



**Search for the Chief Advancement Officer
Spoleto Festival USA
Charleston, South Carolina**

THE SEARCH

Spoleto Festival USA, the nation’s premier performing arts festival, seeks a dynamic and accomplished Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) to expertly lead all fundraising and engagement efforts on behalf of the organization. Reporting to the General Director & CEO and serving as a key member of the senior leadership team, the CAO is responsible for elevating and enhancing the fundraising capabilities of the organization during a pivotal time in the institution’s growth. As Spoleto nears the completion of a comprehensive strategic planning process and enters a critical juncture of organizational transformation, the CAO will play a key role in defining philanthropic priorities for Spoleto’s next campaign endeavor. This is a unique opportunity for an ambitious and aspirational advancement professional to establish the overarching vision and operational support to advance Spoleto’s fundraising and engagement enterprise – applying best practices, data-driven strategies, and innovative approaches for enhancing the philanthropic capacity of the organization.

For 17 days and nights each spring, Spoleto Festival USA transforms Charleston into a global epicenter for the performing arts, presenting more than 150 performances by renowned artists as well as emerging talent in opera; theater; dance; and chamber, symphonic, choral, and jazz music. Now approaching its 47th season, Spoleto is internationally recognized as America’s premier performing arts festival of its kind. In addition to presenting exciting and innovative programs, Spoleto both commissions original work and produces its own operas, specializing in rarely performed masterpieces by well-known composers; American premieres; and traditional works presented in new ways. Attracting more than 65,000 audience members annually from around the world, the Festival has also served as a catalyst for cultural change in Charleston, propelling its rise as a top global travel destination and generating nearly \$42.7 million annually in economic impact on the city. Regularly coinciding with the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, the Spoleto Festival USA 2023 season begins May 26 and concludes on June 11.

As Spoleto plans for future growth, the CAO will provide innovative leadership and strategic vision to all aspects of the organization's fundraising and engagement activities. By guiding and supporting the General Director & CEO in his role as chief fundraiser and personally engaging a select portfolio of major gift prospects and donors, this individual will take leadership in cultivating and soliciting transformative gifts and operationalizing bold new ideas, as well as time-tested techniques, to achieve significant growth through individual, institutional, and planned giving efforts. In addition to expanding the number of planned gifts, corporate and foundation support is a significant growth area for Spoleto's advancement enterprise. As such, the CAO will incorporate into their overarching vision a long-term plan for coordinating activity, developing strategies, building relationships, and raising funds from corporate, foundation, and organizational donors. To successfully achieve these goals, the CAO will maintain collaborative relationships with colleagues across the organization to coordinate and execute philanthropic initiatives. With oversight for a team of six full-time and four seasonal staff members, the CAO will possess a collegial, team-building style and a proven ability to motivate staff, keeping them inspired, energized, and focused on results. The CAO will also possess a depth of knowledge in all key areas of advancement, along with a demonstrated ability to plan, manage, and successfully close a comprehensive or capital campaign.

The ideal candidate will embrace the opportunity to further advance a bold and distinctive strategic vision for Spoleto. With at least ten years of leadership experience in advancement, the CAO should possess strong managerial, strategic planning, and motivational skills; a keen understanding of fundraising best practices; and a track record of personal success in donor cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship at the major gift level. The CAO will demonstrate a commitment to Spoleto's mission and core values, as well as an appreciation for and understanding of its contributions to the arts within the local community and beyond. Spoleto strongly recognizes that diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) initiatives must be infused in all practices at each level of the organization and is committed to ensuring that DEAI initiatives are part of its long-term strategies. Charged with developing fundraising plans for and engaging with diverse groups of artistic practitioners and enthusiasts, the CAO must similarly possess a demonstrated interest in and track record of advancing DEAI.

This role is an exceptional opportunity for a high-performing individual to lead an advancement program in support of Spoleto's mission through the implementation of best practices, team and capacity building, and the application of innovative strategies which will create a philanthropic enterprise of unsurpassed effectiveness. A complete list of the desired qualifications and characteristics can be found at the conclusion of this document. Spoleto Festival USA has retained Jack Gorman of the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to conduct this important recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications may be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

“It will not be like most Festivals...but a unique and fertile ground for the young, and a dignified home for the masters.”

- Gian Carlo Menotti on his founding vision for Spoleto Festival USA in 1977

History and Leadership

In the 1970s, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti sought an American counterpart to the [Festival of Two Worlds](#) in Spoleto, Italy, which he founded in 1958. Looking for a city with similar charms as well as a wealth of performance spaces, Menotti settled on Charleston, relishing its intimacy, enchantment, and, in his words, “unique beauty.” With invaluable support from a young Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. and College of Charleston’s then-president Theodore Stern, the Festival held its first season in 1977.

