



## Director of Major Gifts

**Department:** Development

**Reports to:** Chief Development Officer

**Status:** Full-Time, Exempt, Benefits-Eligible

**Location:** Pasadena, CA

### About Pasadena Playhouse

Pasadena Playhouse, the official State Theater of California and recipient of the 2023 Regional Theatre Tony Award, is internationally recognized for its significant role in the development of American theater. One of the most prolific theaters in the country, the Playhouse has staged thousands of original productions since its founding in 1917 including premieres of works by Tennessee Williams, Eugene O'Neill, Suzan-Lori Parks and hundreds more. For decades, its pioneering School for Theater Arts was a training ground for actors and theatermakers who went on to make significant contributions to the entertainment industry.

Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Danny Feldman since 2016, Pasadena Playhouse's productions and community programs are centered on its founding idea of being a living force in its community, making theater for everyone. Today, the Playhouse continues to advance the American theater and serves as a hub for the top theatermakers of our time. In 2025, the Playhouse regained ownership of its historic campus, paving the way for a new era of artistic ambition, community engagement, and long-term sustainability.

### Position Overview

The Director of Major Gifts is a senior frontline fundraising role responsible for securing philanthropic support from individuals, families, and family foundations, in the range of \$2.0M–\$4.0M annually. This is a new position with significant opportunity to help shape the future of the organization.

The Director's portfolio will primarily include donors and prospects with the capacity to make annual gifts of \$100,000 or more, with a focus on solicitations ranging from \$50,000

to \$500,000. While many donors may enter the portfolio below this level, the role is focused on qualifying and advancing relationships toward \$100,000+ annual giving.

The Director of Major Gifts will serve as a trusted ambassador and philanthropic partner to our community, seeking donors and prospects who are motivated to make significant investments in the Playhouse's artistic work, education programs, and long-term vision. At a time of renewed strength and ambitious growth at the Playhouse, this position is focused on unlocking and expanding the philanthropic capacity of our community.

The Director holds primary responsibility for cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding a portfolio of high-capacity donors, while also proactively identifying and engaging new prospects. Working in close collaboration with the Chief Development Officer, Producing Artistic Director, and Playhouse Trustees, the Director will develop and execute strategies that translate institutional priorities into compelling opportunities for multi-year, project, and capital support.

### **Shared Orientation Across the Team**

All frontline philanthropy staff at Pasadena Playhouse operate within a collaborative portfolio model focused on fundraising growth. While each role has a primary focus, portfolios are dynamic and may include a mix of donor types, motivations, and giving levels. Success requires strong coordination across the team, thoughtful management of donor and funder relationships, and a shared commitment to increasing philanthropic support across all areas of the organization.

## **Key Responsibilities**

### **Major Gift Fundraising & Relationship Management (60%)**

- Manage a portfolio of approximately 50–75 individual donors, families, and family foundations, with a priority on those with the capacity to give \$100,000+ annually
- Conduct 4–5 substantive donor interactions per week, with a focus on strategic, deliberate advancement toward solicitation
- Develop and execute individualized strategies to secure and grow major gifts at the \$25,000 level and above, prioritizing gifts of \$100,000+
- Serve as the primary relationship manager for assigned donors, building trust and long-term engagement

- Identify and advance opportunities for increased giving, including multi-year commitments and deeper philanthropic investment
- Maintain consistent, thoughtful communication with donors, ensuring high levels of engagement, responsiveness, and forward momentum in each relationship

### **Strategic Gift Development & Solicitation (20%)**

- Build, maintain, and execute a comprehensive annual solicitation calendar, ensuring transparency, accuracy, and accountability with respect to all solicitation activity
- Develop compelling gift opportunities and cases for support aligned with the Playhouse's artistic, educational, and strategic priorities
- Ensure that all solicitation plans and prospective gifts align with the organization's budget, priorities, and gift acceptance policies
- After gift acceptance, ensure that all major gift commitments are appropriately documented, acknowledged, recognized, and stewarded
- Work regularly with the Chief Development Officer and Producing Artistic Director on high-level cultivation and solicitation strategies

### **Prospect Identification & Pipeline Growth (15%)**

- Proactively identify, research, and engage new major gift prospects with \$100,000+ annual giving capacity
- Actively leverage board members, current donors, and community networks to generate introductions and referrals
- Demonstrate initiative and persistence in developing new donor relationships, including outreach beyond existing networks
- Establish a strong pipeline of prospective donors, including identification and qualification of high-net-worth members, ticket buyers, annual donors, and program participants

### **Collaboration & Team Integration (5%)**

- Work closely with the Director of Institutional Giving to align individual and institutional fundraising strategies and maximize opportunities across funder types

- Participate in weekly team portfolio reviews and contribute to overall fundraising planning
- Serve as an internal resource on donor strategy and engagement
- Participate frequently in evening and weekend events as part of shared team responsibilities

## **Performance Metrics**

- Total major gift revenue secured annually
- Number and value of new donors acquired
- Sustained completion of 4–5 donor visits or other substantive interaction per week
- Growth in multi-year and leadership-level (\$100,000+) gifts
- Donor retention and upgrade rates
- Strength and sustainability of major gift pipeline

## **Qualifications**

- 7–10+ years of frontline fundraising experience with a focus on major gifts
- Demonstrated success securing major gifts, with experience at the \$100,000+ level or clear readiness to operate at that level
- Demonstrated ability to manage a portfolio of 50+ donors and consistently meet or exceed annual fundraising goals
- Strong relationship-building skills and ability to engage donors around vision, impact, and long-term investment
- Proven ability to proactively identify, qualify, and engage new prospects
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to clearly and persuasively articulate organizational priorities in conversation and in writing
- Comfort working in a highly collaborative environment where feedback is direct, welcome, and expected
- Willingness and eagerness to utilize emerging tools, including AI, to enhance productivity and support donor strategy and communication

- Demonstrated integrity, sound judgment, and discretion in managing sensitive donor and organizational information
- Knowledge of the philanthropic landscape in Pasadena and the greater Los Angeles area is a plus
- Familiarity with CRM systems (Tessitura a plus)

## **Compensation**

- This is a full-time, exempt, benefits-eligible position. The annual compensation range for this position is \$95,000–\$125,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications.

## **Culture**

Pasadena Playhouse works to maintain a positive environment for our employees, where people can learn, grow and thrive with the company. We strive to provide a collaborative, creative, transparent workplace where each person feels encouraged to contribute to our processes, decisions, planning and culture.

## **To Apply**

Please send a cover letter and resume to **Justin Glasson, Chief Development Officer**, at [jglasson@pasadenaplayhouse.org](mailto:jglasson@pasadenaplayhouse.org).

Pasadena Playhouse is an EEOC Equal Opportunity Employer.