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American Guild of
ORGANISTS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Opportunity

The American Guild of Organists ([AGO](#)) seeks a visionary and strategic Executive Director (ED) to guide the organization through its next phase of growth, relevance, and impact.

The Executive Director serves as AGO's chief staff officer and is responsible for the organization's overall leadership, management, and strategic alignment, in partnership with the AGO's National Council. The Executive Director oversees all operations and fiscal management of the organization and leads a senior staff team responsible for financial administration, fundraising and development, membership, marketing and technology, education, conventions and event services, and publications. The Executive Director also supports and engages volunteer leadership at both the National Council level and across the AGO's international chapter network.

This role offers the opportunity to lead a respected organization at a pivotal moment. The next Executive Director will help strengthen AGO's membership base, modernize systems and engagement strategies, support the vitality of local chapters, and expand the Guild's visibility and relevance within broader musical and professional communities. The ideal candidate will be an innovative and collaborative leader who combines strategic vision with operational excellence. They will work closely with the National Council, staff, and volunteers, to advance AGO's mission while positioning the organization to thrive in a changing cultural and technological environment.

Ideally, the Executive Director will work from AGO's national headquarters in New York City. Hybrid or remote arrangements may be considered for highly qualified candidates.

About AGO

Founded in 1896, the American Guild of Organists is the premier professional association dedicated to the organ and choral music tradition. Its mission is to foster a vibrant and connected community of musicians who share knowledge, cultivate excellence, and inspire passion for the organ.

Headquartered in New York City, the Guild represents a global network of approximately 10,000 members across more than 250 volunteer-led chapters in the United States and abroad. Through its respected certification programs, including the Fellow (FAGO) and Associate (AAGO) designations, the AGO promotes professional standards and lifelong learning for organists, choral conductors, and church musicians. AGO supports members through educational programs, competitions in performance and composition, national and

regional conventions, and the publication of *The American Organist*, the world's most widely read journal devoted to organ and choral music.

As the musical and cultural landscape evolves, the Guild is committed to strengthening its membership community, expanding educational opportunities, and embracing innovation while honoring the traditions that have defined the organ and choral music profession.

The AGO has a full-time staff of 13 and annual revenue of approximately \$3 million.

The ED Role

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership/Governance

- Work with the National Council and staff to execute strategic plans that advance AGO's mission and long-term sustainability.
- Provide strong organizational leadership and staff management while ensuring alignment among AGO programs, operations, and strategic priorities.
- Guide the organization in addressing key opportunities and challenges, including membership growth, evolving engagement models, and technology modernization.
- Ensure sound financial stewardship and resource management to support AGO's long-term financial health.
- Foster effective collaboration between professional staff and volunteer leadership, and throughout the Guild's local and international chapter network.
- Participate in relevant professional organizations, such as the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), and remain current on association management best practices.

Advocacy & Communications

- Serve as a key internal and external spokesperson for the organization, communicating in an effective, professional manner with members, staff, media, and the public.
- Promote awareness and appreciation of the organ and organists within the broader musical and cultural landscape.
- Work with the National Council and staff to strengthen AGO's visibility across music, educational, and denominational communities.
- Support strategic communications that elevate the organization's profile and communicate the value of AGO membership.
- Ensure that AGO's publications, digital platforms, and communications consistently reflect the organization's mission and strategic priorities.
- Write monthly columns for *The American Organist* to communicate with the membership and wider community.

Contribute to Member and Organizational Success

- Oversee senior staff in the development and implementation of strategies to increase membership recruitment, retention, and engagement across diverse constituencies.
- Partner with staff and volunteer leaders to expand the value of membership and support vibrant local chapters.
- Provide chapters with tools, resources, and guidance to help them attract and retain members and build sustainable leadership pipelines.
- Provide strategic oversight of the collaboration, learning, and professional development opportunities offered by AGO within the organ and choral music community.
- Ensure the strategic direction, effectiveness, and financial sustainability of AGO's conventions, certification programs, competitions, events, and educational initiatives in collaboration with senior staff.
- Oversee staff to ensure major programs and events are strategically planned, well-marketed, and aligned with the organization's mission and financial goals.
- Evaluate existing programs and initiatives to ensure they meet evolving member needs and advance AGO's strategic priorities.
- With the Director of Development, support AGO's development strategy by building relationships with donors and supporters and expanding fundraising efforts to ensure long-term organizational sustainability.
- Build strategic relationships with peer organizations, educational institutions, arts organizations, and industry partners to expand AGO's impact and visibility.
- Identify and develop new revenue opportunities, including partnerships, programs, and initiatives that support AGO's mission and long-term financial sustainability.

Management/Administration

- Provide day-to-day executive leadership for AGO's staff, operations, and programs. Cultivate a collaborative, inclusive, and high-performing organizational culture.
- Inspire and mentor staff while fostering professional growth and accountability.
- Oversee human resources activities including recruitment, performance management, and the implementation of equitable compensation and personnel practices.
- Oversee the development and management of the organization's annual budget in collaboration with the Treasurer, Finance Committee, and National Council.
- Ensure strong financial oversight, including accounting, auditing, budgeting, and investment stewardship consistent with generally accepted accounting principles.
- Oversee the implementation of effective systems for project tracking, reporting, and organizational performance management.
- Ensure compliance with applicable legal, regulatory, and ethical standards governing nonprofit organizations.

Required Skills, Experience, and Desired Qualifications

- Proven executive leadership experience in an Executive Director, COO, or senior-level position within an organization of comparable complexity.
- Knowledge of nonprofit governance, operations, and financial management practices. Experience implementing strategic plan initiatives and goals.
- Strong volunteer relations experience.
- Proven success in leading, inspiring, motivating, and managing a professional staff and working with a diverse Board in a geographically dispersed organization.
- Bachelor's degree is required. Advanced degree or equivalent education is preferred.
- Experience or interest in the field of classical music a plus.

Personal Qualities and Competencies

- Demonstrates personal creativity and strategic vision, coupled with an ability to listen to others and learn from their ideas.
- Generates trust, organizes people into effective teams, and motivates them.
- Includes staff in planning, decision-making, and process improvement discussions.
- Motivates and inspires staff dedication and independent, informed decision making.
- Delegates work assignments and gives authority to work independently.
- Sets expectations and monitors outcomes.
- Communicates clearly and persuasively, both orally and in writing, in all situations.
- Possesses sophisticated presentation skills and conducts productive meetings.
- Identifies and resolves problems in a timely manner.
- Gathers, analyzes, and synthesizes complex and diverse information skillfully.
- Makes timely decisions and exhibits sound judgment.
- Prioritizes and plans work activities.
- Uses time efficiently and develops realistic action plans.
- Uses a diplomatic approach in interactions with members.

Compensation

The starting range for this position is \$170,000 - \$190,000. A competitive compensation package will be offered to attract an outstanding candidate.

To Apply

To apply, please send a cover letter and current resume (Microsoft Word® format preferred) [here](#). The cover letter should outline how your experience fits the requirements of the position as this will be an important factor in considering your candidacy. Candidates from historically underrepresented and marginalized communities are encouraged to apply.

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Additional Information

For more information, contact:

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