



ALLEY THEATRE

Director of Individual Giving

Sorrell is proud to partner with Alley Theatre, which is seeking a new Director of Individual Giving.

Founded in 1947 by Nina Vance in Houston, Texas, Alley Theatre is a pioneer of regional theatre and one of the leading nonprofit theatre companies in the United States. It reaches more than 200,000 people each year through delivering world class theater performances on its two stages and through its robust education programs and community engagement work. The Alley has been awarded the prestigious Regional Theatre Tony Award® and the Texas Medal of Arts Award. The Alley has transferred productions to Broadway, Off-Broadway, major European Festivals, and to 40 American cities.

Unique among regional theatres, the Alley is committed to maintaining a Resident Acting Company and providing them with work year-round. Nationally recognized directors, actors, playwrights, and designers from across the country have regularly joined the Resident Acting Company to create productions. The Alley operates on a \$24 million annual budget and has \$138 million in net assets. The 2026/2027 season marks the Alley's 80th year.

Led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Jennifer Bielstein, the Alley focuses on delivering excellent programming to inspire and enchant lives through theater and prioritizes creating a welcoming environment for all. For more information, see <https://www.alleytheatre.org/>.

Position Summary

The Director of Individual Giving is a key member of Alley Theatre's Development team and is responsible for driving contributed revenue from individuals. Reporting to the Chief Development Officer, the Director leads the Individual Giving team and works closely with the Chief Development Officer, Artistic Director, Individual Giving Committee, Board members, donors, volunteers, and colleagues across the organization to grow and strengthen the Alley's individual donor base.

The current annual individual giving goal is approximately \$2.1 million. The Director will lead a team that includes three to four gift officers and the Individual Giving Associate, with each gift officer carrying a donor portfolio and an individual fundraising goal. The Director also personally manages a portfolio of approximately 100-120 donors and prospects with capacity to give \$5,000 or more annually, while helping expand the number of donors giving \$10,000 or more each year.

This role offers a significant opportunity to strengthen individual giving at a time when contributions from individuals have declined over several years. The Director will bring a strategic, analytical approach to donor development - closely tracking results against monthly goals, identifying trends and opportunities, and course-correcting quickly when needed. Success will require both a strong fundraiser and a thoughtful relationship-builder who gets to know donors personally, understands their preferences, and tailors cultivation and stewardship activities accordingly.

Key Responsibilities

Individual Giving Strategy & Revenue

- Lead the strategy and execution required to achieve the Alley's annual individual giving goal and build a stronger, more sustainable pipeline of individual donors.

- Develop annual and multi-year plans for individual giving that integrate major gifts, annual fund, broad-based appeals, planned giving, telefunding, donor events, and personalized stewardship.
- Create fundraising projections, revenue tracking, and clear performance benchmarks for the Individual Giving team; review results against monthly goals and adjust strategy as needed to remain on pace.
- Use donor analytics, data integrity, segmentation, predictive modeling, and moves management to identify opportunities for increased giving, retention, and donor progression.
- Work with the Chief Development Officer and Research Analyst to strengthen the major gifts program and expand the number of donors contributing \$10,000 or more annually.

Major Gifts & Portfolio Management

- Serve as an active major gift fundraiser and primary portfolio manager for approximately 100-120 individual donors and prospects with capacity to give \$5,000 or more annually.
- Meet annual financial and activity goals through effective identification, qualification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of donors and prospects.
- Build thoughtful donor strategies and enter all interactions, next steps, and cultivation plans in Tessitura to ensure accurate reporting, strong portfolio management, and consistent moves management.
- Advance donor relationships through one-on-one meetings, tours, calls, texts, emails, letters, impact reports, seat notes, pre-show and post-show gatherings, and other highly personalized engagement.
- Partner with the Artistic Director on donor cultivation and solicitation events in private homes and other settings, using these opportunities to deepen affinity and advance relationships.
- Identify opportunities to broaden the Alley's donor community, including the cultivation of more female philanthropists.

Team Leadership & Management

- Provide leadership, guidance, coaching, and accountability for the Individual Giving team, ensuring staff members have the support, resources, and strategies needed to meet their goals.
- Guide team members in best practices for portfolio management, donor cultivation, pipeline development, data analytics, database integrity, list segmentation, and predictive modeling.
- Establish clear goals and expectations, organize team priorities and schedules, and conduct or assist with timely, constructive performance evaluations.
- Hire, train, motivate, and develop team members and foster a collaborative, positive, high-performing culture within Development.
- Serve as a versatile "utility player" who can step in where needed and contribute to team-based fundraising priorities across the department.

