



Los Angeles Children's Chorus (www.lachildrenchorus.org) **invites applications from collaborative and dedicated leaders** interested in providing strategic leadership **as the Chorus's next Executive Director.**

WHO ARE WE?

Recognized as one of the world's preeminent youth choruses, Los Angeles Children's Chorus (LACC) is dedicated to empowering and changing lives through the collaborative experience of choral music performance. Its programs ignite a love of singing while distinctively nurturing the full expression of each youth's potential for artistic and personal excellence. Its high quality ensemble training encompasses [musicianship](#) classes, extensive performance opportunities, and individual coaching, while holistically attending to the personal development of each whole child within a supportive, enriching community. The Chorus follows the Kodály philosophy, developed by 20th century musician Zoltan Kodály which emphasizes music education through singing and sequential learning to foster musical literacy and appreciation. The most important and transcendental activity for a society is the education of its children. For Kodály, singing was the essence of his concept. As he said: "Singing is as necessary to human beings as walking or eating. Only the best is good enough for a child." ([Read more here](#))

Parents have described choristers' experience in the Chorus, offering:

"LACC has been an integral part of my child's education for most of his life...because of LACC, he will carry with him a love of music and learning for the rest of his life."

"If it weren't for LACC, my chorister's life would be markedly different. The impact of the cohesive teaching, the variety of professional experiences, and the learning environment is unparalleled. I am forever grateful to LACC, a truly world class children's choir."

Founded in 1986, the Chorus is now led by its visionary and dynamic Artistic Director, Fernando Malvar-Ruiz. An internationally celebrated choral conductor, clinician, educator, and expert in the adolescent voice, Malvar-Ruiz has dedicated his life's work to amplifying children's and youth voices through choral music. In his leadership, Malvar-Ruiz centers the highest quality musical training and a joyful approach to making art. As he describes, *"I do not believe you have to suffer to create beautiful art. We infuse joy and kindness in every class, rehearsal and performance and actively cultivate a supportive, enriching community where each chorister can excel musically, personally, and as a citizen."*

The Chorus annually appears in more than 50 public performances, including in its own self-produced concerts and in collaborations with leading organizations such as LA Opera, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and Pasadena Symphony and POPS. It currently serves over 400 young people annually ages 6–18 from 40+ communities across Southern California that represent richly diverse racial, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Its [current programs](#) include seven choirs, a First Experiences in Singing class, a First Experiences in Choral Singing ensemble, and annual training..

Los Angeles Children's Chorus performances have been described as "hauntingly beautiful" (by the Los Angeles Times), "the best children's chorus I have ever heard" (by Esa-Pekka Salonen, international conductor and former Music Director of Los Angeles Philharmonic), and "one of the true artistic gems of Los Angeles" (Gustavo Dudamel). The Chorus has been featured in numerous recordings, films, and live features including LA Philharmonic's 2021 album, *Mahler Symphony No. 8*, for which it received the 2022 GRAMMY Award for Best Choral Performance and alumna Billie Eilish's 2021 cinematic concert experience *Happier Than Ever: A Love Letter To Los Angeles* on Disney+, [among many others](#). It received Chorus America's Margaret Hillis Award for

Choral Excellence in 2014 and frequently serves as a cultural ambassador on its annual tour, which has included 20+ countries on 6 continents.

What's Next?

Los Angeles Children's Chorus is at a strategic inflection point in its organizational trajectory. Throughout 2022 & 2023, participation has achieved record levels and demand for its high quality, in-person youth programming continues to grow. Malvar-Ruiz and the Board of Directors have been envisioning the Chorus's impactful future, which will include a likely geographic expansion of programming; a focus on philanthropic growth and diversification; stabilization and growth of internal capacity; and a comprehensive strategic planning effort.

At the forefront of Malvar-Ruiz's artistic vision is a Chorus that reflects all of Los Angeles. The organization has begun to conceive and advance programming and partnerships that will share the Chorus's comprehensive approach with youth throughout Los Angeles's distinct neighbors. The Chorus is in active conversations with its first such partnership, which it plans to announce in early 2024. Malvar-Ruiz and the Board of Directors have also begun prospecting and cultivating opportunities for expanded industry, educational, and community partnerships; philanthropic support; and regional and national performances.

Supporting this vision, the Board of Directors has recently invested in a professionally facilitated strategic planning process which will begin upon the Executive Director's hire.

The Chorus has a \$2 million operating budget and has ended the past three consecutive years with a meaningful operating surplus. With Malvar-Ruiz beginning his sixth season, the organization is in a strong artistic and financial position to assertively advance the organization's expanded influence and impact.

