



Position Announcement: Artistic Director and Conductor

Mississippi Valley Orchestra (MVO) welcomes applications for the position of Artistic Director and Conductor, available beginning in the 2025-2026 season.

The Orchestra

Mississippi Valley Orchestra is an excellent community orchestra in the Twin Cities metro area in Minnesota whose mission is *to infuse the lives of dedicated musicians, and their neighbors in the Twin Cities, with the creative insights, emotional energy, and camaraderie that come from experiencing classical music together.*

The orchestra was first founded as a chamber group in 1976. Entering its 49th season this year, MVO is now a polished symphony orchestra that offers high level orchestral performances to the public and has achieved growth in its musicians, audiences, and budget throughout the past decade. MVO now consists of 80+ regular musicians, including Minnesota Orchestra first violinist Sarah Grimes as Concertmaster, professional musicians and music educators, graduate and undergraduate students from the School of Music of University of Minnesota, and many very high level amateur musicians. Our recent and upcoming performances include Mahler's First and Second Symphonies, Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, Bruckner's Symphony No. 7, and works by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Ruth Gipps, Ina Boyle, and Bao Yuankai. Please visit <https://www.mississippivalleyorchestra.com/past-seasons-2000s.html> for our past seasons' repertoire.

MVO has partnered with soloists from the Minnesota Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, faculty members of the University of Minnesota, University of Arizona, University of Houston, and several local choruses. The orchestra regularly performs in several music-oriented churches and Benson Great Hall at Bethel University and has performed in Orchestra Hall in downtown Minneapolis.

As an arts organization committed to community, the following events and projects are central to the organization:

1. St. Paul Piano Teachers Association Concerto Competition: Every spring MVO performs part of a piano concerto with the excellent winner of the competition. This is often the student's first experience playing with an orchestra.
2. MVO Foreground Composer Series: Each year the orchestra plays works by an underrepresented composer in every concert of the season. So far the Series has featured Coleridge-Taylor, Gipps, Boyle, and Bao, resulting in over ten US and regional premieres. The series is very popular with musicians and audiences and has become part of the identity of MVO.
3. Crewtets: Operated by volunteers independently of the main concerts, MVO crewtets are small groups (named after quartets, quintets, etc., but with no set number) that perform popular music at breweries and other casual venues, such as the Parkway Theater in Minneapolis and at St. Paul Saints games, most often in the summers. The performances raise funds for the regular concerts, reach community members outside of concert audiences, and provide social and practice/performance experience beyond the regular season.

MVO has worked closely with living composers and given multiple world premieres in the past years. In the 2022-2023 season, we experimented with a Resident Composer Project, collaborating with a local composer for a full year, including mentorship and multiple reading sessions with the orchestra, with the final product being the world premiere of a piece written specifically for MVO. Only one other opportunity exists in the United States that offers composers a series of readings, long-term mentorship, and a performance with a recording.

MVO concerts are always free, and the orchestra charges no dues for its musicians so that money is never a barrier to experiencing classical music. Audiences and musicians make donations to sustain the orchestra financially. MVO has achieved a reputation for serious music making among our partners and growing audiences. We are also known for our welcoming, collegial culture, within both the orchestra and the board of directors.

MVO rehearses weekly on Tuesday evenings from late August to early May and performs five concerts each season.



The Position

The Artistic Director and Conductor is responsible for the artistic vision for the orchestra, planning and operation of each concert cycle, and the fulfillment of the orchestra's artistic potential and identity in the community. As the orchestra's artistic leader, she/he must build and sustain the orchestra's visibility and involvement in the community and is responsible for repertoire, programming, and artistic production. The Artistic Director and Conductor is expected to conduct all rehearsals and concerts, work in close collaboration with the board of directors and staff in carrying out her/his responsibilities, to interact with audiences and patrons and actively participate in the orchestra's fundraising activities.

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will possess exceptional musicianship and conducting skills; exceptional skill and creativity in programming; strong interpersonal, leadership, collaboration, and communication skills; vision, passion, and the ability to use classical music to improve the quality of living for the musicians and audiences of the community; unwavering belief in the importance of camaraderie in building a community-based music organization.

Compensation

\$18,000 to \$20,000 annually, with traveling stipends depending on specific needs.

Applications Materials

In one PDF file, please include:

1. Candidate's personal letter of interest addressing programming strategies and and qualifications specific to MVO
2. Short resume (no more than 2 pages)
3. Names, titles, phone numbers and email addresses of three professional references

Please submit application materials by December 30, 2024 or direct any questions to:

Mississippi Valley Orchestra Artistic Director and Conductor Search Committee
missvalleyorch@gmail.com

Projected Timeline

November 15, 2024	Position announced
December 30, 2024	Application review begins
January 2025	Candidate selection and notification
February 2025	Zoom interview 1
March 2025	Zoom interview 2/Finalists selected
May 2025	Finalists live audition with the orchestra
June 2025	Artistic Director and Conductor announcement
September 2025	First concert's rehearsal

To learn more about Mississippi Valley Orchestra, go to www.mississippivalleyorchestra.com