

Overview

The Lake Forest Civic Orchestra invites qualified conductors to apply for the role of music director. Applications will be accepted through June 25, 2025. Interviews and downselections will occur in July, and four candidates will be chosen to audition during the season. Each audition candidate will be responsible for rehearsing and performing one of the four subscription concerts in 2025-2026. Hiring decisions will be made in early June, 2026.

About the Orchestra

Formed in 1987, the Lake Forest Civic Orchestra is an integral part of the North Shore community. Our mission is to inspire communities by sharing high quality musical experiences that provide lifelong learning and that reinvigorate the human spirit.

The 55-person orchestra is composed primarily of accomplished amateur musicians and supported by paid professional string, timpani, and trumpet principals and concertmaster. We regularly feature young concerto competition winners, and we hold occasional joint performances with the Lake Forest High School and other area ensembles. The orchestra rehearses on Thursday evenings, with an added dress rehearsal on the Friday evening before the Sunday afternoon concert. Rehearsals and concerts are held at Gorton Center in Lake Forest, Illinois.

The orchestra performs four subscription concerts a year and two holiday concerts. Small ensembles from the orchestra perform at community functions throughout the year to raise awareness of the orchestra and foster meaningful community relationships. While over 30% of revenue comes from ticket sales, our performance venue limits the size of our audience and scope of our concerts, and a strategic challenge for the next music director will be to help determine how we navigate those limitations, as we did with our recent Beethoven 9 performance.

The LFCO offers free and reduced-price tickets to students, seniors, and veterans, and frequently donates tickets to area non-profits for their own fundraising initiatives. The orchestra receives over half of its funding from individual and local business donations, and roughly 70% of those funds come from orchestra members themselves. As with all orchestras, fundraising is a constant and we need our new music director to help create and nurture relationships to help increase funding.

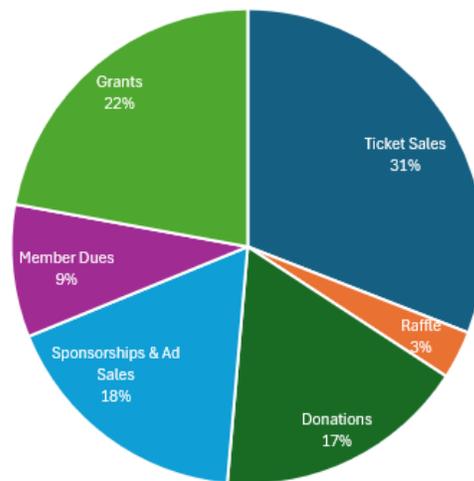
2024-2025 Highlights

- ❖ Held 3 **sold out** performances
- ❖ Performed **Beethoven's 9th Symphony** in collaboration with Chicago Master Singers & Lux Cantorum Chicago at James Lumber Performing Arts Center (sold out)
- ❖ Featured **two MYA high school** concerto competition soloists
- ❖ Provided **small ensembles** for 5 community/non-profit events
- ❖ Enabled **30 veterans** to attend concerts at no charge and **donated tickets** to 6 non-profit groups to support their own fundraising
- ❖ **Exceeded our fundraising goal** for the year

LFCO Factbook

- ❖ **Year Formed:** 1987
- ❖ **Members:** 48
- ❖ **Paid Principals:** 7
- ❖ **Average Concert Attendance:** 250
- ❖ **Average Annual Budget:** \$60,000
- ❖ **Rehearsal and Performance Home:** Gorton Center, Lake Forest, IL
- ❖ **Board Members:** 7

Revenue Breakdown



Music Director Position

The music director reports directly to the board and is responsible for the fulfillment of the orchestra's artistic potential and its image in the community. This responsibility is borne out in a range of activities beginning with planning and programming the season to rehearsal planning and orchestra preparation, to performance and post-performance learning.

With input from a music selection committee and the board, the music director creates the theme and programs for each subscription season, ensuring an appropriate level of challenge and interesting mix of composers, periods, and representation. The music director sets the tone for rehearsals and concerts, helping the orchestra grow musically while providing high quality concerts that audiences enjoy and return to. The music director nurtures relationships with the orchestra, board, audience, and donors, helping to retain and grow membership, patrons, and funding sources for the future. As the orchestra's artistic leader, the music director must build and sustain the orchestra's visibility and involvement in the community. The music director is expected to work closely with the board in carrying out these responsibilities. We would like the next music director to commit to a minimum of 3 years with the orchestra.

