



Head of Development Job Description November 2025

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) has a clear mission to enrich lives through orchestral experiences that are uncompromising in their excellence, wide-ranging in their appeal and inclusive in their delivery. Performing approximately 200 concerts each season and with a global live and online audience of more than 60 million people, the Orchestra acts as a cultural ambassador for the UK on the world stage, whilst enhancing the social and cultural fabric of local communities through a wide range of community, education, inclusion and wellbeing programmes.

As the Orchestra looks forward to its 80th Anniversary in 2026, we are seeking to appoint a dynamic, highly motivated and experienced fundraising professional to shape and implement a new fundraising strategy that will achieve ambitious financial targets and enable the RPO to continue in its mission.

The following information will help prospective candidates when preparing their application. Please also refer to the [RPO Guide for Applicants](#) and the RPO website www.rpo.co.uk

Role

Position:	Head of Development
Reports to:	Huw Davies, Deputy Managing Director / Business Development Director
Line manager for:	Development Team, currently three roles: Trusts and Foundations Manager, Individual Giving Manager and Development Assistant
Location:	15 Rutherford Way, London HA9 0BP, with the option to work 2 days per week from home
Contract:	Full-Time
Salary:	£50,000 to £55,000 per annum, depending on experience
Working hours:	9.30am–5.30pm Monday to Friday with an hour's break for lunch, plus evenings and weekends on a regular basis

Application and interview dates

Application deadline:	12 noon on Tuesday 6 January 2026
Interviews:	12 and 13 January 2026
Format of application:	Apply at https://hr.breathehr.com/v/head-of-development-42169 with a CV and covering letter addressed to Huw Davies, Deputy Managing Director
Application information:	Please see our Guide for applicants and our website www.rpo.co.uk

Purpose of the role

The RPO's Business Development Department generates revenue for the Orchestra from donations, sponsorships, and ticket sales. It also communicates the Orchestra's key messages to audiences and supporters in ways that maximise the value and impact of the RPO brand and inspire journeys of discovery. The Head of Development reports to the Deputy Managing Director / Business Development Director and

works closely with the Head of Sales and Marketing to plan and fulfil the Orchestra's fundraising strategy and meet Arts Council England's 'Let's Create' objectives.

The Head of Development will lead the Development Team in delivering a refreshed Development Strategy that will form part of the RPO's 5-year business plan and achieve ambitious fundraising targets to support the Orchestra's annual schedule of performances, events and community and education programmes. Priorities include increasing levels of development income from individual donors, corporates and Trusts and Foundations; stewarding key donor relationships; devising strategies to grow new areas of development income and delivering an annual programme of engaging fundraising events for donors and prospects.

Role outline

Role: Inspire and lead the RPO Development Team to maximise fundraising opportunities through a refreshed Development strategy that strengthens the intrinsic loyalty of existing supporters, and attracts a new and diverse donor base for the future.

Individual Donors

- Manage the Individual Giving Manager to shape and inform a refreshed RPO individual giving strategy that contributes directly to the RPO Business Plan and annual financial targets
- Work with the Business Development Director and Head of Sales and Marketing to communicate across all marketing and communication channels a compelling case for support that articulates the impact and social value of the RPO
- Increase individual giving by the RPO's existing pool of donors
- Introduce initiatives to cultivate new individual donors, with a clear strategy for increasing loyalty to the RPO, including use of the RPO's existing membership schemes (RPO Chair Patrons, RPO Young Patrons, RPO Benefactors etc)
- Liaise with the Head of Sales and Marketing to identify individual benefactor prospects from amongst RPO audience databases
- Produce compelling project proposals to secure support from high-level individual donors
- Lead the development of the RPO's 1946 Club Legacy Giving Campaign, including stewardship and recruitment of members at annual events
- Support the Business Development Director in stewarding the RPO's high-net-worth individual donors
- Work with the Business Development Director to steward Board members and Advisory Council members
- With the Individual Giving Manager, deliver an annual RPO International Patron's Trip

