



Chief Information Officer
New England Conservatory
Boston, MA

THE SEARCH

[New England Conservatory](#) (NEC), a premier incubator for musical excellence, seeks a visionary and service-oriented Chief Information Officer (CIO) who excels at building relationships, navigating complex organizations, and advancing institutional priorities through innovation and collaboration. Reporting directly to the Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO) and working closely with NEC's senior leadership team, faculty, and staff, the CIO will provide strategic leadership in developing and executing a technology roadmap that enables NEC's evolution into a technology-empowered organization.

The CIO will join NEC as they continue to strengthen the technology, systems, data, and security infrastructure that support its world-class educational and artistic mission. As a key member of the leadership team, the CIO will have the opportunity to shape institutional priorities, partner closely with faculty and administrative leaders, and oversee a broad technology portfolio that includes enterprise systems, cybersecurity, infrastructure, user support, and vendor partnerships. Leading a dedicated team of technology professionals, the CIO will help position technology as a strategic enabler of innovation, operational effectiveness, and exceptional service across the NEC community.

To be successful, the CIO will address a number of key opportunities and challenges, listed below and outlined in detail on pages 4-5 of this document:

- Lead with visionary direction;
- Establish a modern approach to security;
- Build strong institutional relationships;
- Foster a customer service-oriented culture; and
- Advance NEC as a technology-empowered organization.

Isaacson, Miller, a national search firm, is assisting the New England Conservatory in this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in strict confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY

New England Conservatory educates and trains musicians of all ages from around the world, drawing on our distinguished faculty's deep reservoir of talent, as well as our creative community and educational partnerships. We are devoted to inculcating the highest standards of artistic excellence and nurturing individual artistic sensibility and creative growth. Understanding that music is one of the transcendent expressions of human civilization, NEC is committed to advancing music's contribution to contemporary society.

The College

Today, NEC enrolls approximately 750 graduate and undergraduate students from 46 states and 39 countries across a variety of disciplines, including: brass; chamber music; collaborative piano; composition; conducting; contemporary improvisation; jazz studies; music history and musicology; music theory; percussion; piano; strings; voice and opera; and woodwinds. Degree offerings include the Bachelor of Music, Master of Music, and Doctor of Musical Arts. NEC also offers the Undergraduate Diploma, Graduate Diploma, and the prestigious and highly selective Artist Diploma.

Expanded Education

As part of NEC's mission to make lifelong music education available to everyone, Expanded Education (comprising Preparatory School, Adult Education, and Summer Programs) delivers training and performance opportunities for children, pre-college students, and adults. NEC Prep offers open-enrollment educational opportunities for pre-college students across New England. It currently serves 1400 students in the region, including those enrolled in NEC through a partnership with Walnut Hill School for the Arts. Prep musicians attend individual lessons and classes, and participate in chamber music and 20-22 large ensembles, including orchestras, choruses, and wind ensembles. It is one of the largest programs of its kind in the nation.

In 1962, NEC Prep established one of the finest youth orchestras in the world: the highly selective Youth Philharmonic Orchestra (YPO), which tours internationally every two years and has performed in some of the world's finest concert halls. Prep is also home to the highly celebrated and selective NEC Youth Chorale, Youth Camerata, Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble, and Jazz Ensemble.

Expanded Education also opens the doors of NEC to the broader New England community of adult music lovers and learners, offering an expansive array of musical training, including private instrument lessons, ensembles, and classes. Workshops, masterclasses, ensembles, and summer institutes are all taught by the area's most highly qualified musicians. More than 300 students are enrolled in adult programming each year.