Music Director Responsibilities

- Programming
 - Create program for upcoming season at least 8 months in advance
 - Lead annual music planning meeting to gather orchestra input on repertoire
 - Help source soloists and additional paid musicians when necessary
 - Create program notes for each concert
- Rehearsals and Performances
 - Organize and lead 6-7 rehearsals in preparation for performance for each of 4 concert cycles
 - Provide rehearsal schedule no later than Monday of each week for distribution to the orchestra.
 - Organize and lead 2 rehearsals in preparation for the holiday concert (2 performances on the same day). **Note the holiday concert is not included in the audition group for the 2025-2026 season.**
 - Coach individuals and sections during rehearsals to improve quality of performance
 - Collaborate with section leads for more efficient rehearsals, seat assignment, etc.
- Relationships and Collaboration
 - Create meaningful relationships with orchestra members, board, and audience to

foster patronage and retention

- Collaborate with board on strategic initiatives including fundraising, community engagement, collaboration with other organizations, and collaboration with composers to introduce new works
- Attend monthly virtual board meetings as needed and annual membership meeting

Music Director Qualifications

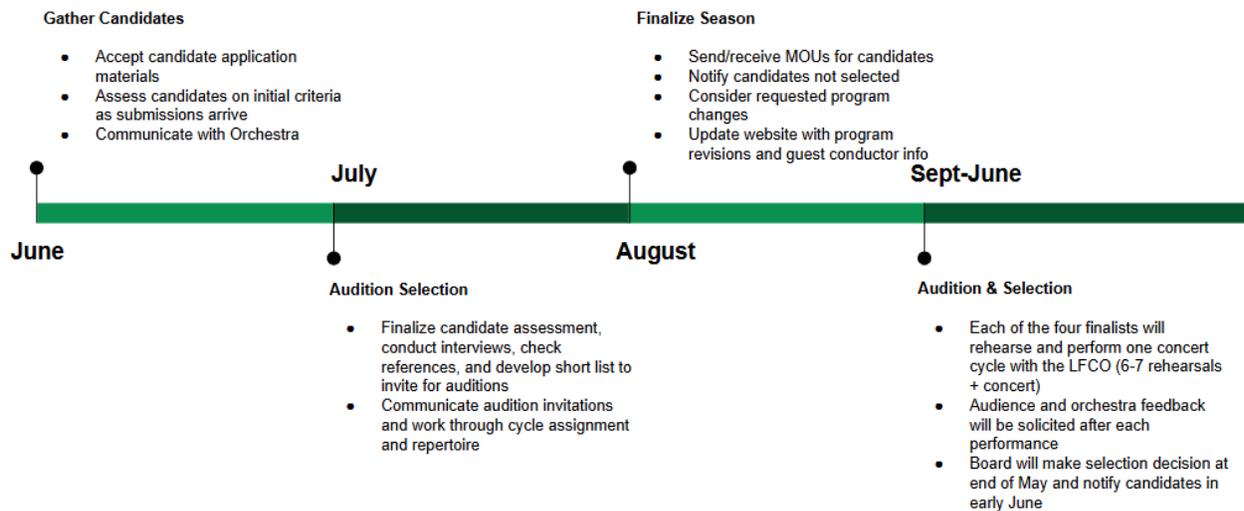
- At least 10 years continuously conducting collegiate, community, and/or professional orchestras, with knowledge of and experience with a broad range of repertoire demonstrated in the conducting CV.
- Programming experience that demonstrates creativity, imagination, inclusiveness, and innovation. The LFCO is already preparing for its next big project work - we want a music director who will collaborate and enable performances that draw new or different audiences without alienating existing patrons.
- Deep musical knowledge that helps contextualize historical works both in the time they were written and in our contemporary society. It's not just about what we are playing, but why, and the ability to communicate those ideas meaningfully to musicians and audience members alike.
- Ability to motivate and elicit the best efforts of musicians; to hold the orchestra accountable to principles of good musicianship and the music itself, while at the same time making the experience of making music together engaging and challenging, in all the positive ways possible. A podium presence sufficient to enhance the quality of music-making and support the musicians' physical and emotional well-being.
- Practical knowledge and understanding of all instruments used in orchestral performance so that relevant, helpful suggestions for technique, alternate approaches to a difficult passage, etc., can advance the orchestra's abilities.
- An effective baton technique that maintains the continuity of the overall performance of a work while evoking and controlling response by gesture at all levels of musical detail.
- An effective and efficient rehearsal technique that balances attention to technical details with communication of overall interpretive goals that advances the orchestra through the rehearsal cycle in preparation for the concert.
- Proven ability to partner with orchestra leadership and other performing arts organizations to advance the ensemble musically, organizationally, and financially.
- Track record of successful contribution to strategic goals including audience growth, funding, musical growth, and orchestra member engagement & retention and ability to operate within established budgetary limits.
- Ability to inspire and communicate musically and verbally with audiences of all ages, both on and off the stage and a commitment to fulfilling the orchestra's potential as an artistic and community resource; willingness to become involved in the life of the community.
- Ability to commit to at least three years in this role.

