



POSITION

Development Director

\$70,000-\$75,000 | Full-time, exempt | Austin, TX (hybrid)

Reports to the Executive Director

Earliest start date: July 13, 2026

Deadline to apply: Friday, April 24th at 12pm CDT

ORGANIZATION

Austin Soundwaves is an arts education nonprofit expanding access to high-quality music education across Central Texas, with the vision of a world without barriers to learning music. Founded in 2011 as an El Sistema-inspired program, Austin Soundwaves now reaches more than 2,000 students each year through school partnerships and nine community programs providing music instruction, mentorship, and educator training. To date, the organization has served over 6,000 students and partnered with more than 50 schools across the region.

Austin Soundwaves is celebrating its 15th anniversary during the 2025–26 season and entering a new phase of growth. In 2027, the organization will open its first dedicated music education facility as part of the Community Arts Collaborative, a 25,000-square-foot arts facility in Central East Austin. Alongside this expansion, Austin Soundwaves has completed the Music Transforms Comprehensive Campaign, the largest campaign in the organization's history, strengthening programs and expanding long-term impact.

ABOUT THE ROLE

With the growth of our organization comes an important next step: building the systems and relationships that will sustain Austin Soundwaves for the long term. The **Development Director** will be a vital thought partner, strategist, and leader on an experienced fundraising team that includes the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Operations Manager, and Marketing Manager. This role focuses primarily on individual giving through the development of annual fund, mid-level giving, and recurring donations, within an organization entering a significant period of growth.

You will not be expected to build a development department from scratch or manage grants, marketing, and major gifts. Instead, this is an opportunity to join a strong, effective team and partner closely with an Executive Director who is actively engaged in fundraising, values collaboration, experienced in building donor relationships, and committed to long-term sustainability through authentic partnerships and thoughtful strategy.

Austin Soundwaves operates with an annual budget of \$1 million, including \$700,000 in contributed revenue. Your role will play a central part in growing that support in close collaboration with the leadership team.

This role exists to:

- Drive annual, recurring, and mid-level giving.
- Strengthen retention and donor experience.
- Create and deepen relationships with donors.

- Collaborate with leadership to think strategically about fundraising.
- Bring structure and momentum to donor qualification and stewardship.

RESPONSIBILITIES

40%: Lead Individual Giving

- Lead strategy and execution of the annual fund program
- Grow our donor base through one-time, annual, and mid-level giving
- Grow the Soundwaves Sustainers recurring giving program
- Execute multi-channel annual fund campaigns (email, mail, phone/text, digital, events)
 - Manage support from the Operations Manager and Marketing Manager
- Create giving appeals tied to program priorities
- Analyze performance and adjust strategy over time

30%: Lead Donor Stewardship & Mid-Level Cultivation

- Build relationships with donors through regular meetings, site visits, and conversations
- Strengthen donor retention and upgrade strategies to grow mid-level giving
- Coordinate stewardship communications and donor updates
- Collaborate with the Executive Director on qualification, stewardship, and major gift asks

30%: Internal Collaboration

- Strategize with the Executive Director on fundraising priorities and development reports for board meetings and presentations
- Coordinate with the Deputy Director on
 - Strategizing foundation, corporate, and government funding to ensure alignment
 - Presenting at our Development Committee meetings
- Collaborate with the Leadership Team around earned revenue growth
- Work closely with the Operations Coordinator to
 - Manage and optimize CRM systems, processes, and automations across platforms (Salesforce, Donorbox, Airtable, website)
 - Track annual fund performance and key fundraising metrics to inform strategy
- Align fundraising and marketing messaging and translate program priorities into compelling donor narratives
- Partner across programs and operations to maximize development opportunities

A NOTE ON SCOPE AND GROWTH

This role is intentionally focused. Rather than asking one person to do everything, we are prioritizing individual giving, qualification, and stewardship as the core of our development strategy. You will have full ownership of that work while contributing to broader fundraising efforts alongside a high-functioning, experienced team. In year one, this role is not responsible for grant writing, corporate partnerships, or leading marketing and communications, and does not include direct management of a development team. Major gift cultivation and overall revenue responsibility are shared across the organization. As Austin Soundwaves grows, we expect this role to grow with it, expanding into broader development leadership and team building over time.

QUALIFICATIONS

Research shows that women and people from underrepresented groups often only apply to jobs if they meet 100% of the qualifications. As no one ever meets 100% of the qualifications, we encourage you to apply if you feel that much of the following matches your experience.

Who Thrives in this Role

- You've already had direct responsibility for donor relationships, with 2–4 years of experience beyond the development assistant or coordinator level.
- You're comfortable engaging donors in person, on the phone, and over Zoom, and bring strong communication and interpersonal skills to those interactions.
- You've owned relationships and worked toward clear fundraising goals, with a sense of what works, what doesn't, and how to adjust.
- You're excited to take responsibility for a core fundraising channel now, with the potential to grow into broader development leadership over time.