Faculty and Staff

NEC's faculty is best in class across a wide array of musical disciplines. The Conservatory is home to over 500 faculty artists who are pre-eminent in their fields, 31 of whom are members of the renowned Boston Symphony Orchestra, and numerous others who are distinguished composers, soloists, performers, and scholars in their own right. The NEC faculty has always included many BSO musicians (131 over the years), and, currently, 50 members of the BSO have at least one NEC affiliation — whether as an alumnus, a current faculty member, or a parent of an NEC Prep or College student. NEC also boasts 11 current or former faculty and/or alumni who are MacArthur Fellows. Across various non-faculty roles, the Conservatory employs over 165 part-time and full-time staff and manages a robust student employment program. The employee commitment to excellence and student achievement is the foundational thread of NEC's esteemed legacy.

Facilities

Located in Boston on the Avenue of the Arts in the Fenway Cultural District, the NEC campus consists of four buildings that stretch along St. Botolph Street and Huntington Avenue. The campus is bounded by Symphony Hall, the Northeastern University campus, the YMCA, and commercial and residential buildings.

The Blumenthal Family Library is home to one of the major music collections in the United States, including more than 150,000 volumes of scores, sound and video recordings, and books about music, as well as subscriptions to all of the major music journals and electronic music databases. In addition, the library archives and special collections boast a rich treasure of manuscripts, first editions, personal papers, and recorded performances of many of the great composers and musicians who have taught and performed at NEC over the past 150 years.

NEC's premier performance venue, the historic and acoustically superb Jordan Hall, is one of the world's most admired concert halls. It provides an intimate and versatile setting for a wide variety of performances and recording sessions featuring NEC students and faculty, with seating for over 1,000. On weekends, the hall is used by some of Boston's top professional arts organizations, including Vivo Performing Arts, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, and the Boston Early Music Festival. In addition to Jordan Hall, NEC has seven other performance spaces on campus, including three acoustically superb, state-of-the-art performance spaces in the Student Life and Performance Center (SLPC). This variety of performance venues enables NEC to host more than 1,000 performances each year.

Finances and Philanthropy

To sustain the enterprise and its annual operating costs of \$63 million, NEC, like many other conservatories, relies heavily on tuition. In fiscal year 2025, the Conservatory drew roughly 68 percent of its revenue from tuition and room-and-board (\$37.7 million) and 14 percent from the endowment (\$7.5 million). As of June 2025, the Conservatory's endowment totaled \$195.1 million.

In fiscal year 2025, Advancement raised \$27 million in private philanthropy; in the same year, unrestricted giving resulted in \$4 million to the NEC Fund. In fiscal year 2026, the team is working to meet its major giving goal of \$20 million, in addition to meeting an unrestricted giving goal of \$4.3 million.

Role of the Chief Information Officer

Reporting directly to the Chief Financial and Operating Officer and working closely with NEC's leadership team, faculty, and staff, the CIO will lead with vision and innovation to develop a strategy for enabling NEC's evolution into a technology-empowered organization.

The CIO will oversee all operational areas of IT and lead a team of six employees, encompassing the help desk, technician staff, IT infrastructure, application-support functions, and managed service relationships. The CIO will manage the IT budget, oversee vendor relationships, and direct all IT activities, including the review and approval of IT policies, controls, and incident-response planning.

The successful candidate will bring a modern, service-oriented, and security-minded approach to NEC's technology environment, ensuring that infrastructure, systems, data management, cybersecurity practices, and user support are aligned with NEC's academic, artistic, administrative, and operational needs.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The CIO will join NEC at an important moment to align technology, information security, and service delivery in support of NEC's mission. In this context, the CIO will thoughtfully address the following key opportunities and challenges:

Lead with visionary direction.

The CIO will reimagine the next chapter of technology innovation at NEC. This leader will anticipate challenges, troubleshoot improvements, and align technologies with best practices across administrative systems, infrastructure, educational technology, information security, disaster recovery, and general system operations. The CIO will bring discipline and imagination to technology planning, helping NEC use systems and digital tools to strengthen institutional effectiveness and support the experience of students, faculty, and staff.

Establish a modern approach to security.

The CIO will establish a security and privacy roadmap framed around industry best practices. This leader will optimize quality assurance, oversee audits and risk-management reviews, ensure regulatory compliance with shifting data protection laws, and implement robust prevention and mitigation actions. Success will require balancing institutional risk, limited capacity, user experience, and the need for clear policies and incident-response practices.

