

## Director of Development

Join us in building a strong and sustainable future



### About Sounds Good Choir

Sounds Good Choir (SGC) is the second-largest choir organization for older adults in the USA, serving 600+ singers annually in 9 choirs in the city of Chicago and suburbs. Through our **Sounds Good Choirs** for cognitively healthy adults age 55+ and **Good Memories Choirs** for people with early-stage memory loss and their care partners, we create welcoming communities where every older adult has a place to sing. In partnership with Northwestern Medical Center, we contribute to groundbreaking research on the emotional, cognitive and social benefits of choral singing for older adults, positioning SGC at the forefront of evidence-based programming.

**What makes our choirs unique:** We offer daytime choirs specifically designed for adults "55 and better" with no auditions required and professional staff leadership - creating an accessible, welcoming environment that stands apart in Chicago's choral landscape.

### Our Mission

Sounds Good Choir enhances the well-being of older adults through the joy of singing in a fun, welcoming community.

### Our Vision

Every older adult has a place to sing in a choir.

### Our Values

- **Fun** - Singers see choir as the highlight of their week
- **Community-focused** - Combating loneliness and building friendships
- **Accessible** - No auditions, all abilities and economic situations welcome



- **Professionally-led** - Expert choral musicians and conductors
- **Inclusive** - Embracing all older adults, including those facing memory loss
- **Research-grounded** - Contributing to science about singing's value for older adults

## Our Current Foundation & Opportunity

**We have built something remarkable:** A loyal, engaged donor community with strong retention (57%) that believes deeply in our mission. One-third of our singers are current donors, representing tremendous growth potential as we expand our reach and impact.

### Our Current Fundraising Landscape:

- Two successful annual campaigns
- Limited but promising individual cultivation efforts
- Beneficiaries of a significant transformational gift ensuring a strong balance sheet as we build
- Untapped opportunities in institutional funding and corporate partnerships
- Active DonorSearch subscription supporting prospect research
- Affluent, educated constituent base of singers, their families and friends

**The Opportunity:** Build upon this strong foundation to create a comprehensive, relationship-centered development program that invites donors to support our mission and join our journey toward long-term sustainability.





## Position Overview

**Reports to:** Executive Director

**Compensation:** \$96,000 - \$120,000 annually with benefits

**Location:** Chicago area (hybrid with required in-person attendance)

This newly created leadership position offers the unique opportunity to build a culture of philanthropy within an organization with deep community connections, proven impact, and significant potential for growth. Working collaboratively with our co-founders, you'll help transition and expand existing donor relationships while developing a comprehensive stewardship strategy.

## Leading Our Development Evolution

You'll help us tell our story and create compelling narratives that connect donors' philanthropic interests with SGC's impact on older adult well-being through the joy of choral music. This is relationship-building at its finest – moving beyond transactions to create meaningful partnerships.

## Key Responsibilities

### Phase One: Foundation Building (Year 1-2)

#### Relationship Stewardship & Expansion

- Build and steward relationships with donors, including transitioning existing relationships from co-founders into your portfolio and cultivating new prospects
- Engage with current donors to co-create our development program, creating donor experiences that invite ongoing participation based on their interests and motivations

#### Strategic Development & Culture Building

- Develop fundraising strategies that align donor interests with SGC's mission and strategic plan, ensuring that philanthropic development directly contributes to the realization of our strategic goals
- Create systems for sustainable donor engagement, recognition, and stewardship
- Build development mindset throughout organization, training staff, board members and other key volunteers in partnership and fundraising principles
- Establish metrics measuring both revenue growth and relationship depth

#### Marketing & Communications Integration

- Partner with marketing team to develop donor-focused content and storytelling
- Ensure consistent messaging across all communications
- Support initiatives that enhance donor engagement and acquisition

## Phase Two: Program Expansion

### Comprehensive Development Program

- Research and cultivate foundation relationships aligned with SGC's mission
- Develop corporate partnerships based on shared community investment
- Develop a planned giving program (beginning with wills and bequests)
- Write compelling grant proposals (or oversee the outsourced grant writing area) connecting institutional funders' goals with SGC's outcomes

## What You'll Work With

### Technology and Systems:

- Work closely with our CRM Specialist who maintains our donor database and provides data analysis, reports, and metrics as needed, as well as our Administrative Assistant for data entry and updates, allowing you to focus your time on relationship-building
- Transition from Little Green Light to Salesforce in the near future
- Leverage our active DonorSearch subscription for prospect research

### Team Support:

- Collaborative Management Team including Executive Director, Artistic Directors, and Good Memories Program Director
- Volunteer Coordinator to support donor engagement activities
- Board Fundraising & Development Committee with growing momentum



Photo Credit: Teel Miller

## Success Metrics

### Year 1-2 Goals:

- Successfully expand existing donor relationships through deeper engagement
- Establish development systems prioritizing relationship quality over transaction volume
- Increase contributed income 15-20% through enhanced donor partnerships
- Initiate 15-20 meaningful major gift prospect conversations
- Build relationships with institutional funders leading to 8-10 new grants
- Serve as the Staff Liaison for the Board Fundraising & Development Committee, to lead and strengthen its operations

### 3-Year Vision:

- Achieve \$500,000 annual contributed income through sustainable donor partnerships
- Build community of 100+ committed individual donors giving \$1,500+ annually with deep mission connection
- Establish reliable institutional and corporate partnerships representing at least 25% of contributed income
- Create organizational culture where philanthropy is integrated into all SGC activities

## Qualifications

### Required Experience:

- Bachelor's degree
- 5-8 years of nonprofit development experience with success in relationship-based philanthropy
- Familiarity with Chicago's institutional philanthropic community
- Proven ability to cultivate major gift relationships (\$1,000+) with individual donors
- Experience with donor database systems and relationship management
- Direct supervisory experience
- Superb communication skills, particularly writing skills, with ability to strongly articulate our mission and impact
- Experience collaborating closely with Marketing colleagues



### Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience developing philanthropy culture within growing organizations
- Background in arts, cultural, or community-based nonprofits
- Knowledge of older adult demographics and philanthropic motivations
- CFRE certification or similar professional development

### Personal Qualities We're Seeking

- **Relationship builder:** Exceptional ability to form authentic, long-term partnerships
- **Strategic thinker:** Able to envision and articulate a comprehensive culture of philanthropy while managing practical activities

- **Mission-driven:** Understands how social relationships and arts advance community well-being
- **Collaborative leader:** Works effectively across teams and with volunteers
- **Storyteller:** Helps others discover how their interests align with SGC's impact
- **Systems builder:** Creates sustainable practices in a growing organization

## In-Person Requirements

This hybrid position requires regular in-person attendance for:

- Weekly staff meetings and management team meetings
- All SGC concerts and performances (~25 per year)
- Key donor meetings and cultivation events

## Ready to Join Our Team?

By October 24<sup>th</sup>, submit your resume and compelling cover letter explaining:

- Your philosophy of philanthropic development
- Your experience with relationship transition and knowledge transfer
- How you would approach building a culture of giving within a community-based arts organization

### Contact:

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Photo Credit: Teel Miller

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*Sounds Good Choir provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.*

*This position offers the unique opportunity to build upon established relationships while creating a culture of philanthropy within an organization with strong community connections, proven impact on older adult well-being, and significant potential for philanthropic growth.*