



Associate Director of Development

About Virginia Arts Festival:

The Virginia Arts Festival celebrates its 29th season in 2026. The largest and most prestigious performing arts presenter in southeastern Virginia, Virginia Arts Festival has transformed the region's cultural scene, presenting great performers from around the world and making this historic region a cultural destination for visitors from across the United States and around the world. Over the past 29 years, the Festival has welcomed visitors from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 25 foreign countries. The Festival has presented more than 1,500 performances, free community events, student matinees and workshops, with a reach of over 1.2 million attendees. Each season, millions more are reached through international broadcasts of Festival performances on American Public Radio's Performance Today, nationally on PBS TV, and regionally on WHRO TV. Over 32% of ticket sales come from outside the region, bringing tens of thousands of visitors to local museums and attractions and filling regional hotels and restaurants. The estimated annual economic impact of the Festival exceeds \$25 million.

Arts education is central to the mission of the Virginia Arts Festival. Since its creation in 1997, the Festival has reached more than half a million students, providing opportunities for students and educators that simply would not otherwise exist. Each year, the Festival reaches over 30,000 young people through student matinees, in-school performances, workshops, masterclasses, and the Rhythm Project world percussion program, offering life-changing opportunities.

Position Summary:

The Virginia Arts Festival is seeking an experienced development professional to drive our development efforts, with a specific focus on individual gift solicitation, donor stewardship, and donor cultivation. The Associate Director of Development works as a key member of the development team under the direction of the General Manager and Executive Director. The Development department is the primary source, other than ticket sales, for raising funds for the Virginia Arts Festival. The fundraising program consists of an ongoing Capital/Endowment Campaign and four areas from which the Development team solicits annual operating funds, including:

- Individual Donors
- Corporate Sponsorships
- Private Foundations (Grants)
- Government Support (City and State Agencies – funding generally achieved through grants).



The Associate Director of Development is the primary staff person managing the overall portfolio of individual donors and cultivating relationships with individual donors,

particularly major-gift and mid-level donors. S/he will manage a staff of three people, oversee fundraising toward the Annual Fund, participate in capital/endowment campaign activities, and be an important team member during the Festival season. The Associate Director of Development must maintain a very high level of thoroughness, accuracy, consistency, patience, and attention to detail. The successful candidate must be a forward thinking, experienced fundraising professional who can be highly collaborative with the executive leadership team and board members.

Principal Responsibilities:

- Develop and manage a personal portfolio of medium to high-level donors and prospects focused on building deep donor relationships with assigned individuals and organizations.
- Oversee portfolio management of all individual donors, serving as a key support to the Executive Director and General Manager's highest-level donor portfolios.
- Oversee portfolios of Annual Fund Manager and Development Operations Manager focused on lower to medium level donors.
- Team leader of Annual Fund Manager, Development Operations Manager, and Special Events Coordinator focused on leading with supportive enthusiasm.
- Work closely with General Manager and Executive Director to ensure proper cultivation and stewardship activities across VAF's donor and prospect portfolios.
- In conjunction with the General Manager, create and implement a comprehensive annual development plan to steward and solicit current donors, while working to increase giving level and cultivate new donors.
- Function as a major and planned gifts officer by ensuring that the external cultivation and stewardship of donors is adequate to meet or exceed the goals set forth in the annual plan, including proactive management of the Executive Director's and General Manager's prospect meetings and solicitations.
- Responsible for assisting with the execution of a campaign effort, working in close conjunction with campaign counsel, General Manager, Executive Director, and volunteers.



- Oversee all special events and receptions through the Festival managed by the Special Events Coordinator. Be an active participant at receptions throughout Festival and support Special Events Coordinator as required. May include invitation management of high-profile events.
- Oversee and effectively manage areas including (but not limited to) annual fund, planned giving, campaign fundraising, volunteer management, gift processing, donor database management, special events, and marketing efforts tied to fundraising activities, as appropriate.
- Other duties as assigned.

Work Schedule

Virginia Arts Festival hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. A typical work schedule will frequently extend beyond the traditional office hours to include evening and weekend activities – particularly in the period immediately before and during the annual Festival period (March – June).

Qualifications:

- At least 3-5 years of experience in development, including personally soliciting funds and motivating others to solicit funds.
- Successful experience in working with volunteers, boards and committees.
- Possess a basic knowledge of database software and be proficient in Microsoft Office programs.
- Ability to communicate and present effectively both verbally and in writing.
- Must have the ability to manage multiple projects with strong attention to detail.
- Must possess strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work with the entire organization to achieve goals.
- Must be able to have flexible working hours, including evenings and weekends, particularly in the time period immediately prior to and during the annual Festival.

Salary: \$90,000 - \$110,000 based on experience and qualifications. This is a full-time position with benefits.

Please send a cover letter, resume, and three references to azedd@vafest.org. No phone calls, please. Recruitment will continue until the position is filled.