Compensation

This music director position is funded at \$2,800 per concert cycle. Guest conductors/auditioners will be paid at this rate for the 2025-2026 season.

Application and Audition Process

Overview



Application

Application Deadline: 6/25/2025

Required Materials:

- Cover letter that includes:
 - Statement of interest and fit with the orchestra
 - Narrative description of experience/ability to lead the orchestra with the qualities described in the position description, with emphasis on areas you are especially drawn to or have had success
 - Three references, including one from an orchestra board member and one from a musician who has performed under your baton
 - Link to video of performance, preferably from orchestra view
 - Optional (but strongly recommended): Link to video of rehearsal
- Conducting CV

Submit single PDF of cover letter and CV via email to: mdsearch@lakeforestcivicorchestra.org

Applications will be reviewed as they are received and early application is encouraged given the short timeframe of the process.

Audition

Four candidates will be selected to audition for the role of music director during the 2025-2026 season. The search committee will work with audition candidates to select a scheduled concert to prepare and perform.

The 2025-2026 season has been programmed, but audition candidates will have the opportunity to recommend alternative works if they desire. More information about the LFCO's upcoming season and current programming can be found on the [website](#).

2025-26 LFCO Calendar - "Postcards From America"

All rehearsals and concerts are held at Gorton Center, 400 E. Illinois Rd, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Concert #1

Oct. 5, 4PM **Program:** Gershwin - Rhapsody in Blue, G. Walker - Premiere, Dvorak - New World Symphony

Rehearsals: 7:30-10:00 PM - Sept 4, 11, 18, 25

Dress: Oct. 2 & 3, 7-10PM

Concert #2

Nov. 9, 4PM **Program:** Hovhaness - Prelude and Quadruple Fugue, Jaxson - Through the Bay, Beethoven - Symphony No. 6 "Pastorale"

Rehearsals: 7:30-10:00 PM - Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30

Dress: Nov. 6 & 7, 7-10PM

HOLLY JOLLY - NOT An Audition Concert

Dec. 21, 4PM (2 Shows)

Rehearsal: Dec. 18, 7:30-10:00 PM

Dress: Dec. 20, 9am-noon

Concert #3

Mar. 15, 4PM **Program:** Grofe - Grand Canyon Suite, Tower - Made in America, Hummel - Trumpet Concerto (1st mvmt) - Davide Andrizzi, soloist (ETHS)

Rehearsals: 7:30-10:00 PM - Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26, Mar. 5

Dress: Mar. 12 & 13, 7-10PM

Concert #4

May 3, 4PM **Program:** O'Connor - Americana Symphony: Variations on Appalachia Waltz, Copland - Appalachian Spring, Rimsky-Korsakov - Trombone Concerto (1st mvmt) - Andrew Schindler, soloist (LHS)

Rehearsals: 7:30-10:00 PM - Mar. 26, Ap. 2, 9, 16, 23

Dress: Apr 30 & May 1, 7-10PM

Process and Decision Making

Orchestra members and the audience will be polled for feedback at the end of each concert cycle. The LFCO search committee will evaluate all feedback at the end of the season to make a recommendation to the board for the new music director. We anticipate that decisions will be finalized in early June, 2026.