

The Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra of Jackson

Music Director - Job description

The Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra of Jackson (MCO) is looking to appoint a new music director. Now in its 43rd season, MCO is the only all volunteer community orchestra serving central Mississippi. The orchestra is looking for a new music director to build on the past 40+ years of success and lead the ensemble into a vibrant future.

The orchestra currently presents three concert cycles each year (fall, winter, and spring) with rehearsals in the Jackson metro area. MCO rehearses on Saturday mornings from 9:30 am -12:30 pm and holds its concerts on Sunday afternoons at 3:00 pm. Each concert cycle has three or four string sectionals and three to four general rehearsals. There is an additional brush-up rehearsal at 1:00 pm on Sundays immediately before each concert.

The orchestra has a professional concertmaster, a membership of around 50 musicians, and engages professional soloists in the Jackson area. The repertoire and dates for the orchestra's upcoming 2025-2026 season can be found at mcojackson.org, and details of past programmes are available on request.

Role Description

The role of the music director is crucial to the life of the organization. As well as being the public facing leader of the organization and architect of the orchestra's musical and artistic offerings, the music director will be a permanent, ex officio member of the organization's board of directors. He or she will be expected to contribute in fundraising efforts and recruiting personnel to the orchestra. The music director should have a deep knowledge of the orchestral repertoire in order to design level appropriate programs for nonprofessional players. However, this does not mean that the orchestra is not curious and open to new things! All programs will be presented to the board of directors before the start of each new season. Most importantly, the music director should have a medium and long term vision for the growth and continued health of the orchestra.

Duties

- Attend and conduct rehearsals on a weekly basis.
- Plan rehearsal schedules and set concert dates before the beginning of each season, coordinate rehearsal and concert dates with rehearsal/performance venues, and submit the proposed schedules and dates for board approval.
- Be dedicated to achieving the highest possible musical standards both at rehearsals and concerts.
- Conduct the group in its three regular season concerts.

- Engage soloists and other performers needed for concerts and determine appropriate rehearsal attendance.
- Propose programming for each season and work with the board to align any programming costs with the annual budget.
- Attend all board meetings and present a yearly report on the artistic happenings of the organization.
- Advise and assist the board in how to support the music director's artistic vision for the group.
- Assist in fundraising efforts and advise the board in expanding the orchestra's revenue and reach.

Person Specification

- Evidence of qualified musicianship and previous experience of conducting
- Ability to motivate, inspire, and cultivate the development of non-professional players.
- In-depth understanding of orchestral repertoire and its technical and musical requirements.
- Excellent communication skills and a willingness to engage with orchestra members, contributors, and audiences.
- An ear for intonation, balance and ensemble with the ability to help players using effective rehearsal strategies.
- Imaginative and creative programming.
- Good contacts with professional musicians, including singers, that the orchestra may wish to engage as soloists or featured ensembles.

Remuneration

The annual salary for the position is approximately \$3,500. Attendance is expected at all rehearsals and concerts unless mutually agreed with the board and provided that a suitable substitute is available.

To apply, please email mcomdsearch@gmail.com with a CV, and recent videos of your conducting. A 5-10 minute clip of a rehearsal would be greatly appreciated if available. Three finalists will be selected to conduct one cycle of the 2026-2027 season. The deadline for applications is January 31, 2026.