

JOB OPPORTUNITY

**Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra
The Region of Waterloo, ON
Executive Director**

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra (KWS) invites applications and referrals for the position of Executive Director.

The Position of Executive Director:

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director (ED) is charged with developing an effective fiscally responsible operating model for the KWS, and being a driving force in the revitalization of our organization through innovation.

The Executive Director is our first full-time hire since the bankruptcy was annulled in October 2024. The ED will have the support of an engaged Board of Directors and an experienced Artistic Advisor. While there will be contracted part-time staff support in the areas of bookkeeping, administration, marketing and production, the Board will be looking to the ED to develop an appropriate staffing model for the organization. The ED will be responsible for general operations and management, leadership and strategy, fundraising, development and financial management, marketing and public relations, community engagement and outreach.

The KWS seeks an industry professional with an entrepreneurial mindset who thrives on execution to help us achieve sustainable revenue, help us continue re-establish ourselves within our community, and offer unique experiences to our patrons. Our 2025-26 budget is approximately \$1.3 million.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra:

Following its formation in 1945 as a community orchestra, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony grew into one of Canada's outstanding orchestras. Under Raffi Armenian's leadership (1971-1993) the KWS evolved into a fully paid professional orchestra with a core of 52 musicians. Raffi Armenian also played a key role in developing the City of Kitchener's Centre in the Square, a venue with a 2,000-seat acoustically superior hall that became the principal performance venue for the KWS when it opened in 1980.

On September 21, 2023 the KWS board of directors, not seeing a way through the 2023-2024 season, filed for bankruptcy. The musicians were adamant that this would not be the end of the Symphony. Working with the KW Symphony Foundation (a separately incorporated entity) the musicians embarked on a plan to have the bankruptcy annulled. Their GoFundMe campaign which raised close to \$500,000 allowed the musicians to put on concerts, pay legal fees, and provide the players with some financial assistance.

On June 6, 2024, at a meeting of members of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra Association, a new board of directors was elected and in October 2024 the bankruptcy was annulled, leaving the KWS debt and deficit free. Meanwhile the music never stopped as musicians produced - and sold out - a series of monthly concerts for the 2024-25 season. These concerts were held at St. Matthews Lutheran Church, a beautiful venue that allowed the 52-piece orchestra to perform for audiences of close to 500 patrons. At the same time the board initiated, with the support of the musicians, a visioning exercise to reimagine the orchestra of the future. Among other things, it will need to be flexible, innovative, and sustainable.

The Region of Waterloo:

The Waterloo Region has a population of approximately 675,000 people (as of 2023). It is located on the Haldimand Tract, consists of the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, and the townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich. It is home to Canada's fastest-growing technology sector, located approximately one hour west of the cities of Toronto and Hamilton. The Waterloo Region offers a unique blend of modern, energetic urban centres and scenic, rural landscapes, and is easily accessible by road, rail and air.

The Region is home to the renowned higher education institutions, the University of Waterloo, and Wilfrid Laurier University. Outdoor enthusiasts will enjoy access to the Grand and Speed Rivers. The Region is known for its think tanks and innovation centres, such as the Perimeter Institute, Communitech, and is home to the headquarters of some of Canada's largest insurance and finance companies, such as Sun Life Financial and Manulife Financial.

With a vibrant and diverse cultural make-up, The Region supports numerous festivals and events year-round including Oktoberfest, The Kitchener Blues Festival, and the Multi-Cultural Festival. Numerous concert and event venues in the Region include the Centre in The Square, Maxwell's Concerts and Events, Walters Music Venue, The Kitchener Memorial Auditorium, and more!

Qualifications:

The ideal candidate will have previous senior administrative experience in leading performing arts organizations with budgets of \$1 to 5 million. Training in business management or equivalent managerial experience or training in cultural administration is desirable. Familiarity with symphonic music and orchestral operations is a plus.

The Executive Director will have excellent financial and organizational skills, with demonstrated leadership in fund-raising, public relations, marketing, human resource management, educational programming and community engagement. Other necessary characteristics would include political savvy and diplomacy, good oral and written communication skills.

The KWS has a pivotal role in the cultural, educational and economic enrichment of Waterloo Region; the Executive Director must be able to establish and maintain effective working relationships with elected officials, the Board of Directors, the media, artists, artist managers, other arts groups, sponsors, educational institutions, volunteers, and the audience.

Other Information and Application Process:

Salary range: \$80,000 to \$100,000, plus benefits and help in relocation.

Preference will be given to qualified Canadian applicants. It is expected the successful candidate will reside in Waterloo Region.

Interested candidates are invited to submit a letter of interest, resume, and list of references by Monday, June 30, 2025 in confidence to:

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