



Assistant Conductor / South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra Music Director

The South Dakota Symphony Orchestra Assistant Conductor/ SDSYO Music Director is a conductor, educator, and an artist who is passionate about orchestral music and enjoys working with both professional musicians and students. The Music Director of the South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra (SDSYO) is responsible for ensuring high quality musical experiences for young musicians. The SDSYO Music Director will support and further the SDSYO mission through the development of strategic and educational initiatives, creation of dynamic recruitment and retention practices, building of lasting relationships throughout the community, and encouragement of young musicians to reach their potential. The Assistant Conductor of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra (SDSO) is integral to the organization's artistic, educational, promotional, and audience and patron development initiatives. The Assistant Conductor will cover all SDSO programs, conduct designated pops and runout performances, and play a key role in the organization's educational and pops programming. Individuals who demonstrate efficiency, flexibility, creativity, effective communication skills, and a commitment to classical, pops, and education orchestral performances and events will be successful in this position. This position reports to the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra Music Director and Executive Director.

South Dakota Symphony Orchestra Assistant Conductor Responsibilities:

- Program and conduct designated SDSO pops concerts, Young People's Concerts, Concert for Kids & Families, and the "Christmas on the Prairie" runout to Hoven (with chorus).
- Serve as cover conductor for all SDSO concerts (currently 7 classical programs) and runouts. This includes personal preparation of scores and providing feedback during/after rehearsals related to artistic matters. Conduct off-stage ensembles as needed. Attend all SDSO concerts.
- Assist with auditions, recordings, artistic research, and other duties as needed.
- Serve as score reader for livestreaming, call video cues, or run supertitles as needed.
- Appear at and participate in promotional, educational, audience development, and donor development events, including 7@7 prior to classical concerts and other speaking engagements.
- Work closely with the SDSO Music Director and Executive Director on relevant season programming and guest artist selection.

South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra Music Director Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement a dynamic, long-range artistic and education vision for the entire SDSYO program in collaboration with the SDSO Music Director, Executive Director, and SDSYO manager.
- Develop programming and conduct all rehearsals, performances, and activities of the Youth Orchestra (advanced full orchestra). Option to conduct Sinfonia (beginning string orchestra) and Prelude Strings (introductory string orchestra).
- Hear auditions for all SDSYO ensembles and work with Philharmonia conductor and SDSYO Manager to place students in ensembles.
- Participate in activities of the Philharmonia orchestra (intermediate full orchestra) as needed.
- In coordination with the SDSYO manager, create and implement a strategic recruiting plan for all levels of the SDSYO program.
- Play a visible and active role in the community at large: develop the overall public image of the SDSYO, serve as the primary face and voice of the SDSYO, and assist with fundraising efforts.
- Serve as primary liaison with public and private schools and community music educators to develop a collaborative working relationship.
- Supervise all SDSYO conductors and coaches.
- Maintain effective communication with SDSYO musicians, parents, coaches, and staff.

Candidate Qualifications & Characteristics

- Candidate must have the unrestricted right to work in the United States of America.
- Meaningful orchestral conducting experience in an academic or professional setting, extensive knowledge of symphonic repertoire, and experience with the concert production cycle. Comprehensive knowledge of music theory and a broad range of musical styles.
- An energetic, engaging, warm personality with the ability to inspire youth to reach their full potential.
- Ability to convey excitement about classical music and music education with audiences of all ages and levels of knowledge.
- A proactive self-starter who is resourceful, flexible, and comfortable embracing change.
- A results and team-oriented work style characterized by an imaginative approach to problem solving and the ability to handle creative as well as administrative tasks.
- Able to develop programming ideas in consideration of goals, audience, and budget.
- Excellent communication skills both verbally and in writing. Exceptional interpersonal skills in support of fostering relationships with professional musicians, staff, and students.
- Bachelor's degree in music or music education.

Compensation

\$34,000 - 36,000/annually

The SDSYO Music Director/SDSO Assistant Conductor is a part-time employee. Health insurance and other employee benefits are not included in this position.

This position begins July 1, 2026.

South Dakota Symphony Orchestra's community engagement work is intentional about building cultural bridges through music, and we encourage people from all backgrounds to be a part of the work we do.

Application Procedure

February 18, 2026:

Application Deadline.

March 27, 2026:

Notification to candidates who are invited to Sioux Falls for a live audition

Sunday, April 26 – Monday, April 27:

Live audition and interviews. Selected candidates must be available to travel to Sioux Falls on these dates to be considered. Candidates selected for the live audition will conduct the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra in a rehearsal of Bartok / Concerto for Orchestra (movements 1 and 4) and a rehearsal with the South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra (repertoire is TBA).

Candidates are required to submit the following:

- Application
- A cover letter that outlines your interest in and specific qualifications for the position.
- Resume
- Conducting videos. The conducting videos must show a minimum of two styles of music and diverse conducting abilities. Ideally, the video is captured from the orchestra's perspective. If a single conducting video includes multiple works, please send a document with time stamps indicating the beginning of each work.
- Maximum 3-minute speaking video as if you are giving an educational introduction of a piece of music to an audience. You may select any orchestral work.

Questions: sdsymphony@sdsymphony.org. No calls, please.

About the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra

The South Dakota Symphony Orchestra (SDSO), based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, is the state's premier performing arts organization with the Washington Pavilion as its home. The SDSO curates a diverse collection of orchestral offerings each season through classical and pops concerts, as well as chamber music, appealing to audiences from the very experienced to first-timers. To reach as many people as possible, orchestra concerts are livestreamed free of charge, and a robust digital library includes virtual recitals, music education videos, and podcasts. Music Director Delta David Gier leads the artistic vision of the SDSO, a collaboration that has garnered national recognition.

The SDSO is nationally recognized as a prime example for how an orchestra engages with its community. The 76-member orchestra includes nine full-time musicians who make up the Dakota String Quartet and the Dakota Wind Quintet. These two ensembles perform over 100 times annually in schools, hospitals, senior living communities, behavioral health, and community centers throughout the region.

The SDSO presents a variety of education and engagement programs including the South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra, Young People's Concerts, the Music Composition Academies, and music enrichment opportunities in the classroom and for children with special needs.

The SDSO's award-winning Lakota Music Project is a model of cultural understanding and is the flagship community engagement program of the SDSO. With the Lakota Music Project as a foundation, the SDSO has fostered additional programs to embrace classical music as a medium for shared understanding. The SDSO strives to embody the values of equity, belonging, diversity, and inclusion, and to empower its many constituents to contribute to and foster its growth.

The **South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra** program is designed to enhance the musical abilities of youth in a group setting that also builds leadership skills, promotes discipline, and develops educated listeners and future arts supporters. Now in its 17th season, the SDSYO is comprised of four separate ensembles: Prelude Strings, Sinfonia, Philharmonia, and Youth Orchestra. Each orchestra performs three concerts each season, and members of the Youth Orchestra participate in a side-by-side performance with the SDSO annually. The SDSYO is a significant educational program under the umbrella of the SDSO.