

Now Hiring - Executive Director, Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra

May 15, 2025

The Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Mission

To inspire, educate, and connect our communities through live orchestral music

Opportunity

The Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra (ECSO) welcomes applications and nominations for the position of Executive Director, available summer 2025. Caleb Bailey steps down after his successful nine-year tenure as the Executive Director for the ECSO. Caleb played a transformative role in expanding the organization's reach, programming, and community presence. His legacy is a strong and dynamic organization that is poised to welcome innovative and dynamic leadership to serve as the creative force to explore new ways of continuing our mission for present and future generations.

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors through the Board President and works in close partnership with the Music Director & Conductor Toshiyuki Shimada. The Executive Director will supervise a full-time Executive Coordinator and a part-time Production Manager, Bookkeeper, Librarian, and Musician Personnel Manager. Working with this dedicated staff, the Executive Director ensures day-to-day operational excellence, prioritizes fundraising activities, and designs and implements sound financial policies and decisions for the organization. The Executive Director serves as the public ambassador for the ECSO and is actively involved and recognized within the Eastern Connecticut community.

About the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra

The ECSO has established itself as one of Connecticut's premier symphony orchestras, and is centered in the heart of New London adjacent to our home concert venue - the historic and grand *Garde Arts Center*. The ECSO will be celebrating its landmark *80th Season* along with *America250th* beginning the summer of 2026. Concert audiences are drawn from shoreline and interior towns all across eastern Connecticut and Rhode Island.

ECSO offers a season of 6 subscription concerts plus a free Palm Sunday concert and also features an adult chorus, youth orchestra/ensembles, and other special programming and educational offerings including the popular annual Young People's/Link Up concerts performed as part of the Carnegie Hall education series that draws more than 1,000 students each year.

ECSO musicians are drawn from the excellent artist pool available locally (35%) and in the New York City, Boston, New Haven, Hartford, and Providence area. New London is also the home of the United States Coast Guard Academy with a number of the ECSO musicians serving as current or former members of the United States Coast Guard Band. The ECSO has 62 contracted musicians, and its current annual budget is \$860,000.

Under the direction of Toshiyuki Shimada, now celebrating the closing of his 15th season and a recent renewal of his contract, the artistic reputation of the orchestra is growing. Lee Howard of *The Day* writes: *"...under the baton of Shimada over the course of the past 15 years, its musicianship has steadily increased to make it one of the small wonders of the American symphony world."* Toshi delights audiences with strong thematic programming and unexpected works from distinguished and diverse composers as well as soloist performances by renowned and rising-star guests. In a New York Times (regional) article, Phillip Lutz wrote: *"Mr. Shimada has quietly established a reputation for programming, adventurous fare [and] groundbreaking productions."*

<https://ectsymphony.com>

About Eastern Connecticut

Eastern Connecticut offers a blend of coastal charm, small-town feel, and close proximity to larger cities like New York and Boston, making it a desirable place to live. The region boasts a rich maritime and cultural history, vibrant arts and dining scene, popular tourist destinations, and diverse outdoor activities including access to Long Island Sound, inland lakes, protected forests, beaches, trails and parks. Eastern Connecticut is also home to State Universities, Connecticut College, Mitchell College and Three Rivers Community College.

<https://ctvisit.com/eastern-connecticut>

Key Responsibilities

Symphony Orchestra Excellence: Exude a deep knowledge and understanding of both classical and contemporary music, and continuously elevate the production of professional and meaningful live symphony orchestra concert experiences for the audience and the musicians.

Leadership with a Growth Mindset: Serve as the strategic and operational leader of the ECSO to inspire professionalism and explore new ideas for growth. The Executive Director, in partnership with the Music Director, will be a vital part of the ECSO visionary leadership. The ideal candidate will raise the presence and brand of the ECSO across Eastern Connecticut and shall be dedicated to advancing its mission.

Fundraising and Development Expertise: Materially increase the number, size, and duration of sponsor and donor commitments. Prioritize annual and longer-term goals for earned and contributed revenue to ensure the sustainability of the ECSO. Cultivate and nurture relationships with individual patrons, donors, sponsors, foundations and other funders in collaboration with the Music Director and the Board of Directors to achieve increased contributed revenue.

External Community Engagement: Serve as a knowledgeable and passionate external ambassador and public speaker for the ECSO. Build trust and credibility with community stakeholders. Build, nurture, and elevate the ECSO reputation as an innovative and welcoming performing arts organization through attendance at community events and promotion of its high quality and enriching programming.

Commitment to Team Excellence: Lead by positive example and maintain integrity, humility, and gratitude. Foster collaboration and build a positive team environment with key stakeholders including the Music Director, Board of Directors, staff, musicians, youth orchestra, symphony chorus, volunteer *Friends of the Symphony*, and the *Garde Arts Center* staff to foster a positive and sustainable work environment. Demonstrate exceptional management skills and balance short-term tasks with long-term goals for organizational success.

Financial and People Stewardship: Manage the development and implementation of a realistic budget. Oversee effective cost management and realistic spending to maintain sustainable, balanced financial plans. Negotiate all contracts and agreements in good faith to support the orchestra and all ECSO operations.

Compensation

Proposed starting salary range: \$75,000 to \$95,000, dependent on experience. This is a full time, in-person position with some evenings and weekends required. We are committed to the well-being of our employees and offer a competitive benefits package.

Contact Information

Please reply with cover letter and résumé to search@ectsymphony.com