



**Dean and Chief Artistic Officer
New England Conservatory
Boston, MA**

THE SEARCH

The [New England Conservatory of Music](#) (“the Conservatory” or “NEC”), an international leader among schools of music, seeks an inaugural Dean and Chief Artistic Officer (CArO) to join its leadership team and guide the college’s artistic affairs. This person will be an innovative and collaborative leader, ensuring the delivery of high-quality programs that foster artistic and educational excellence, and driving innovation in teaching and learning towards student success and professional preparation. As the institution’s chief artistic officer, this person will oversee essential functions connected to artistic affairs across classical, jazz, and contemporary musical arts, including artistic programming, artistic administration, relevant faculty, admissions, and student and residential life, and production and venue management.

Reporting to the president, the CArO will partner closely with executive leadership, other senior administrators, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees to advance NEC’s educational mission, goals, and strategic priorities. The CArO will work in close partnership with the Dean and Chief Academic Officer (CAO) to create and develop innovative and integrative curricula that support artistic growth, connect disciplines, develop an entrepreneurial skillset, encourage community engagement, and promote student success and retention.

The CArO will supervise a team of six direct reports in this work, including the Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid; the Dean of Students and Campus Life; the Director of Artistic Programming and Administration; the Director of Large Ensemble Administration; the Executive Director of Production and Event Services and the Administrative Director of Piano Services.

NEC has retained the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEAN AND CHIEF ARTISTIC OFFICER

Provide strategic leadership to advance NEC's artistic affairs

The CArO will lead efforts that advance NEC's artistic profile, including developing and implementing policies and initiatives that enhance educational programs, artistic programming, and strategic partnerships. As NEC implements a revised undergraduate curriculum that integrates theory and application through practice-based learning, the CArO will continue to find innovative ways to connect performance with academics, all with the goal of preparing students for their lives and careers.

Recruit and develop a world-class faculty

The CArO will partner closely with the Chief Academic Officer to recruit, hire, develop, and retain a faculty of quality and integrity, with a particular focus on recruiting excellent performance and composition faculty. The CArO will cultivate relationships with talented prospective faculty and will be sensitive to changing employment needs. More broadly, the CArO will build connections and create opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation in all faculty work.

Oversee enrollment and student success efforts

In partnership with the Chief Academic Officer, the CArO holds responsibility for fostering collaboration across the student affairs, academic affairs, and enrollment management teams to enhance student success efforts and strengthen persistence and graduation rates. The CArO will oversee college admissions, and serve as a thought partner to the admissions team in developing NEC's enrollment strategies, attuned to admissions trends across the field. The CArO will ensure the student affairs team remains responsive to the evolving needs of students. The CArO will lead with a broad institutional perspective, finding opportunities to intentionally align these efforts with those of the academic affairs team and other relevant units on campus to strengthen student success.

Enhance revenue and ensure financial sustainability

The CArO will oversee many of the revenue-generating functions at the Conservatory, including admissions, residence halls, dining services, and venue rentals. The CArO will partner across the institution to lead these functions in a way that promotes academic and artistic excellence, encourages innovation, enhances revenue generation, and ensures the financial health of the Conservatory.

Develop external partnerships and collaborations

NEC benefits from its Boston location and its relationships with artistic juggernauts such as the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Lyric Opera. In partnership with the Chief Academic Officer and institutional leadership, the CArO will explore and develop additional innovative opportunities for meaningful collaborations and engagements with external partners, strategically align faculty expertise with these external partnerships, and grow them into distinctive learning opportunities for students.

Employ data-informed decision-making

The CARO will embrace data and systems, ensuring that such information informs decision-making processes, track enrollment and retention, scholarships, revenue, and areas for improvement or growth. On the academic side, the CARO will partner with the Chief Academic Officer to monitor key performance indicators related to educational quality and assess educational needs and performance. In this work, the CARO will be data-informed but humanistic, ensuring that decisions are made not only to benefit the overall Conservatory, but also the people who comprise it.

Manage crisis and mitigate risk

As a senior leader, the CARO plays a critical collaborative role in campus contingency planning and crisis management. This person will collaborate with executive leadership and the crisis and emergency management teams to develop and implement contingency plans and protocols related to institutional emergencies, disruptions, and risks. The CARO will share responsibility with the Dean and Chief Academic Officer for the continuity of academic and artistic operations and will support the well-being of students, faculty, and staff during moments of crisis.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

In its CARO, NEC seeks a creative, forward-thinking, and adaptable leader with high artistic sensibilities across genres. This person will have the capacity to serve as a bold thought partner to institutional leadership and will bring an innovative approach to education, as well as relevant administrative and management experience. In addition to a passion for music, the successful candidate will possess familiarity with educating high-level college-aged musicians. While no one candidate is likely to possess all the desired qualifications, the ideal candidate will bring many of the following experiences, characteristics, and abilities:

