



Position: Arts Administration & Community Engagement Fellow

Organization: Southern Tier Symphony

Location: Hybrid (Remote / Olean, NY & Bradford, PA)

Timeline: September – November 2026

Organization Mission & Overview

The Southern Tier Symphony is a regional professional orchestra dedicated to enriching the cultural fabric of Western New York and Northern Pennsylvania by delivering exceptional, accessible orchestral experiences that inspire our musicians, captivate our audiences, and unite our community through the power of live music. Featuring a talented roster of professional and semi-professional musicians—drawing skilled players from the local region and as far away as Toronto and Florida—the symphony is deeply rooted in community accessibility. We foster a lifelong love and appreciation for music through an active commitment to free student admission. By blending musical excellence with collaborative, innovative performances, the Southern Tier Symphony removes economic barriers to the arts, unifies a diverse bi-state region, and ensures that world-class classical music remains a vibrant, shared, and meaningful experience for families, students, and music lovers across the Southern Tier.

Role Summary & Core Projects

The Fellow will play a pivotal role in advancing the Southern Tier Symphony's community footprint on a lean operating budget by leading three core initiatives: revitalizing the Toys for Tots program, managing the "Sponsor a Musician" individual giving program, and building the strategic framework for Educational Outreach Concerts. Operating within a lean fiscal environment, the Fellow will learn the vital art of maximizing limited resources to inspire the arts in historically underserved communities.

- **Toys for Tots Program:** The Fellow will handle collection logistics, manage grassroots promotional outreach, and serve as the primary liaison with local coordinators, gaining essential experience in cause-marketing and cross-sector collaboration.
- **"Sponsor a Musician" Program:** The Fellow will directly steward critical funding by pairing donors with orchestra chairs and tracking pledges, allowing them to master budget-conscious donor relations, database management, and grassroots fundraising pipelines.
- **Educational Outreach Program:** The Fellow will research regional school curriculums and structure low-overhead logistical blueprints for student engagement, acquiring vital skills in creative problem-solving, strategic planning, and community-driven program design.

Estimated Timeline (September – November 2026)

- **September (Orientation & Groundwork):** Complete onboarding with the Executive Director, audit legacy donor and partner data, initiate regional school curriculum research, and collaborate with the Music Director on educational themes.

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- **October (Implementation & Concert Launch):** Attend the season-opening concert cycle to be introduced to the orchestra and community. Launch the on-site "Sponsor a Musician" campaign and Toys for Tots collection drive, and draft the preliminary educational blueprints.
- **November (Integration & Wrap-Up):** Finalize donor tracking, conclude the holiday toy drive coordination, deliver the completed Educational Outreach framework, and participate in an exit reflection and professional evaluation.

Ideal Candidate Profile

A successful Fellow will:

- Possess an entrepreneurial spirit and creative problem-solving skills, thriving in a lean non-profit environment where maximizing a small budget to inspire underserved communities is a welcomed and exciting challenge.
- Demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills, allowing them to comfortably engage with a diverse range of stakeholders, from local school administrators and Toys for Tots coordinators to symphony donors and professional musicians.
- Be a highly organized self-starter capable of balancing multiple moving parts—from managing donor databases and event logistics to researching regional school curriculums—with a passion for bringing the transformative power of orchestral music to rural populations.

Mentorship & Professional Support

The Fellow will work directly under the daily mentorship of the Executive Director, Aidan Carney, with occasional collaboration alongside the Music Director, Benjamin Grow, offering a comprehensive view of both the administrative and artistic sides of orchestral management. Through regular one-on-one guidance, the Executive Director will coach the Fellow on navigating small-budget arts management, maximizing limited resources, and mastering donor stewardship. Additionally, the Executive Director will introduce the Fellow to local community leaders, school administrators, and non-profit partners to provide firsthand experience in building regional coalitions. To bridge the gap between creative vision and logistics, the Fellow will occasionally collaborate with the Music Director to align educational outreach frameworks with the orchestra's repertoire. Crucially, the Executive Director prioritizes Fellow wellbeing; while leading arts initiatives in rural areas presents unique challenges, the Executive Director ensures a highly supportive workspace where the Fellow is never expected to over-exert themselves.

Position Structure & Accessibility Considerations

To prioritize Fellow wellbeing and ensure equity of access, this position is structured as a flexible hybrid role with much of the work completed remotely. While the Fellow is expected to attend orchestra rehearsals and concert cycles in September, October, and November 2026 to manage on-site programming and engage with the community, reliable personal transportation is not a barrier to entry. If the selected Fellow lacks a personal vehicle, the symphony will gladly arrange necessary transportation for all required in-person events. Ultimately, while leading arts initiatives in rural, underserved areas presents unique challenges, the workload is carefully balanced to support a healthy workspace that prevents burnout.