organization or similar nonprofit environment.
- Genuine curiosity and interest in classical music and the performing arts.

What Success Looks Like in the First 12 Months

- A clear, actionable fundraising plan is in place and driving performance across all revenue streams.
- The individual donor pipeline is stronger — retention is up, the \$1,000–\$25,000 tier is growing, and a major gift portfolio is actively moving.
- Fundraising systems are operating with discipline—moves management is tracked, revenue is forecastable, and the team has clear goals and accountability.
- The Beyond 25 Campaign has successfully closed, meeting or exceeding its goal.
- The Development Director is a trusted strategic partner to the Executive Director and Board, aligned with the artistic mission and building the development culture Mercury needs for long-term growth.

What We Offer

- Salary: \$92,000-\$98,000, commensurate with experience.
- Employer-paid health insurance and life insurance
- Generous personal time off.
- 401(k) retirement plan.
- Flexible hybrid schedule with some evening and weekend events.
- Modern office environment in River Oaks.
- Concert tickets for friends and family.

To Apply:

Submit a cover letter outlining interest and experience along with a resume to jobs@mercuryhouston.org. Include “Development Director” on the subject line.

Mercury Chamber Orchestra is committed to fostering an inclusive workplace and welcomes candidates from all backgrounds and experiences. Mercury is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other status protected by applicable law.