Corporate Sponsorships / Partnerships

- With the Business Development Director, manage the RPO's relationships with its existing roster of corporate partners
- Work closely with the Head of Sales and Marketing to identify exciting new features and opportunities that will appeal to prospective corporate sponsors
- Prospect for new corporate partnerships that align with the RPO brand, vision, mission and values
- Write creative sponsorship proposals and create eye-catching sponsorship decks to inspire and attract new corporate sponsors
- In collaboration with the Marketing Team, create bespoke communication and branding opportunities for corporate partners
- Pitch proposals to prospective sponsors, negotiating and closing deals and executing contracts
- Liaise with the Head of Sales and Marketing to develop sponsorship opportunities associated with RPO own-promotion and co-promotion concerts

- Collaborate with the Business Development Director to secure major sponsors to support the RPO's international touring and partnerships programme

Trusts and Foundations

- Direct the Trusts and Foundations Manager to deliver a strategy that meets the needs of the RPO Business Plan, artistic, community/education and talent development programmes, and ensure that associated annual financial targets are achieved
- In consultation with the Trusts and Foundations Manager and Director of Community and Education, ensure a strong pipeline and manageable schedule of Trust and Foundation applications
- As required, take lead responsibility for prospecting and stewarding high-value Trust and Foundation relationships to secure funding for multi-year programmes
- Lead on specific Arts Council England funding initiatives which fall outside the RPO's National Portfolio relationship

Events / Appeals

- Deliver an annual programme of fundraising events, including the annual RPO Gala Evening, as directed by the Business Development Director
- Devise new event formats to strengthen donor loyalty, including cultivation events with the RPO's Music Director and musicians.

Digital

- Work with the Digital Marketing Manager to implement communication strategies for appeals and campaigns across all digital channels
- Introduce a compelling digital fundraising strategy in collaboration with the Digital Marketing Manager
- Liaise with the Head of Sales and Marketing to ensure a prominent and consistent presence for the case for support on the RPO website
- Work with the Digital Marketing Manager to ensure that all opportunities for fundraising are explored for the new RPO website

Other

- Maximise the value of the RPO's CRM and box office system Spektrix
- Work closely with the Head of Sales and Marketing to ensure cross-pollination of development and marketing strategies and agree common goals and objectives
- Segment data and develop systematic plans to identify new lower-level donors to help feed the RPO's donor pipeline
- Ensure robust processes and systems are in place to underpin the smooth running of the RPO Development Team and maximise fundraising potential
- Ensure that all Development activity (on- and off-line) complies with the rules and regulations as set out by the Fundraising Regulator
- Ensure that all communication with current and prospective supporters is GDPR compliant
- Produce written Development reports for quarterly RPO Board and Audit Committee meetings
- Recruit, manage, motivate, appraise and train Development Team personnel
- Attend RPO performances in London, across the UK and internationally, as required
- Undertake any other duties which may reasonably be required by the Company

Person specification

Essential attributes:

- An impressive track record in fundraising for major gifts, with demonstrable experience securing HNW and UHNW donors, significant corporate sponsorships, and multi-year commitments from charitable trusts in the UK and internationally
- Experience in devising and implementing impactful campaigns to generate donations
- Strategic thinker and planner with a proven track record in developing and implementing fundraising strategies
- Full competence using CRM systems, preferably Spektrix
- Exceptional communication, influencing, negotiation and presentation skills
- Proven ability to create and communicate a compelling written case for support
- Calm, articulate, professional and self-motivated
- Experience of line management
- Good knowledge of numeracy and proven management of significant budgets
- Willingness to work out of office hours, attend RPO concerts and travel on a regular basis, as required

Desirable attributes:

- Degree standard or equivalent employment experience
- Experience of fundraising in the arts sector
- A passion for orchestral music and the live performance sector would be an advantage

Terms of employment

- 25 days annual leave per annum
- 8 Bank holidays
- Entitlement to leave during the Company's annual (Christmas) shutdown (generally 3 days)
- Time off in lieu for work on weekends or Bank holidays
- Pension scheme with an employer contribution up to 6% salary
- Interest-free loan for a travel season ticket after 6 months
- Probation period of six months

November 2025

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www.rpo.co.uk