

Music Director & Conductor

Alpine Orchestra - Position Description

Location: Buena Vista, Colorado | Upper Arkansas Valley

Website: <https://www.alpineorchestra.org>

About Alpine Orchestra

Founded in 1991, Alpine Orchestra is a nonprofit community orchestra serving Buena Vista, Salida, Leadville, and the surrounding Upper Arkansas Valley. The orchestra brings together volunteer musicians of diverse ages, backgrounds, and experience levels through a shared love of orchestral music.

Our mission is to share the enjoyment of orchestral music with our communities, strive for musical excellence, and expand opportunities for young and developing musicians. We aim to foster an inclusive, rewarding environment where musicians can grow, collaborate, and contribute to a vibrant local arts community.

Position Overview

The Music Director & Conductor provides artistic leadership for Alpine Orchestra, overseeing concert programming, rehearsal preparation and conducting, musician development, and contributing to community engagement. Working collaboratively with the Board of Directors, the conductor balances artistic ambition with the needs of a volunteer ensemble and fosters a positive, supportive musical environment.

Schedule & Time Commitment

Alpine Orchestra presents two concert series annually:

- **Fall Season:** Eight rehearsals followed by three concerts. Typically start rehearsals in mid-Sept for concerts in mid-November.
- **Spring Season:** Eight rehearsals followed by three concerts. Typically start rehearsals in late Feb or early March, for concerts in mid-to-late April.
- **Rehearsals:** Currently Mondays, 7:00–9:00 PM, in Buena Vista.
- **Performances:** Three consecutive concerts per season, typically Friday in Leadville, Saturday in Salida, and Sunday in Buena Vista. The 2027 Spring Concerts are scheduled for April 16, 17 & 18.

The position requires attendance at 16 rehearsals and six concerts annually, including evening and weekend commitments and travel between concert locations. Additional time is required for rehearsal planning, programming, communication, and coordination.

Key Responsibilities

Artistic Direction & Programming

- Select repertoire appropriate to the orchestra's instrumentation, skill levels, and artistic goals and present a proposed program to the Board for approval 6-8 weeks before each season.
- Provide input on performance venues and related logistical considerations as needed.

Rehearsals & Performances

- Prepare and conduct all scheduled rehearsals and concerts.
- Develop structured, efficient rehearsal plans that maximize limited rehearsal time and prioritize musical improvement.
- Arrange for a qualified substitute conductor when necessary in coordination with the Board.

Musician Leadership & Development

- Confirm chair and part assignments and appoint sectional rehearsal leaders as appropriate.
- Oversee auditions or musician evaluations when necessary or desirable.
- Foster a respectful, collaborative rehearsal environment that accommodates musicians of varying abilities and experience levels.

Organizational Collaboration & Community Engagement

- Maintain regular communication with the Board regarding programming, artistic needs, rehearsal progress, and other relevant matters.
- Coordinate with designated volunteers on music acquisition and instrumentation needs.
- Participate in orchestra promotions and serve as a liaison with local musicians, music educators, and the regional arts community.

Qualifications

Required

- Demonstrated experience conducting instrumental ensembles and leading rehearsals.
- Strong musicianship, score preparation skills, and knowledge of orchestral repertoire and instrumentation.
- Effective communication, organizational, and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to lead musicians of varying experience levels with clarity, respect, and adaptability.
- Availability for the orchestra's scheduled rehearsals and performances.

Preferred

- Experience conducting orchestras with both string and wind instruments. Experience with community or volunteer ensembles is a plus.
- Formal education or training in conducting, music education, or a related field.
- Experience with concert programming, musician development, and collaborative artistic leadership.

Governance & Performance Review

The Music Director & Conductor serves at the discretion of the Alpine Orchestra Board of Directors. The conductor will work collaboratively with the Board on artistic and organizational matters, including concert programming. After the spring concerts, the board will provide an employee review with the conductor. At that time, the contract can be renewed for a full year with annual reviews after each spring concert series.

