

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 457**Are you a 501(c)3 organization in good standing with the IRS?**

Yes

According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?

Hartford

Where will your project be performed or exhibited?

Hartford

Will this activity occur after August 1, 2025?

Yes

Are you a recent grantee?

Yes

Enter your Report Code

Roberts2022

Organization Name

Hartford Symphony Orchestra

Organization's IRS Tax ID #

060637319

Principal Contact Name

Eric Hutchinson

Title

Director of Development

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[Map It](#)

Website<http://hartfordsymphony.org>

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 457**Amount requested this application**

\$25,000.00

What is the organization's mission/vision statement?

To enrich lives and community through great music!

Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) is widely regarded as Connecticut's premier musical organization and is recognized as one of the finest regional orchestras in the United States. Through over 100 performances each year—including its celebrated Masterworks and POPS! series, Sunday Serenades, Discovery Concerts, Symphony in Schools, and the Talcott Mountain Music Festival—the HSO inspires audiences of all ages. With a mission to deliver emotionally compelling experiences and build stronger, more vibrant communities, the HSO is a vital cultural force throughout Greater Hartford. Appointed in January 2011, Carolyn Kuan made history as the HSO's tenth music director, becoming both the first woman and the youngest person to hold the role. Her tenure has brought a dynamic vision to the organization, marked by community-focused performances and creative programming that continues to elevate the orchestra's artistic profile. Founded in 1934 and incorporated as the Symphony Society of Greater Hartford in 1936, the HSO has a rich legacy. Its early music directors included Angelo Coniglione, Jacques Gordon, Leon Barzin, Moshe Paranov, and George Heck. Under Fritz Mahler's leadership beginning in 1953, the orchestra launched its Young People's Concerts and recorded notable albums with Vanguard. Arthur Winograd, who became music director in 1964, helped the orchestra earn national acclaim, including performances at Carnegie Hall. From 1985 to 2000, Michael Lankester led a period of innovation, introducing educational initiatives like Classical Conversations and theatrical concert productions. Edward Cumming continued that momentum from 2001 to 2011, further advancing artistic excellence and creative outreach. Today, the HSO reaches more than 95,000 concertgoers annually. Its education and community engagement programs serve over 23,000 people in Hartford and the surrounding region, underscoring the orchestra's deep commitment to enriching lives through music.

Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.

The Hartford Symphony serves a diverse population across all ages, genders, races, and backgrounds. Through free community concerts in Bushnell Park and throughout Hartford, programs in senior living facilities, and educational initiatives like Symphony in Schools, the HSO engages with children, students, families, and older adults—ensuring access to live music and music education for people from all walks of life. A breakdown of demographic percentages is not currently available.

Describe your organization's governance.

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is governed by a 25-member Board of Directors that meets five times annually. Each board member also serves on at least one committee, actively contributing to the organization's strategic direction. Board meeting attendance averages 80%, reflecting strong engagement. Additionally, 100% of board members contribute to both the HSO's Annual Fund and Capital Campaign, demonstrating their full commitment to the Symphony's mission and sustainability.

Please describe the diversity of your board by gender and ethnicity/race. Use percentages.

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is proud to champion Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Our Board of 25 members reflects our commitment: 36% female, 64% male; 68% White, 20% Black, 8% Hispanic, and 4% Indian/Asian/Pacific Islander. We believe a diverse Board strengthens our mission, ensuring our music and programs reflect and serve the vibrant, multicultural community we are honored to engage.

What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 457

100%

Project Name

2025-2026 Masterworks Season

Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

Project Description

This thrilling nine-concert season will be held in Belding Theater, with performances on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 PM and Sundays at 3 PM.

The 2025–2026 Masterworks Season celebrates the intersection of tradition and innovation. The lineup features powerful classics, dynamic new works, boundary-pushing guest artists, and immersive multimedia collaborations. With a focus on American voices, dramatic storytelling, and cultural exploration, this season exemplifies Maestro Kuan’s bold artistic vision.

Highlights include the season opener with Gershwin, Marsalis, and Bartók, a Shakespearean theatrical experience in Romeo and Juliet, the multimedia finale The Rite of Spring On-Screen, and collaborations with Curtis Stewart, Clarice Assad, and visual artists from the Wadsworth Atheneum. The season also features iconic works by Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, and more.

Attached is a more detailed season lineup featuring all concerts and artists.

Total estimated project budget

\$1,677,150.00

Project start/opening

09/26/2025

Project end/closing

06/07/2026

Project venue

The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts

Project town

Hartford, CT

Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

Ticket prices range from \$41.50 to \$88.50, with student tickets available for just \$10. Additionally, up to 20 free tickets per concert are offered through the Hartford Public Library, expanding access to our performances for the entire community.