Since then, Spoleto has served as a catalyst for cultural change, aiding in Charleston’s flourishing as a top destination. Following Menotti’s departure in the early 1990s, Nigel Redden, who had previously served as General Manager from 1986 to 1991, took the helm as General Director in 1995. Under his stewardship, Redden secured Spoleto’s preeminent foothold in the international performance arts landscape through artistic commissions and the staging of U.S. and world premieres. Locally, with support from the city and generous donors, Redden and Spoleto spearheaded the renovations of numerous performance spaces: Festival Hall, Dock Street Theatre, College of Charleston Sottile Theatre, and the Charleston Gaillard Center.

In October 2021, Mena Mark Hanna succeeded Redden as General Director & CEO, promising to continue Spoleto’s legacy of presenting exemplary, innovative work that showcases and celebrates the breadth of artistic expression while maintaining a year-round commitment to the Charleston community.

To learn more about Spoleto Festival USA, please visit: <https://spoletousa.org/>

The Work and the Artists

Spoleto Festival USA commissions original work and produces its own operas, specializing in rarely performed masterpieces, American premieres, and traditional works presented in new ways. Spoleto has produced and/or presented 20 [opera, dance, and theater world premieres](#). Each season, the Festival employs more than 500 full-time, part-time, and seasonal staffers. More than 65,000 audience members attend the Festival annually, half of whom reside outside of the Charleston area and with nearly all 50 states and 16 countries represented.

The Festival provides a platform for young performers to work alongside established masters. Illustrious artists who performed at Spoleto early in their careers include, among others, pianist Emanuel Ax, violinist Joshua Bell, soprano Renée Fleming, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, actor and performance artist Taylor Mac, vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant, soprano Jennifer Rowley, pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and dancer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar. The Festival becomes a creative playground for interdisciplinary collaboration, sparking connection between artists from across different disciplines and genres.

Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra

One of the country's most prestigious ensembles for young professional musicians, the [Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra](#) serves as the Festival's orchestra in residence. It accompanies Spoleto's opera selections and symphonic concerts, and smaller ensembles are selected to participate in choral, chamber, and contemporary performances.

Assembled anew each year through nationwide auditions, and under the direction of Resident Conductor and Director of Orchestral Activities John Kennedy, the Festival's Orchestra takes on a dynamic new identity with the participation of both returning and new musicians, consisting of 80 to 90 members depending on the season. Each musician is selected for his or her skill, artistry, and versatility, and the resulting group of talented and diverse young professionals is consistently lauded in the press.

Spoleto Festival USA Chorus

Led by Joe Miller, Spoleto's Director of Choral Activities, the Festival Chorus was established in 2021, building upon a long tradition of choral excellence. For many years, students of the Westminster Choir served as Spoleto's choir in residence; vocal fellows now stem from students and recent graduates of conservatories, colleges, and choral programs across the country.

Each of the vocal fellows is selected by Miller through nationwide auditions. The professional chorus comprises roughly 50 singers, though the number fluctuates depending on the season's repertory and needs. The singers have the opportunity to perform in major choral works, as well as in the chorus and in small roles (and as covers for large roles) of Spoleto's mainstage operas. Select choristers perform in smaller chamber choral concerts and take part in special projects, such as [Music in Time](#) concerts.

Engaging the Community

Spoleto Festival USA's founding purpose to provide a fertile ground of experimentation, exploration, and artistic learning extends far beyond its stages. Vital to the Festival's endurance are its endeavors to engage audiences across a broad spectrum. With programming that includes sending artists into schools, holding public discussions, and organizing workshops for budding artists, the Festival aims to spark connections and leave lasting impressions. Spoleto [Engaging the Community](#) (ETC) comprises three avenues:

1. **Tailored education programs to instill artistic curiosity and inspire audiences of the future.** This includes artists visiting area schools as well as students visiting Festival venues. Spoleto artists also work with independent student-focused organizations, such as the Charleston Jazz Academy and the College of Charleston's arts management program.
2. **Community engagement programs to encourage participation and remove barriers.** This includes free discussions before the Festival (like Salon Series and Exploring Omar) and Artist Talks during the Festival (Conversations With and Jazz Talks). Each season, Spoleto also provides more than 800 free tickets to local nonprofits through [Open Stage Door](#) and offers Azure Concerts designed for individuals with autism spectrum disorder or similar challenges.
3. **Programs for the professional advancement of young artists and arts administrators.** This includes the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra; the Spoleto Festival USA Chorus; and Spoleto's [Apprentice Program](#), a short-term internship opportunity for college-age students.