Annual Giving, Campaigns & Planned Giving

- Lead a broad-based annual giving program utilizing direct mail, email, social media, telefunding, text messaging, and other channels.
- Coordinate the Alley's telefunding program, including weekly guidance to the telefunding company, timelines, calling priorities, scripts, lead lists, and coordination of leads moved into portfolios.
- Lead two major annual fundraising campaigns - end-of-year and end-of-season, which coincides with the Alley's June 30 fiscal year-end - in partnership with Development and Marketing.
- Develop detailed campaign timelines and coordinate direct mail, social media, email communications, and other campaign activity to meet revenue and participation goals.
- Expand awareness of the Nina Vance Legacy Society and help identify and qualify prospects for planned gifts.
- Work with the Individual Giving Associate to strengthen the Sustainer program, donor stewardship, and lower-level donor growth.

Donor Stewardship & Institutional Presence

- Build genuine, long-term relationships with donors by understanding and remembering their interests, preferences, and history with the Alley and using that knowledge to personalize communication and engagement.
- Engage Individual Giving Committee members, Board members, and other volunteers with regular updates on goals, results, and opportunities to support fundraising efforts.
- Maintain an active donor-facing presence at performances and patron events, including rotational Green Room duty, CenterStage dinners, Individual Giving Committee meetings and receptions, and insider patron events.
- Support annual fundraising events, including the Alley Ball and Deck the Trees, and collaborate with Special Events colleagues as needed.
- Stay current on the Alley's performances, education programs, and institutional activities in order to connect donors and prospects to the aspects of the mission that are most meaningful to them.
- Consistently place volunteers, Board members, and donors first, providing the personalized attention and responsiveness expected of the Alley's Development team.

Essential Skills, Knowledge and Experience

- Minimum eight years of fundraising experience within the nonprofit sector, with demonstrated success in individual giving and major gifts.
- Strong record of personally cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding donors, including comfort making cold calls and direct asks.
- Experience managing and developing a fundraising team, with the ability to motivate, coach, and hold staff accountable for results.
- Strong strategic orientation and ability to translate fundraising goals into practical plans, timelines, metrics, and action.
- Demonstrated knowledge of donor analytics, segmentation, pipeline management, predictive modeling, and fundraising database practices.
- Genuine interest in analytics and the discipline to review performance regularly, understand variances against goal, and course-correct based on data.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a relational approach to fundraising; able to listen well, understand donor preferences, and provide highly personalized stewardship.
- Strong collaboration skills and the ability to work effectively with the Chief Development Officer, Artistic Director, Board members, volunteers, Marketing, and colleagues across the organization.
- Exceptional project management, organizational, research, analytical, and problem-solving skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities within budget and timeline constraints.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to prepare and deliver formal written and oral presentations.
- Ability to work effectively in a fast-paced, energized, and quickly changing environment; proactive, self-directed, detail-oriented, and able to take initiative.
- Ability to maintain confidential information and demonstrate sound judgment.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite and fundraising databases; experience with Tessitura is a plus.
- Bachelor's degree required.
- Experience in the arts or performing arts is a plus but not required.

Physical Requirements / Working Conditions

- Full-time, exempt, in-office position based at the Meredith J. Long Theatre Center in Downtown Houston.
- Typical hours are during the day, but the position requires flexibility to be available for weekends, holidays and evening work hours as needed for performances, donor stewardship, and special events.
- Must be comfortable working in a fast-paced environment where directions and priorities can change rapidly.

- Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk and working on a computer.
- Ability to lift and move 25 lbs.

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience. Generous benefit package, including medical, dental and vision insurance; paid vacation, floating holiday and sick time; 401(k) with matching; Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Health Reimbursement Account (HRA); free and discounted tickets to Alley Theatre performances; discounted parking and gym membership; and employee wellness and Employee Assistance Program benefits.

Application and Referral Process

Applicant review is currently underway and will continue until the candidate has been selected. To nominate or be considered for this position, please contact Priscilla Plumb at priscilla@sorrellco.com / 281.224.0881 or Stacie Gaff at stacie@sorrellco.com / 832.594.1925. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

Alley Theatre is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and disabled veterans in its job application procedures. If you need assistance or an accommodation due to a disability, you may contact hrdept@alleytheatre.org.

Alley Theatre is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable local, state, or federal law. We encourage people of all backgrounds to apply.

About Sorrell

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