How do you intend to promote/market this project?

We will market the concert through weekly eblasts, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, our website, and printed concert guides. Additional outreach includes listings in the MetroHartford Alliance Newsletter, as well as promotion via radio, TV, and other

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 457

local media networks to maximize visibility and audience engagement.

How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is grateful to the Roberts Foundation for the Arts for its generous support of our Masterworks Season. These funds help cover essential costs, including venue expenses, fair compensation for musicians, marketing, and the recruitment of top talent and guest artists. With this support, we are able to deliver exceptional performances that are both musically and visually captivating.

How will Roberts support be recognized?

The Roberts Foundation for the Arts will be honored for its generous support of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra through prominent recognition, including signage at each Masterworks concert, logo placement in the Playbill, on our website, in concert guides, and weekly eblasts. Additionally, the Foundation will receive onstage recognition at select concerts and further acknowledgment throughout the season.

What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?

At the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, artistic excellence means delivering extraordinary musical performances that resonate with our community while continuously evolving to meet the diverse needs of our audience. We are committed to accelerating the pace of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, both on stage and in our audience, ensuring that all voices are heard and represented. Our pursuit of excellence also includes achieving our financial goals and ensuring our programming remains relevant, engaging, and accessible. By fostering a culture of artistic innovation and community engagement, we strive to create transformative experiences that inspire and unite.

How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra's Masterworks Series furthers our mission to enrich lives and community through great music by offering exceptional performances that engage, inspire, and unite diverse audiences. Each concert is thoughtfully curated to showcase a range of powerful, transformative works that resonate with both new and seasoned listeners. By incorporating diverse composers, guest artists, and innovative programming, we ensure that our concerts reflect the richness of the community we serve. The series fosters an inclusive cultural experience, bringing people together to share in the power of live music. Beyond the concert hall, our educational and outreach programs extend the impact of the Masterworks Series, making music accessible and meaningful to all, while supporting our ongoing commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Through these efforts, we strive to create lasting connections and enrich the cultural landscape of Hartford and beyond.

How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra's Masterworks Series provides both our audience and the community with an enriching cultural experience that celebrates artistic excellence and fosters connection. The diverse programming, which includes timeless classics and contemporary works, offers something for all tastes, inviting deeper engagement with world-class music. This series also contributes to the region's economic vitality by attracting visitors, supporting local businesses, and creating jobs. Additionally, our educational outreach initiatives make music accessible to all, enhancing cultural awareness and nurturing creativity. The Masterworks Series strengthens the cultural fabric of Hartford, deepens community ties, and enriches the lives of residents, while simultaneously contributing to the area's economic growth and vibrancy.

How will this project be evaluated?

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra's Masterworks Series is evaluated through a combination of audience surveys, financial data, audience reactions, stakeholder feedback, and alignment with our mission. We actively use this information to assess

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 457

performance and drive continuous improvement, ensuring the series evolves to meet the needs of both musicians and audiences. This commitment to feedback allows us to enhance the overall experience and ensure that our programming remains relevant and impactful.

Cover letter

- [HSO-Cover-Letter-2025-Roberts.pdf](#)

Board list

- [2025-Board-List.pdf](#)

IRS 501(c)3 determination letter

- [8-HSO-IRS-Determination-Letter.pdf](#)

Financial statement

- [HSO-Audit-Final-FY24.pdf](#)

Last year operational budget

- [HSO-Audit-Final-FY241.pdf](#)

Current year operational budget

- [FY25-Budget-w-YTD-Actuals.pdf](#)

Balance sheet

- [Balance-Sheet-as-of-2-28-25.pdf](#)

Project budget

- [FY26-Masterworks-Budget-DRAFT-V.6-4.22.25.xlsx](#)

Does your organization produce an annual report?

No

Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?

Yes

Strategic plan

- [HSO_Strategic-Framework-book_B_FY25v3.pdf](#)

Grant Report

Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 457

- [Hartford-Symphony-Orchestra-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

Other materials?

- [HARTFORD-SYMPHONY-ORCHESTRA-ANNOUNCES-2025-2026-MASTERWORKS-SERIES- -Hartford-Symphony-Orchestra.pdf](#)
- [Masterworks-26-Poster.pdf](#)

The Hartford Symphony Orchestra is immeasurably grateful for funding and support from the Roberts Foundation for the Arts. We look forward to another wonderful year of partnership and music.

Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?

Yes

Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?

Yes