At this important juncture, the Chorus invites interest from collaborative executive leaders who are passionate about furthering this award-winning institution as its next Executive Director. The incoming Executive Director will have the opportunity to play a pivotal role in supporting Malvar-Ruiz in prospecting, structuring, stewarding, and evaluating programmatic partnership opportunities that will expand the Chorus's impact, as well as professional performance and touring opportunities in the U.S. and abroad. The incoming Executive Director will also have the opportunity to advance the strategic direction of the organization as a key member of the Strategic Planning Committee composed of board members, staff leaders, and key stakeholders.

What we are looking for in this position

The Executive Director will be a confident, grounded and collaborative leader who will serve as a strategic partner to Artistic Director Fernando Malvar-Ruiz. They will ensure the Chorus maintains its place at the forefront of the Los Angeles arts ecosystem and national choral music field through aspirational, incremental and right-sized growth.

At their core, they will be a relationship builder, long-term planner, and management strategist, able to operationalize the Artistic Director's vision and produce the resources, organizational structures, and institutional visibility necessary to achieve it. They will bring the ability to develop engaging marketing and fundraising strategies that celebrate and amplify the Chorus's distinct contribution and generate diversified portfolios of earned and contributed revenue.

The Executive Director will have strong administrative acumen and demonstrated experience which will enable them to efficiently lead day-to-day organizational operations while prioritizing efforts on the organization's long-term strategy development and advancement. They will bring the ability to ably lead all aspects of administrative operations, encompassing program administration, revenue management, marketing and external relations, financial management and human resources.

If not already Los Angeles-based, they will bring an enthusiasm to relocate and plant roots in the Los Angeles music community.

Lastly, they will exude an affinity for youth choral music education and performance, and be able to share this enthusiasm with stakeholders, funders, partners, families, and the local community. They will be an effective storyteller able to articulate a compelling case for support for the Chorus's approach, programs, experiences, choristers, and impact.

Who you will be working with

The Executive Director and Artistic Director each report directly to the Board of Directors and work in close partnership with one another, in service of the Artistic Director's vision.

The Executive Director's direct reports include a Director of Development, Marketing and Communications Manager, and Office Manager. External contractors support the company in the areas of grant writing, accounting, graphic design, legal services, and auditing.

The Artistic Team reports to the Artistic Director and includes four Conductors (Associate Artistic Director, who conducts the Intermediate and Preparatory Choirs; Young Men's Ensemble Director; Apprentice Choir Director & Assistant Young Men's Ensemble Conductor; and Preparatory Choir Director), four Music Educators (Director of Music Literacy & Curriculum, First Experiences in Choral Singing Director, and two First Experiences in Singing Directors); a cohort of pianists, musicianship teachers, and vocal coaches; and a Chorus management team, which works closely with Executive function.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Leadership:** In partnership with the Board of Directors and Artistic Director, provide strong organizational leadership to set the overall strategic and operational direction for LACC. Collaborate with the Artistic Director to bring the artistic vision to fruition and champion LACC's music education and performance programs. Advance LACC's culture of kindness, transparency, and collaboration with clear and thoughtful communication throughout the organization. Play a leading role in long-range strategic planning and ongoing strategy development.
- **Relationship Building & Stewardship:** Develop strong relationships with stakeholders across the organization, including Board, artistic & administrative staff, donors, families, and volunteers. Broaden and deepen relationships with current and future artistic and community partners including the LA Opera, LA Philharmonic, Pasadena Symphony and POPS, and Pasadena Presbyterian Church (LACC's home).
- **Program Administration:** Oversee the planning and execution of audition, registration, tuition, and financial aid processes, with support from the office manager and the chorus management team. Negotiate and execute performance agreements for contracted bookings and venue agreements for self-produced concerts. In collaboration with the chorus management team and outside tour management company, lead logistical planning for LACC's annual local, regional, national, and international touring activities.
- **Financial Management:** Serve as the organization's chief financial officer, leveraging efficient and modern financial instruments to monitor and report on financial performance including: leading the annual budgeting process for Board approval; providing timely and meaningful financial reports to the Board; monitoring cash flow and liquidity; developing, implementing, and monitoring policies and procedures that ensure fiscal responsibility; and developing long-term financial plans. Oversee accountant's effort (currently an external contractor), including preparation of monthly financial statements, bi-weekly payrolls, weekly A/P, and annual audit materials.