- A profound understanding of musical excellence; personal commitments to supporting the role of music in society and to the education and training of the next generation of musicians and arts leaders;
- A deep respect for the community and culture of NEC; an appreciation for the spirit of partnership among faculty, students, and staff, and the ability to harness this collaborative spirit to drive toward new opportunities and goals;
- A demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Administrative, operational, and interpersonal intelligence and capabilities; a record of success managing people and teams, partnering effectively with faculty, and building support for and leading groups through change initiatives;
- The proven ability to communicate effectively with different constituencies;
- Experience with teaching, including developing and/or redesigning educational programming and curricula; a demonstrated commitment to fostering students' growth, either in an arts organization or otherwise;
- A track record of innovation and strategic risk-taking, creative problem-solving, and impeccable judgment; experience building programs, moving from idea to action, and generating buy-in for entrepreneurial efforts;
- Emotional intelligence, including warmth, approachability, and empathy.

ABOUT NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY

Founded in 1867, NEC is the oldest independent school of music in the U.S. and a cultural icon of national and international standing. It is recognized as a leader among music schools, educating and training musicians of all ages from around the world. At all levels, an NEC education is at once rigorous and nurturing. Staff, faculty, and students alike attest to the power of the distinctively inclusive, encouraging, and supportive community one discovers upon arriving on campus.

Mission Statement and Core Values

New England Conservatory educates and trains musicians of all ages from around the world, drawing on the talent and deep reservoir of experience of our distinguished faculty. We are dedicated to inculcating the highest standards of excellence and nurturing individual artistic sensibility and creative growth. Understanding that music is one of the transcendent expressions of human civilization, NEC aspires to ensure it has a central place in contemporary society.

We believe that the study of music builds human capacity, elevates the soul, and prepares our students for lives that enhance the public good.

We believe our students must have a supportive and collegial learning environment that maximizes the individual attention they receive from their teachers, and allows them to explore and develop their unique artistic personalities.

We believe in the critical importance of mutual support among faculty that encourages the highest standards of excellence and accommodates innovation, individual teaching philosophies, and a broad range of disciplines. We believe that we have a responsibility to reinforce and expand the position of music in society by educating the next generation of music leaders, incubating new work, and sharing our sublime art with the widest possible audience.

The College

Today, NEC enrolls more than 700 undergraduate and graduate students across a [variety of majors](#), 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.

NEC's faculty is best-in-class across a wide array of musical disciplines. The College is home to 237 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. NEC also boasts eleven current or former faculty and/or alumni who are MacArthur Fellows. Students are drawn to NEC, first and foremost, because of the caliber of NEC's faculty members and for the opportunity to study with artists who are masters of their craft. The faculty's commitment to excellence and to student achievement is the foundational through-line for NEC's esteemed legacy.

In addition to its core musical training and studio work, NEC places significant emphasis on liberal arts, music history, and music theory, which it believes contribute importantly to the development of well-rounded musicians and arts leaders. As part of its core mission to produce well-rounded musicians, active life-long learners, and responsible citizens, the College has long supported and encouraged cross-departmental collaborations, as reflected in the recent Collaboration Challenge, which resulted in new interdisciplinary approaches to coursework. Unsurprisingly, chamber music and small ensembles are at the heart of NEC's approach to musical artistry. Most NEC students participate in chamber music/small ensembles nearly every semester, learning the art of collaboration and collective musical decision-making alongside incredible faculty coaches.

NEC has long been a pioneer in musical education beyond the classical canon. It maintains the highest standard of music-making, with deliberately permeable lines between genres, and supports a confluence of different types of musical study and performance. The formal jazz program was founded in 1969 under the leadership of President Gunther Schuller, making NEC the first major classical conservatory to offer a degree program in jazz studies. The Contemporary Improvisation program, founded by Schuller shortly thereafter, supports musicians who seek to move beyond traditional genre boundaries with an emphasis on ear training, technique, conceptual ideas, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a wide range of improvisational traditions. As a meaningful complement to these interdisciplinary musical programs, NEC is also home to leading-edge work in Entrepreneurial Musicianship. This program offers a range of courses, seminars, and visiting artist programs that help emerging artists articulate the impact they want to make as musicians and build the professional skills to do so.

The Preparatory School

The [NEC Preparatory School](#) (NEC Prep) offers open-enrollment educational opportunities for pre-college students across New England. It currently serves over 1400 students in the region, including those enrolled in NEC through a partnership with Walnut Hill School for the Arts. Prep student musicians attend individual lessons and classes, and participate in chamber music and 20 large ensembles, including orchestras, choirs, 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 once every two years and has performed in some of the finest concert halls in the world. Prep is also home to the highly celebrated and selective Youth Chorale, Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble, and Youth Jazz Orchestra.

TO APPLY

NEC has retained the national executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be submitted electronically and in confidence to the Isaacson, Miller team below:

Katie Rockman, Partner | Keith Mason, Managing Associate

Diana Carmona, Senior Associate | Maria Connor, Managing Search Coordinator

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

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.