Financial & Fundraising Overview

Spoleto Festival USA relies on the generosity of its benefactors to sustain its mission of presenting programs of the highest artistic caliber. The Festival operates on an annual budget of nearly \$10 million, approximately \$4.5 million of which comes from contributions and the remainder of which comes from ticket sales, endowment income, and facility rentals. Of this \$4.5 million figure, roughly \$1.3 million comprises individual giving and nearly \$600,000 comes from corporate sponsorships. The remaining contributions consist of foundation funding, government and state funding, and board giving. There is significant opportunity to increase major gifts, expand support from corporations and foundations, and build a more robust planned giving operation under the next CAO. The organization's endowment is valued at approximately \$10 million.

CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

The Chief Advancement Officer provides strategic leadership for, and supervises staff members involved in, all fundraising and engagement activities of Spoleto Festival USA. This includes individual and institutional giving; capital and comprehensive campaigns; major gift initiatives; operational and planned giving; and special projects and events. Reporting to the General Director & CEO, the CAO partners with senior management, the Board of Directors, and other key stakeholders to elevate and enhance the philanthropic capabilities of Spoleto during an exciting time of growth and innovation. The CAO will oversee a budget of approximately \$1 million for the advancement operation.

An inspiring and inclusive leader, the CAO will possess the ability to motivate staff, board members, donors, and key benefactors throughout the local community and nationwide as Spoleto's reach, prominence, and reputation continues to grow. A passion for the performing arts is critical to success, as is a sincere belief that arts and creativity are vital to a healthy society.

Following are the specific responsibilities and duties of this position:

Programmatic Elevation

- Assess the fundraising potential of the organization by evaluating, strengthening, and enhancing existing individual and institutional giving programs. Develop and implement new and innovative strategies for identifying and acquiring prospective donors, increasing donor retention, and upgrading and renewing existing donors.
- Serve as an architect and builder of a sophisticated, cohesive, and systemic multi-year fundraising and engagement strategy that is reflective of best practices, consistent with the organization's mission and core values, and designed to produce sustainable long-term growth in philanthropic contributions.
- Develop efficient and effective programs to leverage annual gifts as a pipeline for major giving prospects. Assess opportunities and implement strategies to grow the planned giving operation. Ensure that accurate and timely data related to prospect and donor outreach is captured in Tessitura.
- Partner closely with staff in other departments, particularly the Chief Financial, Marketing, and Operating Officers, and Lead Producer, to coordinate the development, production, and distribution of print and online communications to donors and members, as well as to define financial plans to ensure the vitality and stability of the organization. Ensure that internal and external communications incorporate appropriate, consistent, and compelling fundraising messaging and reinforce the organization's key priorities and strategic direction.

Leadership Support and Engagement

- Support the General Director & CEO in developing major philanthropic opportunities and in designing cultivation and solicitation strategies for donors and prospects. Ensure that the General Director & CEO is effectively staffed for fundraising activities and donor conversations, and that his time is optimally, efficiently, and appropriately leveraged.
- Develop, articulate, and manage the overall advancement plan for the organization in close collaboration with the General Director & CEO, Board of Directors, and other key internal stakeholders.
- Serve as an active and valued member of the organization's senior leadership team, which is responsible for the overall management, strategic planning, and prosperity of the organization.

- Oversee the preparation and presentation of regular reports to the General Director & CEO, the senior leadership team, and the Board of Directors as it relates to philanthropic revenues and initiatives.
- Serve as a liaison to the organization's Board of Directors, as directed by the General Director & CEO. Provide staff support and direction to the Development Committee of the Board.

Staff Management and Fundraising

- Lead the organization's development staff of six full-time and four seasonal employees, promoting a culture of collaboration and high achievement and ensuring that the staff is well-prepared to meet the ongoing challenges and opportunities for the organization.
- Oversee department personnel activities, including the hiring, development, and evaluation of all development staff.
- Provide clear direction and priorities for development staff. Work with each staff member to set mutually agreed upon, well-defined, and measurable goals. Ensure that staff members execute effective management strategies and timely, accurate gift acknowledgements that result in meaningful engagement, successful solicitation of prospects, and superb stewardship of donors.
- Personally cultivate, solicit, and steward a select portfolio of major gift prospects and donors and, in doing so, lead the frontline fundraising team by example.
- Oversee the design and execution of special events of various size and purpose and establish, measure, communicate, and reevaluate the success of each event through both qualitative and quantitative metrics.
- Represent the organization in meetings with donors and prospects and at special events. Uphold a high degree of professionalism and sophistication as a representative of Spoleto Festival USA to external audiences.
- Leverage the emerging priorities following the organization's comprehensive strategic planning process, develop, oversee, and execute philanthropic strategies for future campaign endeavors.