Build strong institutional relationships.

The CIO will partner across a broad array of diverse stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and board members. This leader will build bridges, communicate regularly, and establish healthy collaborations to generate community buy-in for critical IT improvements. In a highly relational environment, the CIO must be able to translate technical priorities into accessible language and build confidence in technology decisions across the institution.

Foster a customer service-oriented culture.

The CIO will instill a departmental culture that prioritizes efficiency, responsiveness, clear communication, and accurate project timelines. This leader will support the professional development of IT staff by setting clear goals, providing feedback, and encouraging continuous learning. The CIO will strengthen trust in IT by ensuring that service expectations are clear, follow-through is consistent, and the department is viewed as a collaborative institutional partner.

Advance NEC as a technology-empowered organization.

The CIO will help NEC use technology as an enabling platform for academic, artistic, administrative, and operational excellence. This will include strengthening infrastructure and applications, improving data and reporting capabilities, supporting performance and instructional technologies, and ensuring that NEC's digital environment is secure, resilient, and responsive to evolving needs. The CIO will work with colleagues to prioritize initiatives thoughtfully and manage change in a way that reflects NEC's mission, culture, and capacity. This includes approaching emerging tools like AI with patience and compromise, balancing tech exploration against healthy faculty and student skepticism.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

NEC seeks an experienced, collaborative, and service-driven technology leader with a deep understanding of complex educational or mission-driven institutions.

An ideal candidate will bring many of the following professional experiences and personal characteristics:

- Senior management experience in information technology within higher education, independent education, or a comparably complex mission-driven organization as an institutional partner, translating academic and administrative priorities into technology strategy and communicating technology decisions across the institution.
- Proven knowledge of advanced information technologies and successful experience implementing major IT initiatives, including piloting emerging tools, documenting institutional requirements, evaluating multi-vendor solutions, and driving cross-functional change.
- Comprehensive understanding of data governance and institutional data strategy, including systems integration, analytics, and using institutional data to support planning and decision-making.
- Experience establishing or strengthening cybersecurity, privacy, compliance, risk-management, and incident-response practices.

- Track record of outstanding personnel management, with a demonstrated ability to hire, develop, retain, and lead talented individuals, as well as manage FTEs, consultants, vendors, and managed service relationships.
- Sophisticated strategic planning skills with up-to-date knowledge of marketplace trends and industry best practices.
- Collaborative partnership style, with the ability to listen actively, build unity around complex issues, and foster productive relationships across stakeholder groups with differing technology needs. Experience of bringing departments together around initiatives involving technology, process, policy, and organizational change.
- Service-driven leadership, with proven capability to sustain a departmental culture defined by excellence, responsiveness, clear communication, and user-friendly customer service.
- Innovative and forward-thinking orientation, including a passion for continual learning, close monitoring of the IT threat landscape, and creative thinking about how technology can improve the stakeholder experience.
- Mission-minded appreciation for the rigors of a top-tier music conservatory and for digital trends relevant to academia and the performing arts.
- Uncompromising integrity, discretion, and devotion to the highest ethical and professional standards.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

The final salary will be commensurate with experience, with an expected range of \$185,000 to \$215,000. Senior Leadership will determine the selected candidate's actual compensation based on experience and qualifications. The CIO is a full-time role based in Boston, Massachusetts. NEC employs a hybrid workforce. The CIO is expected to be a visible leader on campus and be available to work on-site.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/new-england-conservatory/chief-information-officer>.

Dan Rodas, Partner
 Carley Davenport, Managing Associate
 Amy Gillespie, Senior Associate
 Seema Khan, Senior Search Coordinator
 Isaacson, Miller

NEC is an Equal Opportunity Employer that recruits and hires qualified candidates without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, or veteran status.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by NEC. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by NEC would supersede any conflicting information in this document.