- **Board of Directors:** Keep members of the Board informed and excited about the work of the organization, maximizing their participation in the life of the organization and their contribution toward its success and growth. Work closely with the Board on governance matters, including policy development and new member recruitment. Support the Board as it fulfills other key responsibilities including budget approval, resource stewardship, strategic planning, public advocacy, and revenue generation. Facilitate and attend Board and Committee meetings.
- **Fundraising:** Supervise, support, and guide the Director of Development and Grant Writer in the creation of annual and multi-year fundraising strategies to achieve short-term and long-term contributed revenue goals. Develop and maintain high-level relationships with key individual, foundation, corporate, and government funders. Partner with the Development Committee of the Board in these efforts.
- **Visibility, Marketing, and External Relations:** Supervise, support, and guide the Marketing and Communications Manager in the development of annual programmatic and institutional marketing strategies that grow enrollment; maximize earned program and ticket sales revenues; promote LACC's brand; and advance LACC's position at the forefront of the youth choral music field. Ensure these activities reflect LACC's commitment to excellence, values, and culture. Serve as one of the principal spokespersons of the organization, attending LACC performances and participating in community, civic, and social events.
- **Human Resources:** Oversee the hiring and onboarding processes for all new employees and contractors, in coordination with the Artistic Director. Organize and manage the administrative team to produce engaged, efficient, and productive operations. Stay abreast of developments in human resources management and ensure policy and operational compliance with local, state, and federal labor laws. Guide LACC's operational and strategic approach to public health safety concerns. (The Chorus is currently managing its emergence from COVID-19).

Required Qualifications

- 7+ years of progressively responsible management experience in the nonprofit sector, preferably for a performing arts and/or music education organization.
- Personable, diplomatic and grounded demeanor along with exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to speak persuasively about LACC's mission and work.
- Demonstrated success in the areas of fundraising, external relations, operations and financial management.
- Excellent sense of judgment, tact, and diplomacy.
- Adept computer and technology skills, including fluency with MS Office, experience with SaaS software, and customer relationship management databases (LACC uses Patron Manager).
- Passion for the performing arts, particularly choral music and music education.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience.
- Currently reside within the Los Angeles area or willing to relocate (stipend available).

Preferred Qualifications

- Knowledge of the Los Angeles arts ecosystem, choral music community, and philanthropic landscape.
- A keen understanding of the unique operating environment of a youth music organization.
- Knowledge of trends and best practices in the performing arts and nonprofit management.
- Master's degree or equivalent experience in management, the performing arts, or a related field.

Employment and Compensation

- Hiring range is \$120,000-\$150,000, dependent on experience.
- Compensation package includes 100% employer-sponsored health, dental, and vision insurance, paid time off for vacation, holidays, and illness, and the option to participate in the CalSavers retirement savings program.
- Start Date: Negotiable, Approximately late Fall 2023.
- This is a full-time, exempt position based at LACC's office in Pasadena. LACC's administrative staff currently works a hybrid in-office/from-home schedule. Regular business hours are Monday to Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and some weekend and evening hours throughout the year will be required for performances, meetings, and other events.
- LACC requires that all employees be fully vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19.

How to Apply

This search is being facilitated by Syrah Gunning, Director, Executive Development and Brett Egan, President of the DeVos Institute of Arts Management, a leading provider of arts management services, training and thought leadership for arts, cultural, and educational sectors worldwide. Learn more [here](#).

To apply, please upload your resume and answer the following brief short answer questions [ONLINE HERE](#):

- Why are you interested in this position at this point in your career? What interests you most about LACC's mission, programs and trajectory?
- Please briefly describe your experience fundraising and working with boards.
- Please briefly describe your experience developing partnerships.
- Please briefly describe your experience and interest in youth programming.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and will continue to be accepted until the position is filled. For priority consideration, please apply by mid-September.

If you have questions or require accommodation of any kind throughout the process, please email segunning@devosinstitute.net.



SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS – Los Angeles Children's Chorus Executive Director Opportunity

Los Angeles Children's Chorus Programs include:

- [LACC Ensembles](#):
 - [Preparatory Choir](#) – Introductory choir for young singers.
 - [Apprentice Choir](#) – Serves young singers with some prior musical experience.
 - [Intermediate Choir](#) – Serves choristers with more advanced musical abilities who audition directly into the ensemble, along with choristers who have been promoted from Apprentice Choir. Also performs in select public performances with the Concert Choir below.
 - [Concert Choir](#) – LACC's largest and most advanced performing ensemble which frequently performs with leading local arts organizations, including the LA Opera, LA Philharmonic, Pasadena Symphony and POPS, and Los Angeles Master Chorale, among others.
 - [Chamber Singers](#) – Performing ensemble for more musically accomplished and technically sophisticated young women.
 - [Young Men's Ensemble](#) – Serves male choristers at their vocal transition, providing a forum where they can ensure healthy development of their maturing voice in a supportive, educational and encouraging environment.
 - [Chorale](#) – Mixed-voice ensemble for technically proficient and accomplished singers.
- [First Experiences in Singing](#) – Exposes young singers ages 6-7 to core melodic and rhythmic musical exploration through high-quality folk song, using the bel canto vocal technique.
- [First Experiences in Choral Singing](#) – Helps children develop their skills in preparation for Preparatory Choir.
- [LACC Tours](#) – Each year, LACC serves as a cultural ambassador for Los Angeles on tours that take choristers across the country and around the world.