Qualifications and Experience:

Candidates will possess many, if not most, of the following professional qualifications and personal characteristics:

- A minimum of ten years of progressively responsible fundraising and leadership experience in advancement.
- A deep commitment to and passion for the performing arts, as well as an articulated appreciation for Spoleto Festival USA's mission, history, and core values.
- Demonstrated experience advancing diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion within an organization, with the ability to articulate the necessity of inclusivity.
- A strategic change agent with a successful track record of building upon an existing advancement program through the application of analytical thinking and best practices, resulting in a substantive and sustainable increase in philanthropic revenue for an organization.
- Proven experience as a highly effective, collaborative, and inclusive leader for a team of development professionals, and success in developing a team- while creating a goal-oriented environment resulting in a solid rate of retention and staff satisfaction.
- Familiarity with all varieties of charitable giving and a depth of knowledge in key areas of advancement including annual, major, and planned giving and campaigns.
- A proven track record of success in securing major gift and pledge commitments from individuals, foundations, and corporations.
- The credibility, maturity, and sound judgement required to effectively engage and leverage senior leaders and volunteers in the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of key prospects and donors.
- A level of ease and confidence in social settings and in engaging individuals in meaningful conversations in support of the mission of an organization.
- Demonstrated effectiveness in writing, public speaking, and one-on-one conversations.
- A highly organized and process-oriented work style, strong attention to detail, and a demonstrated ability to multi-task in a fast-paced environment.

- The flexibility and willingness to travel occasionally in order to meet with high-level donors and prospects, and to participate in fundraising-related and Festival events.
- Proficiency in using fundraising and customer relationship management software, preferably Tessitura.
- Bachelor's degree required.

Location

Contributing to Spoleto Festival USA's ongoing success is its location in Charleston, South Carolina. Recognized for its stunning natural beauty, impressive array of preserved historical architecture, and wealth of charming performance venues, Charleston provides an incomparable setting for audience members and guest artists alike.

With its cobblestone streets, incredible historic buildings, world-class restaurants, and miles of beautiful beaches, hundreds of new residents are relocating to Charleston each year – and for good reason. Charleston has been named *Travel & Leisure's* top city in the nation for many years in a row, as well as the best small city in the U.S. in *Condé Nast Traveler's* 2022 Readers' Choice Awards since 2011. To explore all that Charleston has to offer, please visit: <https://www.charleston.com/>

To Apply

Jack Gorman is leading this search with Nicole Poe and Ryan Cheung. For more information, to submit a nomination, or to apply for this role, please visit:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/spoleto-festival-usa/chief-advancement-officer>

Spoleto Festival USA is an equal opportunity employer and committed to diversity in hiring. Equity is central to its culture, mission, and identity as an arts organization. Spoleto Festival USA does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership, parental status, military status, or any other non-merit factor.

ADDENDUM: LEADERSHIP

Mena Mark Hanna

General Director & CEO

Mena Mark Hanna is the General Director & CEO of Spoleto Festival USA, where he oversees all aspects of the 17-day performing arts festival. Previously, Hanna served as the Founding Dean and Professor of Musicology and Composition at the Barenboim-Said Akademie. As Dean, Hanna oversaw the strategic and operational management of the Akademie's artistic and academic initiatives in coordination with Daniel Barenboim, including implementing a comprehensive music and humanities curriculum; artistic planning and curation of Akademie concerts, festivals, and events; and building a world-class teaching facility.

Prior to his role in Berlin, Hanna was the Assistant Artistic Director and Dramaturg at Houston Grand Opera, where he served on senior management as the main artistic planning partner with Artistic and Music Director Patrick Summers; supervised the department of new opera commissions; researched and developed new opera productions; and led all main-stage educational initiatives.

Hanna received a Bachelor of Music in Music Composition from the Boyer College of Music and Dance at Temple University and was the recipient of Temple University's inaugural Honors Distinguished Alumni Award. He earned a master's degree in musicology and a D.Phil. in Music Composition and Critical Writing as an Oxford University Marshall Scholar. He was appointed Spoleto Festival USA's General Director & CEO in 2022.

Board of Directors

Spoleto Festival USA's Board of Directors consists of 41 members and is chaired by **Alicia Mullen Gregory**. A national board, nearly one-third of Spoleto's trustees reside full-time in the local community; one-third reside part-time in the region; and one-third reside in other parts of the country but are longtime and dedicated attendees of the Festival. For a full list of current Spoleto trustees, please visit: <https://spoletousa.org/about/board-of-directors/>