

## CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

JOB DESCRIPTION

July 2024

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### BACKGROUND & HISTORY OF THE PLAYHOUSE

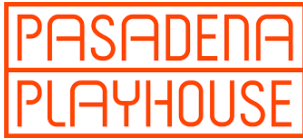
One of the oldest and most prestigious theaters in the country, Pasadena Playhouse has been at the vanguard of theater for more than a century.

Founded in 1917 by theater impresario Gilmor Brown, the Playhouse was built by and for the community, beginning with Brown's unprecedented innovation at the time to build the campus with funds raised from more than 1,000 local citizens. Less than a decade after inception, Brown launched the pioneering School for Theater Arts, a training ground for actors and theatermakers that came to be known as the 'Julliard of the West' and included notable alumni such as Gene Hackman, Dustin Hoffman and Sally Struthers. These community innovations have always been part of the Playhouse's DNA and, if this current generation of the Playhouse team can execute its long-term strategic plan, will be part of the Playhouse for its next century.

In 2016 Danny Feldman became the theater's Producing Artistic Director and within seven years (and a pandemic) turned the Playhouse into [the best theater in Los Angeles](#) and earned it the 2023 Regional Theater Tony Award. During that time, he has served as both artistic director and managing director (another innovation in the performing arts), and was recently named by the LA Times as [one of L.A.'s 101 most influential people and "the man who saved L.A. theater."](#)

Under Danny Feldman's leadership, Pasadena Playhouse continues to thrive and build on its legacy, which includes premiering works from Tennessee Williams to Eugene O'Neil, showcasing playwrights like Suzan Lori Parks and Martyna Majok, and more recently producing large-scale, Broadway-caliber musicals (Ragtime, Stephen Sondheim, Jelly's Last Jam) in its intimate, historically landmarked home.

While always keeping an eye on its history, the Playhouse is now a modern, innovative performing arts organization, and by focusing on the creation of great productions, the expansion of educational and outreach programs, the development of new plays, and the creation of innovative programs, the Playhouse will continue to be at the forefront of regional theater for its next 100 years.



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#### **MISSION & VALUES**

Pasadena Playhouse makes theater for everyone. As the official State Theater of California, the Playhouse's mission is to enrich people's lives through theater, programs and events in order to reflect its local and state-wide communities. With the productions and programs centered on its founding idea of being a living force in the community, the Playhouse understands the gravity of its responsibility to represent California's diverse population and their stories, and programs each season with this at the forefront of its decision making.

The Playhouse's core values include innovation, connecting people, playfulness and the reach for the extraordinary.

#### **THE OPPORTUNITY**

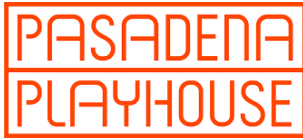
This is an exciting opportunity during an incredibly high potential period for the theater.

Pasadena Playhouse is now a nationally renowned, \$12M organization with a budget that has grown almost 50% since 2021. It is one of the few theaters in the country that has exceeded pre-pandemic audience and fundraising numbers and, despite the industry-wide turbulence in the nonprofit performing arts, is ambitiously while carefully planning for an acceleration of growth over the next few years. From a ticketing standpoint, the theater had many of its top performing productions ever during the 2023-24 season. The 2024-25 season's membership campaign is also off to its best start in years. And development has grown: the team has expanded from two and a half to seven staff with a significant increase in contributed revenue budgeted for next season.

The Playhouse building is celebrating its centennial over the next two seasons, with a birthday party planned for the spring of 2025. With the institution in better financial health than it has been in decades, plans are underway to significantly grow contributed revenue surrounding the annual springtime gala and the corresponding announcement of a significant campaign.

Two major, organization-wide projects have also recently launched and will require major funding in the next few years: Danny Feldman's American Musicals Project and the Playhouse's Youth & Family programming.

The theater continues its string of self-produced, hit musicals that bring in wider, younger and more diverse audiences, and part of the long-term strategic plan will be to expand these productions while also diversifying their underwriting.



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The Playhouse also had its largest programmatic expansion in its history launching productions, classes, camps and events aimed at families and children. With clear demand (both productions sold out in this inaugural season) and almost no professional children's theater in Los Angeles, the Playhouse is strategically moving into this untapped market.

### **POSITION & RESPONSIBILITIES**

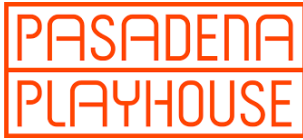
The Playhouse is looking for a Chief Development Officer (CDO) to scale the organization into its largest phase of growth in decades. The CDO is a principal leader within the organization and one of its key external facing representatives.

