

Development Director

Job opportunity

Job Title:	Development Director
Contract type:	Permanent employment
Hours:	Minimum of 3 days per week, but flexible on both number of days and hours worked. Some evenings required.
Salary:	c. £60,000 (pro rata)
Start date:	Ideally February 2026
Place of work:	National Opera Studio, 2 Chapel Yard, London SW18 4HZ, with the possibility of some hybrid working
Reporting to:	Executive Director

About the National Opera Studio

National Opera Studio (NOS) is independent yet works in partnership with the UK's leading opera companies, including English National Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera North, the Royal Ballet and Opera, Scottish Opera, and Welsh National Opera. Its Young Artists spend nine transformative months immersed in a rigorous programme individually designed around their unique vocal and developmental needs. They emerge equipped with the artistry, unwavering confidence, and vital contacts to not just survive, but thrive, in a lifetime dedicated to the art of opera.

Analysis of alums and regular contact with partner opera companies and industry professionals shows that the time Young Artists spend at the Studio often makes the single biggest difference to their future prospects as top-level solo artists. Numerous NOS-trained singers, such as Gerald Finley CBE, Alfie Boe OBE, Nicky Spence OBE, David Butt Philip, Susan Bullock CBE, Lesley Garrett CBE, Jean Rigby, Alice Coote and Joan Rodgers CBE, have ascended to build highly successful careers on the international stage. Repetiteurs are international Festival Directors, Conductors, Artistic Directors, and are on the music and artistic staff of major companies in the UK and abroad.

But the National Opera Studio's dedication extends beyond its core programme; NOS also passionately supports emerging talent. It provides short courses and other opportunities for emerging singers, repetiteurs, conductors, directors, and stage managers. Working hand-in-hand with local schools, it identifies and nurtures young talent, while simultaneously offering its Young Artists the invaluable and rewarding learning opportunities that come from working with children and young people. Furthermore, NOS enriches the cultural landscape by presenting public performances for the benefit of audiences in London and around the UK.

About the role

As our Head of Philanthropy retires, we are seeking a highly motivated, relationship-focused person to drive income generation and stakeholder engagement in support of the National Opera Studio's mission to provide free, world-class training. With support from the team, this role will lead the establishment of new long-term partnerships, cultivate meaningful connections with existing donors and supporters, and contribute to the organisation's strategic direction as a member of the senior leadership. You'll be joining at a time of strength: NOS is in a solid financial position, backed by a committed core of donors and a passionate, high-performing team. providing the ideal platform for a new Development Director to make a lasting impact.

Key Responsibilities**Strategic Leadership**

- Serve as a key spokesperson for NOS, advocating for its mission and values across diverse stakeholder groups
- Develop and implement a comprehensive Fundraising Plan aligned with NOS's vision and values
- Actively contribute to future planning and organisational development
- Oversee public-facing communications, especially with key stakeholders and during high-profile moments
- Collaborate with the team to ensure development objectives are woven into every aspect of NOS
- To attend board meetings alongside the Executive and Artistic Directors

Fundraising and Income Generation

- Lead on cultivating and stewarding relationships with individual donors, corporates, and Trusts and Foundations
- Design and deliver targeted fundraising campaigns including Patron schemes, legacy giving, alumni engagement, and new initiatives in collaboration with the Marketing team
- Oversee the planning and execution of fundraising events, ensuring high-quality donor experiences
- Represent NOS at external events and cultivate new donor relationships
- Represent NOS at residencies and similar NOS-related events regionally, including overnight stays where necessary.

Donor Engagement and Stewardship

- Introduce a new network of contacts and supporters to introduce to NOS
- Build and maintain strong relationships with current and prospective supporters
- Harness the networks and influence of the Ambassadors Group (constituted of key donors and trustees) to expand NOS's reach and deepen supporter engagement

- Coordinate donor visits, communications, and acknowledgements, involving senior leadership and Young Artists where appropriate
- Ensure accurate tracking of donor benefits and engagement
- Collaborate with the Marketing and Digital team to produce fundraising materials and donor communications
- Develop engaging content for supporter newsletters, website, and social media

Trusts and Foundations

- Develop our trusts and foundations strategy, ensuring the right work is funded by the right grants and appropriately tracked
- Research and prepare compelling grant applications and proposals
- Carry out effective reporting to trusts and foundations as required

Corporate Giving

- Create a new Corporate Giving strategy and build partnerships with the business sector
- Identify and cultivate corporate partnerships that align with NOS's values

Systems and Reporting

- Maintain donor databases, fundraising calendars, and reconciliation systems
- Use the CRM (Beacon) and other relevant data to support donor segmentation and analytics
- Provide quarterly reports to the Board and regular updates to the Ambassadors Group
- Ensure all fundraising activities comply with relevant legal, ethical, and regulatory standards

Young Artist Support

- Work with the Artistic team to match donors with Young Artists and support their individual fundraising efforts
- Ensure Young Artists are informed and engaged in donor stewardship activities
- Together with the Head of Artistic Planning, meet incoming Young Artists to discuss their individual financial needs whilst at the Studio
- Work with and support the Young Artists in their own fundraising goals

Person Specification

- Passion for opera and the mission of NOS
- Proven experience within the fields of fundraising, development, and philanthropy, ideally within the arts or cultural sector
- Excellent relationship-building and communication skills
- Strategic thinker with a collaborative approach to leadership
- Strong organisational and project management abilities

- Comfortable and confident in public speaking and engaging with the public

How to apply

Please send a covering letter, CV and details of two referees to Nick Simpson, Executive Director, by email: nicholas.simpson@nationaloperastudio.org.uk

Please also complete an Equal Opportunities monitoring form - <https://forms.office.com/e/LTnbsrvX04>

Deadline: 09:00 on Monday 17 November 2025