

Position Announcement

Director: Opera Europa

THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OPERA COMPANIES AND FESTIVALS IN EUROPE

The Board of Directors of Opera Europa is inviting applications from individuals interested in seeking the Director position. Opera Europa is the leading service organisation for professional opera companies and opera festivals throughout Europe. It currently serves over 215 members from 43 countries. For more information about the organisation and its programmes please consult: www.opera-europa.org.

After 20 years of extraordinary leadership and service, Opera Europa Director Nicholas Payne is relinquishing his position to the next generation's leader. The Director serves as the Association's Executive Director, community ambassador, leading European opera fan and network leader.

In partnership with the Board, the Director will be responsible for developing and implementing the Association's strategic plan, and building and maintaining relationships with the membership, other industry organisations and the European Union. As the chief administrator, the Director will oversee and/or delegate: operational planning, the association's financial management (including the drafting and monitoring of a multi-year operational plan and budget to fulfil the strategic plan), staff management and all day-to-day operations. As a respected industry leader, the Director will inspire and motivate a dedicated team and devoted membership, galvanizing the membership's energy and resources in the development of solutions to current and future industry challenges.

The Membership Network: Solutions to the Opera Industry's Challenges

The network facilitated by Opera Europa is valued as the industry collective to meet the industry's challenges and issues in service to its members. The Director is charged with the development and administration of membership programmes and services leading to the identification, analysis and development of solutions to the current and future challenges facing the industry.

The Director, with the support of the Opera Europa team, must act as a colleague to members, accompanying them through their challenges.

Issues confronting the membership include but are not limited to:

- **Audience:** Developing new audiences, both young and reflective of the diverse communities served.
- **Facilities:** Reimagining the facility infrastructure needed as historic and new facilities are developed to meet the needs of future presentations and audiences.
- **Communications:** Developing new ways to communicate with current and future audiences and the community through new digital media, while preserving methods preferred by existing audiences.
- **Sustainability:** Maintaining the fiscal stability of member companies is a continual challenge given the need to develop new performance programs in spite of constrained revenues and continually rising production and operating costs.
- **Human Resources:** Attracting diverse and highly skilled human resources while recognising the increasing cost of living in the major urban centres and the competition for highly skilled professionals with expertise in new technologies.
- **Freedom of Artistic Expression:** Meeting the challenge member companies experience with repertoire and interpretation.
- **Relevance and Values:** Ensuring the future of opera's relevance and value to the communities that it serves.
- **Education and Community Programmes:** Developing the programs to inspire future audiences and build a desire to attend mainstage productions.

Position and Responsibilities

Association Director

The Director is an association manager who leads an effective, efficient and financially responsible membership organisation. The Director is responsible to manage a process that continually assesses the membership's needs, ensuring that the services and programmes Opera Europa administers meet those needs and offers good value.

Summary of Responsibilities

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Director's primary responsibility is to work with the Board to fulfil the mission of the association and to work with the Board and Staff in creating, implementing and monitoring a new strategic plan to achieve tactical and long-term objectives for the membership. To this end the Director leads and works in close collaboration with the General Manager, the principal operational manager reporting to the Director.

Currently, The General Manager is the one direct report to the Director. Reporting to the General Manager are 4 full-time staff and 2 contracted workers. It is expected that the Director will evaluate the current organisation and develop a reporting structure that will facilitate the optimum operating organisation. The operating budget of 600.000€ funds the membership programmes, services and administrative overhead of the association. The bulk of operating revenues comes from the membership's fees. OperaVision runs on an additional budget co-funded by the member partners and the European Union's Creative Europe programme.

The Director will liaise with government, the industry, industry supporters and community groups.

The Director of Opera Europa oversees the following:

Organisational Management

- Oversee the effective management of the association and ensure its long-term viability and growth.
- Work collaboratively with the General Manager to ensure the programmes and services are effective and efficiently managed while ensuring the organisation's financial stability.
- Ensure delivery of quality programme activity, attending to exceptional experience for all members.
- Hire, retain and nurture staff with the aim of fostering professionalism, diversity, equity, and inclusion and support ongoing efforts to make necessary and important progress.

Executive Strategy and Board Leadership

- Initiate an ongoing Strategic Planning Process in partnership with the Board of Directors to develop the association's strategic priorities. Develop programmes and membership services to implement the approved strategies. Set and achieve goals for the measurement of success. Annually assess and review association programmes, membership services and tactics.
- Work closely with the Board to meet the membership's needs and build a stronger and engaged membership.

Financial Leadership

- Actively identify and cultivate revenue sources needed to finance programmes and services, including fundraising and European funding opportunities.
- Develop organisational budgets and lead all operational planning with key staff and Board Committees.
- Meet financial goals through membership fees and other potential income and expense management.
- Maintain high standards of financial management and reporting.

External Relations and Community Engagement

- Foster the relationships built with sister organisations Opera America and Ópera Latinoamérica, with partner organisations FEDORA, IAMA, OMAI, and with lobby organisations Culture Action Europe and Pearle
- Develop opportunities for collaboration and partnerships, positioning Opera Europa as a cooperative leader within the Opera Industry
- Represent Opera Europa as an engaging and inspirational public spokesperson, leader of the membership and face of the industry.

Qualified candidates should possess the following qualifications, skills, and traits:

- Is an accomplished leader with extensive knowledge and experience in the Opera Industry, with an understanding of the various national opera landscapes.
- A genuine passion for opera, ballet, orchestra, and a thorough knowledge of the core repertoire.
- A comfortable networker who has formed strong, lasting relationships with various industry players.
- A desire further to build an association which is indispensable to the membership that it serves.
- Has strong management, business, and financial acumen and knowledge of artistic matters.
- Has worked effectively with a Board of directors.
- Has the ability to foster open, transparent dialogue across the organisation and membership.
- Is an excellent public speaker and presenter who can effectively represent Opera Europa to a variety of audiences and stakeholders, able to express themselves in at least 2 languages.
- Willing to travel extensively on behalf of the organisation.
- Values innovation and forward-thinking.
- A demonstrable track record of integrity, candour, and reliability.

Required experience

The ideal candidate will have the combined education and professional experience to have established a successful track record in the Opera industry with executive-level responsibilities.

Compensation and start date

Opera Europa offers competitive compensation commensurate with organisations of a similar size and scope of activities. Opera Europa is set up as a Belgian international non-profit organisation (aisbl). The director may choose to work from Belgium, or with a freelance status, from a European country of their choice.

The organisation hopes to make a hiring decision no later than October 2022, with the selected candidate assuming the role by spring 2023.

Any offer of employment will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of a background check and reference conversations.

How to apply before 15 July

Opera Europa has engaged **Genovese Vanderhoof** & Associates to facilitate this search, with Dory Vanderhoof as the consultant leading the process. GV&A Partner Rosalind Bell is assisting with the search.

If interested in this position, please contact gvarosalind@gmail.com to receive further information about Opera Europa's programmes and budgets.

Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following items for consideration:

- A current résumé
- Cover letter / essay, stating the candidate's motivations for seeking the position, substantiation of qualification to lead and a preliminary assessment of Opera Europa and the strategic direction it should be following in the future.
- Three professional references

Each file should have the applicant's name included as part of the file name.

Once all materials have been submitted online, the applicant will receive a confirmation of their submission via the email address provided in the application. To apply for this position, send an email with the relevant attachments to gvarosalind@gmail.com.

Genovese Vanderhoof web address: www.genovesevanderhoof.com.