The CDO will work very closely with the Producing Artistic Director, Chief of Staff, all its Senior Staff members, Board members and other key volunteers and stakeholders to grow an exemplary department and \$7M annual fund.

The CDO is an exempt full-time position that will report to the Producing Artistic Director.

### **Organizational Responsibilities:**

- Develop and execute a successful, long-range fundraising plan for the organization.
- As a key member of the Senior Staff, forge productive relationships with all members of this team and advance the vision and goals of Pasadena Playhouse in concert with the Producing Artistic Director.
- Lead major organizational initiatives such as capital campaigns, programmatic expansions, culture building, systems overhauls, etc.
- Strengthen the Playhouse's Board. Work closely with the Producing Artistic Director, Chief of Staff, Trustees and other volunteers to manage multiple committees, build a culture of fundraising, improve Board operations, continually build the Board pipeline, and foster a culture of collaboration among Board leadership, volunteers and staff.
- Be a change agent, but doing so in a collaborative, consensus-forward style.
- Develop strong relationships that elicit trust with Senior Staff, Board members and other stakeholders, while being an exemplary representative of the institution.
- Lead by example, champion organizational core values and priorities, and translate them into department and individual priorities.
- Provide financial stewardship and bring a metrics-based mentality to the Playhouse. Accurately and proactively forecast expected revenue and expenses.
- Be a thought partner and collaborate with the Producing Artistic Director and Chief of Staff to optimize interdepartmental performance.



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#### Department Responsibilities:

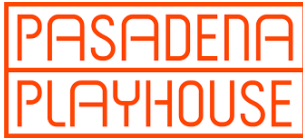
- Lead a team of six to raise nearly \$7 million for the 2024-25 annual fund, an ambitious increase in contributed revenue.
- In collaboration with the Chief of Staff, set staff priorities and strategies that align with organizational goals, in particular with acquisitions of new donors and upgrades into major giving.
- Significantly increase net revenue to \$1M from the House Party, the Playhouse's signature annual fundraising event, with the centennial celebration of the building in the spring of 2025.
- Mentor the development team and reinforce a culture of high ownership and ethics.
- Implement innovations and best practices for all parts of the donor cultivation cycle.
- Develop and implement a donor communications plan.
- Launch a planned giving program.
- Prep the team for an upcoming capital campaign.
- Increase fundraising ratios to accelerate the theater's next phase of growth.

#### Qualifications/Experience:

- 7-10 years fundraising experience and a proven track record of increasing contributed revenue.
- Successful history of change management and leading new initiatives, changing culture, leading turnarounds, all while building consensus.
- Demonstrated success with six-figure and larger solicitations, and in particular with acquisition and pipeline management of new donors.
- The ability to build and steward relationships with executives, donors and Board members that span years and organizations.
- Outstanding emotional intelligence.
- Experience in leading a team: hiring, motivating, mentoring and retaining all-stars.
- Experience and/or interest in the performing arts is preferred.
- Experience with major capital campaigns would be an advantage.

#### Competencies:

- Reaches for the extraordinary.
- Innovation.
- Prefers building and improving, rather than the status quo.
- Kaizen and growth mindsets.
- Hungry; interest in high ownership and workload translating into high reward.
- Highly proactive.
- Collaborative style.



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### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

The Playhouse is a hybrid working environment that is primarily an in-office, collaborative team with some remote time. Must be available to work select evenings and weekends.

There are no major sources of discomfort in the office and the Playhouse is a standard environment with regular exposure to screens. The noise level in the work environment is usually quiet. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform core functions. The CDO is occasionally required to lift or move up to 15 pounds.

The Playhouse maintains a positive environment for employees and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

### **COMPENSATION**

The salary range for this position is \$150,000 - \$175,000 (salaried and exempt). Benefits package includes medical, dental, life insurance coverage, vision, PTO and a 403(b) plan.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

Research shows that members of underrepresented groups often apply to jobs only if they meet 100% of the qualifications. The Playhouse recognizes very few individuals ever meet 100% of the qualifications for any given role; therefore it encourages candidates with some or most of the qualifications to apply.

Please email a cover letter and resume in one PDF (other file formats will not be opened) to [developmentjobs@pasadenaplayhouse.org](mailto:developmentjobs@pasadenaplayhouse.org) with "CDO" in the subject line.