Select Performances, Recordings and Live Features

The Chorus performs frequently with leading music ensembles including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, Los Angeles Master Chorale, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Calder Quartet, Pasadena Symphony, and MUSE/IQUE. The Chorus assists LA Opera and the LA Philharmonic by training and providing children for its productions that require children's chorus or child soloists. The Chorus has performed in many recordings, films, and live features including:

- LA Philharmonic's 2021 album, *Mahler Symphony No. 8*, for which it received the 2022 GRAMMY Award for Best Choral Performance;
- Alumna Billie Eilish's 2021 cinematic concert experience *Happier Than Ever: A Love Letter To Los Angeles* on Disney+;
- John Williams' 2017 recording, *John Williams & Steven Spielberg: The Ultimate Collection*;
- Los Angeles Master Chorale's critically acclaimed 2010 Decca recording of Nico Muhly, *A Good Understanding*; and on *Amore Infinito* ("Infinite Love");
- The 2009 Deutsche Grammophon CD of songs based on poems by the late Pope John Paul II;
- *Keepers of the Night* (2007), a world premiere performance by composer Peter Ash and librettist Donald Sturrock commissioned and presented by LACC;
- Four documentaries by Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Freida Mock, including the 2001 Academy Award®-nominated *Sing!*, which is about a year in the life of the LACC;
- John Mayer's performance on NBC's "The Tonight Show"; and

- Features on PBS's "Great Performances," BBC Radio, and PRI's nationally-syndicated show "From the Top".

Musicianship

The Chorus's comprehensive musicianship program addresses all learning styles and levels of experience through: a sequential music literacy curriculum based on the Kodály concept; a rehearsal schedule in which choristers master a challenging, multi-lingual repertoire of fine choral music in the bel canto style; a solid education in music theory; and individual vocal coaching. Developed in Hungary during the mid-20th century by Zoltán Kodály, the concept is:

- a philosophy of education and a concept of teaching, and
- a comprehensive program to train basic musical skills and teach the reading and writing of music, and
- an integration of many of the best ideas, techniques, and approaches to music education, and
- an experience-based approach to teaching.

Musicianship teachers use aural, visual, and kinesthetic techniques to teach choristers in each ensemble, from Preparatory Choir through the mixed-voice Chorale. Music theory is taught in conjunction with weekly or biweekly rehearsals, during which academic concepts learned in musicianship class are reinforced through singing. Conversely, music being studied by each ensemble is taken to theory classes where it is used to reinforce sight-singing skills and theory lessons.

The goal of LACC's Musicianship Program is to provide choristers with the tools they need to:

- Read music fluently;
- Appreciate music and describe what they hear using a musical vocabulary;
- Become better singers and musicians; and
- Understand and interpret music from many eras and cultures.

For more information on the Kodály Concept, please visit the [website](#) of the Organization of American Kodály Educators.

Artistic Director Biography

Fernando Malvar-Ruiz – GRAMMY Award-winning conductor Fernando Malvar-Ruiz is serving his fifth season as Artistic Director of Los Angeles Children's Chorus, having commenced his tenure on August 1, 2018. Mr. Malvar-Ruiz is an internationally regarded choral conductor, clinician, and educator, who has worked with children's and youth choirs his entire career. From 2004 to 2017, he was the Artistic Director of The American Boychoir, leading the ensemble in over 150 performances and up to five national and international tours annually. He has prepared choirs for appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, LA Opera, San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic and London Symphony Orchestra, among others. He has worked with such conductors as Gustavo Dudamel, Marin Alsop, Pierre Boulez, Yannik Nézet-Seguin, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Valery Gergiev, as well as artists ranging from cellist Yo-Yo Ma, trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, pop legends Billie Eilish, Beyoncé Knowles, Sir Paul McCartney, Josh Groban, and opera singers Kathleen Battle and Jessye Norman. He conducted The American Boychoir on six recordings, led its performances on the Academy Awards and a 9/11 Memorial Service broadcast globally on CNN. Mr. Malvar-Ruiz was the music director for the film *Hear My Song* (Boychoir), starring Dustin Hoffman, Kathy Bates, Debra Winger, and Josh Lucas.

Mr. Malvar-Ruiz previously served as The American Boychoir's Associate Music Director from 2000-2004 under James Litton. An expert in the adolescent voice, he has guest conducted children's and youth choirs around the globe. He has a master's degree in choral conducting from Ohio State University and completed the coursework toward a doctoral degree in choral music from the University of Illinois.

Board of Directors

[Read more about the LACC's Board of Directors here.](#)