



Job Description

Astral Artists

Executive Director

October 2020

JOB DESCRIPTION

Position	Executive Director
Organization	Astral Artists
Location	Philadelphia, PA
Reporting Relationship	The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors
Website	https://www.astralartists.org/

ASTRAL ARTISTS: ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND/CULTURE

Founded in 1992, Astral is a nonprofit intensive mentoring program that specializes in developing the early careers of extraordinary classical musicians. Our approach is forward thinking. We concentrate our resources on a small number of rising-star soloists and chamber ensembles with the potential to be change-makers and influencers. As a result, cohorts of artistic visionaries leave our program ready to build a future for classical music.

Our [roster size is approximately 25](#), and artists stay in our program for an average of four years. During that time, the full strength of our resources is at our artists' disposal.

Our [National Auditions process](#) is competitive. Since we make a long-term and personalized commitment to our artists and ensembles, we take only a few each year.

Our programs work together to support our artists' professional and artistic growth.

Career Planning

We have a team of staff and outside experts who give our artists the very best start, turn their ideas into sustainable and impactful careers, and expand their sphere of influence. In return, we have high expectations for their commitment to developing their potential as artistic and community leaders.

We have decades of experience working with early-career artists. Our expert team is comprised of musicians, educators, and arts administrators, and our contacts in the industry run deep. We provide:

- project and idea incubation.
- a full complement of marketing tools such as professional photos and website, social media consultation, and branding.
- extensive community engagement experiences through our award-winning Education & Community Engagement Program.

- opportunities to commission new works through our Micro-Commissioning Program.
- solo and collaborative appearances on the critically acclaimed Astral In Concert chamber music series.
- access to concert engagements through Astral's bookings department.
- professional advice and mentoring.
- public speaking experience.

Astral In Concert

One of Philadelphia's most critically acclaimed concert series, [Astral In Concert](#) is our public programming arm that introduces Philadelphia to some of the most talented musicians of their generation. Astral In Concert takes audiences into the sublime world of chamber music, while helping emerging artists learn how to use repertoire, both traditional and modern, to communicate who they are as individuals, artists, and thinkers. We are one of Philadelphia's leading champions in the creation and performance of new music, and have a twenty-year history of commissioning and presenting world premieres by award-winning and emerging composers.

Education & Community Engagement

Our Education & Community Engagement programs, *Classroom Classics* and *Community Classics*, benefit Philadelphia-area students whose education does not typically include music, seniors ranging in age and ability, and adults with disabilities. These programs also help artists infuse a commitment to social responsibility into their developing careers. Each community engagement program is interactive, of the highest musical caliber, and designed to meet the needs of its unique audience. Each year, we present 140 school and community programs, reaching over 2,000 students, senior citizens, and disabled adults.

For more information: <https://www.astralartists.org/>

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director assumes responsibility for the management of all personnel and financial resources needed to achieve Astral's mission. To that end, the Executive Director is accountable for all aspects of the organization and for implementing policies set by the Board of Directors.

The Executive Director sets the tone for Astral's operations, formulating and carrying out policies and strategies related to administrative, budgetary, staffing, fundraising, and programmatic activities. In addition, the Executive Director is expected to be a public face for Astral nationally and in local activities and patron/donor relations. The position requires travel for industry visibility, event attendance, and networking on behalf of Astral. The Executive Director is responsible for assembling and cultivating a high performing staff, working effectively with Board and community partners, and providing leadership for program directors to safeguard the integrity and growth of Astral's programming.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to and working with the Board, the Executive Director of Astral Artists will serve as the visionary and chief administrative officer, balancing artistic considerations, resources, and operations to ensure excellent delivery of programs and organizational management.

The Executive Director will be responsible for the following:

- **Organizational Leadership** – provides bold leadership that establishes Astral as an innovator in the national classical music marketplace; nurtures an organization-wide environment of professionalism, inclusion, innovation, and empowerment; conducts all business at the highest standard of integrity. Manages effectively in an entrepreneurial environment – thinking strategically about the Astral Artists' programs and planning, and balances strong fiscal and business management skills while advocating for the Astral Artists' mission.
- **Staff Management** – motivates and develops the professional management team; hires, supervises and evaluates staff; coordinates work with Board committees, volunteers, and partner organizations. Sets staff compensation in alignment with the organization's budget and strategic plan directives.
- **Industry Engagement** – maintains a high level of expertise and knowledge of industry trends in the area of early career development for classical musicians; builds relationships with major teachers, musicians, agents, conductors, music schools and conservatories; monitors pipeline of prospective roster artists.
- **Program Development, Management & Operations** – develops, implements, and supervises programs and services so they are properly staffed, funded, and consistent with Astral's mission and strategic plan. Oversees all aspects of Astral's operations including assembling high profile panelists for Astral's National Auditions.
- **Advocacy** – serves as the chief spokesperson for Astral locally and nationally; articulates and communicates Astral's value and impact. Acts as a publicly-visible and publicly-engaged advocate, primary representative, and champion for mission and image of Astral Artists, increasing the reputation of Astral Artists locally, nationally, and internationally.

- **Community and Industry Engagement** – develops effective and mission-advancing relationships in Philadelphia and across the US. Generates increased support and engagement from external partners, institutional supporters, donors and other key constituencies.
- **Artist Relations** – provides career guidance and resource development for roster artists, in coordination with program directors; works with the Artistic Director to provide strategic direction in developing and tracking individual career and artistic development plans.
- **Strategic Planning** – develops and implements Astral’s strategic plan and annual action plans in conjunction with the Board.
- **Fund Development/Grant Oversight/ Fiscal Management** – develops and oversees the fundraising and financial strategies of the organization; develops an annual budget for approval by the Board; oversees the management of all revenues and expenses that is consistent with Astral’s accounting systems and policies.

With respect to all the responsibilities above, the Executive Director will be expected to infuse considerations of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion throughout Astral’s operations and programming in order to support and help realize the organization’s commitment as recently published by the Board.

QUALIFICATIONS: DESIRED ATTRIBUTES, EXPERIENCES AND SKILLS

The ideal candidate will be an experienced and collaborative leader who has both aesthetic sensibilities and advocacy and management experience to lead this distinguished performing arts organization. The Executive Director must have the appetite to embrace the entrepreneurial spirit and have a vision for how to develop an organization that empowers aspiring performing artists to succeed in a competitive landscape. The successful candidate will have a distinguished record of leadership accomplishments and the relevant experience that would speak to the responsibilities of the role.

The successful candidate will bring the requisite experience and skills to build upon and shape the Astral Artists’ strengths. Desired experience and qualifications will include:

Personal Characteristics

- **Self-Starter:** Goal driven and possesses a high degree of motivation and energy. Ideal candidate will be a “doer” and have a record of productivity.
- **Passion for the Organization’s Mission:** “Driven” by the importance of the organization’s mission.
- **Values & Demonstrates “Servant Leadership”:** Demonstrates concern about “giving” to others rather than “getting” from the organization.
- **Resilience & Stamina:** Has physical and emotional stamina and tolerates long days. Demonstrated ability to carry on a full day of back-to-back meetings and still function at a high level. Comfortable working in high stakes fast-paced environment; extremely resilient, able to be flexible and adapt to shifting priorities as needed.

Leadership Competencies

- **Ability to Accept and Motivate Others:** Attracts and inspires others, including volunteer Board members and staff. Open to and accepts many different types of people.
- **Fundraising Skills:** Has knowledge and experience in fundraising techniques, including major gift fundraising.
- **Deals Well with Conflict:** Handles adversity with grace and does not take criticism personally. Keeps a sense of perspective.
- **Thinks Strategically, Implements Tactically:** Sees the big picture but is able to implement plans effectively in “bite-size morsels” to move the organization forward.
- **Financial Acumen:** Understands finances and budget discipline. Recognizes both financial opportunities and threats.
- **Collaboration & Communication:** Actively receives input and listens to other viewpoints; collaborates well with others; communicates effectively both orally and in writing.
- **Sound Judgment:** Sifts through alternatives, deliberates, and arrives at a sound decision.
- **Persistence:** Overcomes obstacles and will persevere through difficult times for the organization.

COMPENSATION

Astral Artists is prepared to offer a competitive compensation package, commensurate with experience, to attract a compelling candidate.

APPLICATION AND NOMINATION PROCEDURE

Nominations and expressions of interest will be received until a list of candidates is put forward for final consideration. Review of candidates will begin immediately. Applications and nominations may be sent to John Wright, Chair, Executive Director Search Committee, at:

search@astralartists.org

Astral Artists is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer.