



# Executive Director Job Description

**Location:** Greater Memphis, TN

**Status:** Full-time, salaried exempt

**Salary:** Starting at \$85,000

**Reports to:** Board of Directors

## About Iris Collective

### Mission

Iris Collective creates connection and transformation through music and partnership across Greater Memphis.

### Vision

A Memphis where music unites people, strengthens communities, and inspires a more compassionate future.

Iris Collective is a Memphis-based arts organization that brings musicians, community partners, and audiences together through programs designed around three interconnected pillars: Music as Mentorship, Music as Medicine, and Music as Meaning.

Across these areas, Iris works in partnership with schools, healthcare settings, community organizations, artists, and others throughout Greater Memphis to develop programs that respond to the needs and opportunities of the communities we serve. Organizations that Iris Collective has partnered with include Alpha Omega Veterans Services, Memphis Oral School for the Deaf, Memphis Shelby County Schools and Thistle and Bee, among others.

Our approach is as important as the programs themselves. Iris believes in artistic excellence, meaningful collaboration, shared leadership, and equitable and inclusive practice. Rather than creating programs in isolation, we engage artists, partners, and communities in dialogue about what we create together. We value work that crosses artistic and societal boundaries and reflects the breadth and vitality of Greater Memphis.

Iris Collective was formed in 2022 by staff and rostered musicians of the former Iris Orchestra (2006-2022).

<https://iriscollective.org/>

## Position Summary

Iris Collective is seeking an experienced, collaborative Executive Director to lead the organization into its next chapter.

The Executive Director will serve as Iris Collective's chief organizational leader, fundraiser, and community ambassador. Working in partnership with the Board of Directors, staff, artists, community partners, advisors, and donors, the Executive Director will provide the leadership and resources necessary for Iris Collective's work across all programming to thrive.

A central priority of the position is relationship-based fundraising and network building throughout Greater Memphis. The Executive Director will cultivate and steward relationships with individual donors, foundations, corporations, civic and community leaders, and other supporters; strengthen Iris Collective's existing network; and develop new relationships that advance both the organization's mission and its long-term financial sustainability.

The Executive Director will provide strategic, financial, and organizational leadership for Iris Collective, overseeing its human and financial resources and working closely with the Board to establish organizational direction. Iris is built around collaboration and shared leadership, so we are looking for someone who can lead decisively while also listening well, respecting the expertise of others, inviting dialogue, and creating a culture of trust, openness, accountability, and shared ownership.

## Key Responsibilities

- **Lead fundraising and external relationship development**, cultivating and stewarding individual donors, foundations, corporations, sponsors, government funders, civic leaders, and other supporters while identifying new opportunities for contributed revenue.
- **Serve as a visible ambassador and network-builder for Iris Collective**, strengthening relationships across Greater Memphis's philanthropic, business, civic, education, healthcare, arts, and community sectors.
- **Develop and implement long-term strategic plans**, balancing artistic and community vision with operational needs, and positioning the organization for continued growth.
- **Provide collaborative organizational leadership**, working closely with the Board, staff, artists, consultants, and partners to establish priorities, support strong teams, encourage shared ownership, and translate Iris Collective's mission into action.
- **Oversee organizational operations, finances, and strategy**, including budgeting, financial reporting, staffing, policies, contracts, compliance, and long-term planning.
- **Support mission-aligned programs and partnerships**, ensuring that Iris Collective's work remains artistically strong, responsive to community partners, financially sustainable, and consistent with the organization's commitment to inclusive and equitable practice.
- **Partner effectively with the Board of Directors**, providing timely information, supporting committee work, contributing to strategic planning, and engaging Board members in fundraising, advocacy, and organizational stewardship.

## Reporting Relationships

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors. The Executive Director will lead a team that includes the Programming Manager, Iris Artist Fellows, and part-time Administrative Assistant. The Executive Director will also work in collaboration with four clearly defined part-time consulting roles that bring specialized expertise.

## Qualifications

We are especially interested in candidates who bring:

- Significant leadership experience in arts administration, nonprofit management, cultural organizations, philanthropy, community engagement, or a related field.
- Demonstrated success in fundraising and donor cultivation, including relationship development with individuals, foundations, corporations, sponsors, and other funding partners.
- A strong record of building networks and partnerships that have contributed to organizational growth, philanthropic support, or community impact.
- Experience leading people, budgets, strategy, and organizational operations at a senior or executive level.
- Strong financial judgment and experience developing and overseeing organizational budgets.
- Excellent interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills and the ability to build trust with people from a wide range of backgrounds and sectors.
- A leadership style grounded in collaboration, listening, transparency, shared responsibility, and respect for the expertise of others.
- Passion for the arts, with an understanding or appreciation of instrumental music.
- Experience with board governance and nonprofit best practices.

- A commitment to artistic excellence, inclusive and equitable practice, community partnership, and Iris Collective's mission.

### **Preferred Qualifications**

- Leadership experience in the arts and cultural sector.
- Knowledge of the Greater Memphis philanthropic, nonprofit, business, civic, or arts landscape.
- Existing relationships in Greater Memphis or demonstrated success entering a community and quickly developing strong local networks.
- Experience with major gifts, sponsorships, foundation funding, grants, annual giving, or other diversified fundraising strategies.
- Experience working in partnership with a nonprofit Board of Directors.
- Understanding of the unique demands of the arts work culture.

## **Compensation and Benefits**

**Salary:** Starting at \$85,000 annually based on experience

Iris Collective's full-time employee benefits package includes paid vacation, paid holidays, sick leave, approved professional development support, and group health insurance benefits, with 100% of the employee's health insurance premium currently paid by Iris Collective.

## **Work Schedule and Location**

This position is based in Greater Memphis and requires an active presence in the community. The Executive Director should expect a combination of office-based work, donor and partner meetings, community events, performances, programs, and other activities throughout the region. Some evening and weekend work is expected.

## **Equal Opportunity Statement**

Iris Collective is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applicants from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Iris Collective does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other protected status under applicable law. Reasonable accommodations are available during the application process and employment.

## **How to Apply**

Interested candidates should complete the online application at:

**[iriscollective.org/jobs](https://iriscollective.org/jobs)**

Applicants will be asked to submit a résumé, a cover letter, and responses to a brief set of application questions.

**Priority consideration:** October 15, 2026 Applications will continue to be reviewed until the position is filled.