Position Terms

The Music Director & Conductor serves as an independent contractor employed by Alpine Orchestra Inc, with a stipend of **\$3,000 paid after each concert series**. Additional terms may be established in agreement with the Board of Directors.

Candidate Selection

Please review the next page for instructions and further details on the application process and timeline. You may contact alpOrchBoard@googlegroups.com with any questions. We look forward to hearing from you!

Conductor Application Process

Alpine Orchestra is accepting applications for its next Music Director & Conductor.

Get to Know the Orchestra — Before You Apply

Prospective candidates are invited to observe one or more of Alpine Orchestra's remaining rehearsals and/or fall concerts to get a sense of the ensemble, its musicians, and its musical environment.

- **Rehearsal Dates:** October 26, November 2, November 9, from 7-9pm in Buena Vista
- **Concert dates:** November 13th in Leadville, November 14th in Salida, November 15th in Buena Vista

This is an optional opportunity to explore whether the position may be a good fit before committing to an application. **Rehearsal attendance can be arranged either before or after submitting an application.**

Please contact alpOrchBoard@googlegroups.com in advance to coordinate a visit.

Application Process & Tentative Timeline

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, with interviews conducted throughout the application period.

Key Dates

- **Application Deadline:** November 22, 2026, at 11:59 PM Mountain Time
- **Interviews:** Rolling basis until early December 2026
- **Anticipated Selection Announcement:** By December 15, 2026
- **Expected Start:** Spring 2027 concert season, first rehearsal February 22, 2027

How to Apply

Interested candidates should email alpOrchBoard@googlegroups.com with the following:

- A résumé or summary of relevant conducting and musical experience.
- A brief statement describing their approach to musical leadership and working with and developing ensembles.

- *[Optional]* You may include relevant “portfolio” items, such as links to recordings of you conducting, etc., if you have them. You will not be negatively impacted if you do not have recordings.

Selected candidates will complete a panel interview. Finalists may be asked to participate in additional evaluation activities, potentially including an opportunity to work with the orchestra.

Dates and selection activities are tentative and subject to change.

Please email alpOrchBoard@googlegroups.com to submit your application or to ask any questions about the role or application process.

Conductor Search — Tentative Process & Timeline

Goal: Select and announce the new conductor by December 15, 2026 at the latest, allowing time to prepare for the spring 2027 season.

Proposed Timeline

Date	Milestone / Action Items
Week of Oct. 13	Board confirms job description, application materials, selection process, compensation, and logistics. Begin outreach and notify orchestra by email following approval. Outreach to possible panelists.
Oct. 19	Earliest in-person announcement at rehearsal (note that Leadville musical musicians won't be there).
Oct.–Nov. v.	Accept applications, conduct rolling interviews, and coordinate optional candidate visits to remaining string rehearsals (3) and fall concerts (3). Candidates may visit before or after applying.
Nov. 22	Applications close at 11:59 PM MT.
Late Nov.–Early Dec.	Complete finalist interviews, evaluations, and reference checks as needed. Aim to complete most interviews before Thanksgiving.
By Dec. 15	Finalize selection, confirm appointment terms, and announce new conductor.
Jan. 7, 2027	Target deadline to provide spring concert program to Jennifer.
Feb. 1, 2027	Target date to distribute spring concert music to musicians.

Immediate next step: Finalize search materials, evaluation approach, and Board responsibilities during the week of October 13 to support timely recruitment and candidate engagement.

Note: Please closely review the WHOLE doc here and provide comments/thoughts prior to the meeting so we can complete everything during the meeting

Outstanding questions to confirm prior to application launch:

