

Position Opportunity

Managing Director Sarasota Opera Sarasota, Florida

Sarasota Opera welcomes applications and nominations for the newly defined position of Managing Director, available in the summer of 2026. The Managing Director will serve as the organization's senior administrative leader and key partner to General & Artistic Director Richard Russell. The Managing Director will provide financial, operational, and organizational leadership for an artistically ambitious opera company entering a period of significant capital activity and institutional growth.

Sarasota Opera **(www.sarasotaopera.org)**

Founded in 1959, Sarasota Opera is a nationally respected professional company recognized for artistic excellence, fiscal responsibility, and deep community engagement. Located in Sarasota, Florida, a vibrant cultural destination on the Gulf Coast, the Company presents a robust annual season of opera productions alongside education and community programs that advance opera as a vital and accessible art form.

Sarasota Opera has earned particular distinction for its commitment to the operatic canon, innovative programming, and high production values, which, in turn, attract leading artists and creative teams from across the country. The Company performs in the historic Sarasota Opera House, a 1,119-seat venue that has been hailed as "one of America's finest" by *Musical America*. The Sarasota Opera today is a nationally respected professional opera company and a leading U.S. destination for international opera audiences. The Company just marked the Centennial of the Sarasota Opera House and concluded its 67th season with a robust Winter Opera Festival.

With an \$11 million annual operating budget, a \$16 million endowment, and an active \$50 million capital campaign dedicated to facilities renovations and long-term sustainability, Sarasota Opera is entering a significant period of institutional growth. The Company is governed by an engaged Board of Trustees and led through a General & Artistic Director model that emphasizes close partnership between artistic vision and sound financial stewardship. A year-round staff of 30 expands to 200 during the peak winter season.

The Position

The Managing Director is Sarasota Opera's senior administrative leader, a key partner to the General & Artistic Director, and a member of the Company's executive team. This newly defined role provides financial, operational, and organizational leadership for a mid-sized, artistically ambitious opera company as it navigates a period of significant capital activity and institutional growth.

The Managing Director provides oversight and direction to finance, human resources, facilities, and administrative operations. The Managing Director supports stewardship of the organization's endowment; provides financial leadership for a major capital campaign; and collaborates closely with artistic, production, and facilities leadership on upcoming renovations. The Managing Director supervises the finance department, including the Staff Accountant and the Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable staff, who also serves as Payroll Manager.

The Managing Director leads the strategic and day-to-day oversight of all organizational finances, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and strict compliance with nonprofit accounting standards and industry best practices. The Managing Director directs the annual budgeting process in collaboration with department leaders and the General & Artistic Director to deliver a balanced budget aligned with organizational priorities for Board approval. Serving as the primary staff liaison to the organization's investment advisor, the Managing Director manages the financial health of an endowment valued at approximately \$16 million.

The Managing Director leads the financial planning, budgeting, and monitoring for the organization's \$50 million capital campaign. The Managing Director provides clear financial reporting for campaign activity, including sophisticated cash-flow planning and restricted fund tracking, and providing regular dashboards and updates for executive leadership and the Board.

As the primary staff liaison to the Board of Trustees, the Managing Director provides expert guidance on financial, administrative, and operational matters. The Managing Director works in close partnership with the General & Artistic Director to implement Board-approved policies, strategic initiatives, and long-range organizational plans.

The Managing Director serves as the organization's primary human resources contact, overseeing payroll, benefits administration, and personnel policies. They ensure the company remains in full compliance with all applicable employment laws and regulations while actively supporting a professional, collaborative workplace culture that advances both artistic excellence and organizational effectiveness.

The Managing Director supervises the facilities department and oversees the maintenance, planning, and long-term stewardship of all physical assets. As liaison with an outsourced IT firm, the Managing Director ensures the optimal utilization of available technological resources. The Managing Director manages key vendor relationships and oversees organizational risk management. The Managing Director partners with the Director of Production and Director of Facilities on upcoming renovations.

The Managing Director works collaboratively with all department heads to align financial resources with operational and artistic needs and ensures the continuity of operations. This allows administrative functions to maintain resilience during the peak opera season and throughout major facility projects.

This is a full-time, on-site position that requires evening and weekend attendance at Sarasota Opera performances and events, especially during the opera season.

Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will be a leader who is passionate about opera, committed to non-profit service, and excited to contribute to a collaborative organization at a pivotal moment in its evolution. The successful candidate will be a seasoned financial manager with seven to ten years' senior level experience with a non-profit performing arts organization, preferably with an annual operating budget of \$10 million or more.

The ideal candidate will be thoroughly familiar with non-profit fund accounting and will have substantial experience overseeing organizational finance, including multi-year budgeting, forecasting, cashflow management, financial reporting, audits, and internal controls. The candidate will bring the demonstrated ability to provide strategic financial and operational leadership within an artistically driven, mission-centered organization. Familiarity working in a union environment with multiple collective bargaining

agreements is highly desirable. Experience managing facilities renovations while maintaining ongoing performance operations is a plus.

The successful candidate will be thoroughly knowledgeable about institutional planning and helping to shape, implement, and monitor strategic plans. The candidate will have a thorough working knowledge of the technology available to support finance and operations. The successful candidate will also bring experience in human resources and benefits administration.

The successful candidate will be a strong communicator and collaborator with experience serving as a senior staff liaison to a Board of Trustees and staffing the Board's finance, audit, and investment committees. The candidate will have experience working with endowment and investment advisors. Preferred qualifications include an advanced degree such as an MBA or MPA and/or a professional credential such as a CPA or CMA.

The successful candidate will be able to accept a work schedule that includes performances and events on nights and weekends during production periods. The candidate will welcome the opportunity to be an active participant in the Sarasota arts community and to represent Sarasota Opera with the area business community.

Compensation

Sarasota Opera offers a competitive compensation and benefits package. The annual salary range for this position is \$160,000 to \$180,000, plus a benefits package that includes paid time off; health insurance; life insurance; and a voluntary 403(b) retirement plan.

Applications

Sarasota Opera welcomes recommendations, nominations, and applications from all qualified candidates regardless of race, religion, political affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, or marital status, or any other basis protected by law. Candidates must be legally authorized to work in the United States.

Please submit a resumé along with a cover letter that describes your specific interest in the mission and work of Sarasota Opera and your qualifications for the position as described in the candidate profile. On a separate sheet, provide the names and contact information for several professional references. All applications will be treated as confidential and references will not be contacted without the applicant's knowledge and agreement.

Electronic submissions are requested. Please send to:

Managing Director – Sarasota Opera
c/o Catherine French Group
applications@catherinefrenchgroup.com

(Adobe Acrobat PDF attachments only, please)