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Development Manager

SOUNDS Academy is a non-profit music education organization that transforms lives by empowering youth through teaching music and character values, with a commitment to reaching underserved communities. Students receive individual lessons and group classes on all instruments and voice. Instruments are provided to those who cannot afford one. SOUNDS Academy students learn the character values of creativity, leadership, perseverance, resilience, and teamwork through music education. We teach these values in our Musical Access Program, which connects students to live music and instruments through our Instrument Petting Zoos, our School Programs for lower income schools and community centers, our SOLO Program, which provides one-on-one instruction, and The Collective Ensembles that teach music theory and ensemble playing techniques.

Mission: We transform lives by empowering youth through teaching music and character values, with a commitment to reaching underserved communities.

Vision: One day, every child, regardless of their zip code, will have access to the transformative impact of music education and character development, in order to foster personal growth and strengthen communities.

Values: We value and teach the character values of creativity, leadership, perseverance, resilience, and teamwork through music education.

Culture Statement: The SOUNDS Academy Family is a collective of inclusive, personable, and progressive individuals who are committed to passionately creating and building relationships to support and inspire our young leaders.

Development Manager

The Development Manager is responsible for building and maintaining a diverse and sustainable funding base that allows SOUNDS Academy to thrive today while preparing for continued growth and long-term impact. This position oversees fundraising systems, donor engagement, campaigns, events, donation tracking, and development operations while helping strengthen relationships throughout the community.

This role is an excellent opportunity for candidates who are goal-oriented, relational, organized, and energized by both strategy and execution in a fast-paced environment. If you enjoy building relationships, coordinating projects, tracking progress, managing details, and helping turn vision into tangible results, this may be the role for you!

The Development Manager will work closely with the CEO, who remains deeply involved in fundraising and major donor relationships. While the CEO focuses heavily on external partnerships, large gifts, and organizational visibility, the Development Manager plays a critical role in managing the day-to-day infrastructure and execution of fundraising efforts.

This position is responsible for overseeing fundraising campaigns and events, donor communications and stewardship, donation tracking and reporting, development calendars and systems, prospect research, and ongoing donor engagement. The Development Manager will directly manage and grow a portfolio of individual donors and supporters while helping cultivate a strong culture of philanthropy throughout the organization.

Projects and responsibilities may include coordinating fundraising events and benefit concerts, executing annual and end-of-year campaigns, maintaining donor databases and spreadsheets, managing acknowledgments and stewardship touch points, assisting with sponsorship outreach and reporting, researching funding opportunities, supporting light grant writing and grant reporting, and helping create systems and workflows that improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the development department.

What You'll Do

- Set and Achieve Fundraising Goals

- Set and achieve annual fundraising goal overall and goals by funding streams (foundations, corporations, individuals, in-kind)
- Steward our donors' experiences with a goal to retain/renew 60% of donors annually
- Work with team members to track progress, produce reports, and communicate trends
- Run the overall development operation using best practices and effective development tools
 - Fundraising Plan
 - Weighted pipeline
 - Donor acknowledgements
 - Tracking systems (analytics)
- Connect with the Community
 - Directly manage a portfolio of gifts, grants, and sponsorships
 - Lead Fundraising Campaigns
- Manage up to the CEO to ensure larger donors are stewarded effectively.
- Invite supporters and steward their experiences at our events (The Speakeasy and The Benefit Concert)
- Attend outreach events to connect with the community

Must-Have Skills and Talents

- Systems Thinker and Visionary: You think and operate in systems that allow you to see the big picture and every detail of the funding campaign as well as how they fit together. While you're grounded in the current reality, you don't accept it as a limitation for the future.
- Continuous Learner: You're committed to identifying what you need to learn and growing quickly. In this dynamic and growing organization, our fundraising strategy will evolve quickly to capture new opportunities.
- Organizational Stewardship: You center the mission and goals of the organization in all of the decisions that you make. You proactively identify and solve areas where program and fundraising are in tension with one another, and find solutions that work for all stakeholders.
- Drive to Achieve Results: You do what you need to do to achieve your goals, including being open with your manager about where you need help, anticipating problems, brainstorming solutions, driving work forward, and course correcting where needed.
- Creative Problem Solving: Proactively develop solutions to challenges and roadblocks, including by constantly looking at big picture progress across programs and flagging potential upcoming challenges.
- Team Player and Proactive Communicator: You value relationships, both with the team and board at SOUNDS and also in the community. You demonstrate respect for colleagues and partners through proactive communication. You commit to no surprises.

To Apply

Please submit a 1-page letter describing your interest in this position, a 1-page professional writing sample that speaks to the skills required, and your resume to info@soundsacademy.org by June 5, 2026. Early submissions are encouraged.

The full-time, exempt salary for this position is \$60,000-\$68,000. SOUNDS offers health benefits, Employee Assistance Program, progressive paid time off starting at 5 days in year 1, paid sick leave, and 11 week-day holidays throughout the year. This is a hybrid (work remote and in-person) position, based in Phoenix, Arizona. The Internal Operations Administrator will also need to plan to attend in-person meetings with staff and potential partners throughout the city of Phoenix.

SOUNDS Academy provides equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees. We do not discriminate against our employees or applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender (including pregnancy and childbirth), national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, genetic information, or any other classification protected by federal, Arizona, or local laws and ordinances. SOUNDS Academy will ensure the fulfillment of this policy with respect to recruitment, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, compensation and benefits, social and recreational programs, discipline, termination and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with all applicable federal, Arizona, and local laws and ordinances.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read this job description. We're looking forward to getting to know you.