1. Position Description & Terms

- ☐ Approve final conductor position description and qualifications.
- ☐ **Venue selection:** Clarify discrepancy between bylaws (conductor proposes venues) and established practice (Board manages venues).
- ☐ **Position structure:** Decide whether the conductor will be a paid contractor or volunteer with reasonable expenses paid. Does this impact tax forms?
- ☐ **Compensation:**
 - ☐ 1) How much should we provide? Do we want to confirm that right now?
 - ☐ 2) Do we want to share amount on public-facing documentation? Vs share with candidates after applying or say they can reach out? Vs keep the language general like it is in the bylaws and work it out with the conductor later?
 - ☐ Note that bylaws say: “with reasonable expenses paid”
- ☐ **Bylaws:** Determine whether changes are needed to reflect the agreed-upon responsibilities and position structure.
- ☐ **Appointment terms:** We should probably note SOMETHING about appointment terms in the public-facing job description, but should agree on further details as a board. What do we think about appointment length and/or renewal process and/or notice period to have in the job description?
 - ☐ Determine whether there will be a probationary first season. Do we want to note that in the job description?
- ☐ **Agreement: Determine what needs to be documented in writing now vs later.**

2. Recruitment & Application Logistics

- ☐ Confirm application requirements (currently drafted: résumé/experience summary and brief leadership philosophy). Do we want to request a cover letter with any particular info? References?
- ☐ Confirm application submission method (double checking that outsiders can email the board, right?)
- ☐ Confirm primary POC for handling of candidate inquiries/communications.
- ☐ Confirm launch date and orchestra announcement plan (email and October 19 rehearsal).
- ☐ Confirm dates that are listed in the position description.
- ☐ Coordinate optional candidate visits to remaining rehearsals and fall concerts, including visits before applying.

3. Interviews & Candidate Evaluation

- ☐ Confirm rolling interview approach, aiming to complete most interviews before Thanksgiving.
- ☐ **Practical evaluation:** Decide whether candidates should conduct before selection and/or be evaluated during a probationary first season (and/or something else?)
 - ☐ Do we want to set up a separate scratch rehearsal with volunteer musicians?
- ☐ Do we want to send out a general orchestra survey to ask questions about topics like what they would look for in the next conductor, feedback on recent repertoire, ideas for things the orchestra/board can do better, etc.?
 - ☐ Decide whether/how to collect musician feedback.
- ☐ Determine whether references will be requested?

4. Selection & Transition

- ☐ **Discussion on Spring program selection:** is there anything that we need to decide **now** on this topic to be able to communicate with candidates in the job description or during the application process?
 - ☐ Does it matter if the candidates or us know now who will be selecting program?
Do we want to play it by ear depending on the conductor candidate? Do we want to ask conductors to submit a past program from their career (does that matter?)
- ☐ Repeat from above - Determine whether there will be a probationary first season.
 - ☐ Do we want to note that in the job description?

5. Ongoing Conductor Expectations

- ☐ Clarify expectations for additional rehearsals and sectionals - is this something that we need to flag in the position description? If these continue, is new conductor expected vs requested to attend?
 - ☐ I *think* the status quo is that the conductor has been invited to attend but not expected to lead sectionals.
- ☐ Confirm authority over chair assignments, auditions, and sectional leaders.
 - ☐ I do not have any knowledge of auditions ever taking place for Alpine.

Key Scheduling Considerations

- ☐ The December 15 selection target leaves limited time, including holidays, before the January 7 spring programming deadline.
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Items that must be addressed in next week or two but not necessarily required for application launch:

- ☐ **Sharing application:** Decide where/how to promote the opportunity (website, regional music networks, referrals, etc.).
 - ☐ **Evaluation Criteria/Interview Logistics:**
 - ☐ Agree on evaluation criteria and interview questions.
 - ☐ Confirm who will review applications and participate in interviews.
 - ☐ *****Determine + Outreach to outside interviewer panelists*****
 - ☐ Confirm how finalists will be compared and how the final selection will be made.
 - ☐ **Spring programming:** Decide whether the incoming conductor, Board/committee, or both will select the program. Or, confirm that we'll play it by ear?
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Items to discuss for next season / potential candidate follow-up
Qs:

- ☐ Clarify expectations for regular Board communication and attendance at Board meetings, if any.
- ☐ Define reasonable expectations for orchestra promotions and community engagement.
- ☐ Confirm annual review criteria and process, consistent with the bylaws.
- ☐ Confirm who finalizes appointment terms and coordinates onboarding.
- ☐ Confirm repertoire approval process, budget, etc.