Basic Requirements for Success at Austin Soundwaves

- Ability to think strategically and creatively with outstanding organizational skills.
 - High attention to detail and follow-up – you don't default to assumption.
 - Self-starter with an exceptional work ethic.
 - Challenge and question assumptions and suggest improvements and better approaches.
- You are an exceptional collaborator with colleagues and stakeholders.
 - Take direction when needed.
 - Step into ownership when it counts.
- Willing and able to be candid and transparent with your managers and colleagues.
 - You are expected to give and receive feedback from and to anyone on the team.
 - Able to give clear and respectful critique and highlight challenges.
 - Celebrate successes by everyone on the team.
 - Act with good intent and trust in the team to do the same.
- Able to take informed risks and not discouraged by possible failure.
- Make tough decisions and act rather than agonizing or continuing to delay without reason.
- Flexibility and adaptability in an emerging and changing environment.
- Care deeply about the success of Austin Soundwaves and our mission.

Preferred and Nice to Have

- Experience working with families from diverse ethnic, economic, and cultural backgrounds.
- Proficient in Google Suite (or similar), especially Docs, Sheets, and Slides.
- Experience and proficiency using CRMs such as Salesforce.
- Familiarity with Squarespace, monday.com, Airtable, and Donorbox platforms.
- Familiarity with nonprofit and/or educational settings, and a belief that music can serve as a vehicle for social change through access to high-quality music education
- Spanish fluency is a plus.

BENEFITS

Health Insurance

We offer employer-paid health insurance; employee-paid dental and vision options are also available.

Retirement Plans

We offer a 403(b) retirement plan through Vanguard with a 3% employer match.

Paid Time Off

We offer a flexible, trust-based approach to time off that prioritizes both high performance and meaningful rest.

- 15 days (3 weeks) of paid vacation annually (does not accrue).
- Approximately 28 days of scheduled organizational closures, including:
 - One week each for the Thanksgiving holiday and Spring Break (aligned with local schools).
 - Two weeks in late December through early January for Winter Break, with development staff coordinating coverage to support year-end giving as needed.
 - Most major federal holidays and observances.
- For day-to-day appointments, errands, family events, etc., staff have flexibility to take time as needed, as long as responsibilities are met and communication is clear with your team and supervisor.
- Stay/get healthy: take the time you need and ensure your team is set up to cover your responsibilities.

Working Conditions

- Employees must be based out of the Austin, Texas area.
- Must be eligible to work full-time in the United States without sponsorship.
- The standard work day is 8am - 5pm, Monday through Friday.
- Some nights and weekends required for events, programs, etc.
- Must have reliable transportation for travel within the city.
- Hybrid work model.

Administrative work is often completed remotely, while in-person participation is expected for programs, concerts, donor meetings, board meetings, key events, weekly in-office days, etc. Because our work is program- and event-driven, the rhythm of in-person work varies throughout the year. Some weeks include frequent in-person activity, including evenings and weekends, while others may be largely remote.

For more information on our work culture, please [check out our Austin Soundwaves culture document](#), which outlines our values and how those show up in our work with our students and each other.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Austin Soundwaves is committed to a policy of equal treatment and opportunity in every aspect of its relations with its applicants, staff members, and families, without regard to race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, marital status, military status, pregnancy, or parenthood. People of diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. If you require reasonable accommodation(s) to participate in the application or interview process, please contact us at info@austinsoundwaves.org.

HIRING PROCESS TIMELINE

- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis between Monday, April 6 and Friday, April 24.
- Round 1: Select applicants will be invited for a 10-minute Zoom screening between April 20 and May 1.
 - References will be contacted for select applicants after phone screenings.
- Round 2: Select applicants will be invited for a formal 30-45-minute Zoom interview between May 4 and May 15.
 - Zoom interview candidates invited to our Season Finale concert at UT-Austin. This is 100% optional and will not impact your application. The invite provides an opportunity to see our work in person.
- Final Round: Finalists will be invited for in-person interviews between May 19 and May 29.
 - You will get a chance to meet with our staff, students, and our work.
 - Finalists from out of town must be willing to travel to Austin (travel costs covered).
- Welcome to the Team: Notification of intent to hire will be sent no later than June 3.
 - As your schedule allows, we would love to contract you to observe or work during our Summer Music Camp between June 15th and 26th and get to know our team and our students.
- The earliest start date for this role is July 13, 2026.

HIRING PROCESS COMMITMENTS AND NORMS

As an organization committed to equitable and creative hiring practices, we:

- Will communicate any updates to the timeline directly with candidates.
- Outline the entire hiring process in each job description.
- Acknowledge receipt of every application and notify all applicants of their status.
- Share interview questions and topics ahead of time.
- Include students directly in full-time hiring decision, including interviews.
- Provide an honorarium to interview applicants for their time.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please send the following application materials to info@austinsoundwaves.org with **Development Director** in the subject line by **Friday, April 24th at 12pm central time.**

1. Maximum 2-page resume attached as a PDF.
2. Names, emails, and phone of 2 professional references (preferably one is a current or past supervisor).
3. Tell us a bit about yourself and why you would like to be our Development Director
 - a. Option 1: Cover letter or
 - b. Option 2: 90-second max selfie video sent as an unlisted YouTube link
4. LinkedIn or personal/professional website link.