

Leadership Statement for the Position of Chief Executive Officer

MISSION STATEMENT

The Organ Historical Society celebrates, preserves, and studies the pipe organ in America in all its historic styles, through research, education, advocacy, and music.

BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE OHS

The Organ Historical Society began with a meeting of young enthusiasts in 1956 interested in locating historic pipe organs in New York City. OHS membership has since grown to as many as 2,500 musicians, organbuilders, historians, scholars, and music lovers from around the globe. The founders of OHS aspired to visit extant American “tracker” organs, create a comprehensive list with specifications, and make this information available to interested organ scholars. As the OHS marks its 70th anniversary, it has far exceeded its founders’ aspirations, overseeing today the Historic Pipe Organ Registry that has recognized more than 400 instruments; holding the OHS Library & Archives (the world’s largest collection of its kind); hosting conventions across North America; maintaining a powerful online database of pipe organs with more than 73,000 entries; producing renowned publications including a quarterly journal as well as scholarly books through the OHS Press; and selling organ-related books, recordings, videos, and sheet music through its online store, the OHS Catalogue.

In 2017, the OHS moved to Stoneleigh in Villanova, Pennsylvania, a historic mansion on a 40-acre property managed by the Natural Lands Trust. Stoneleigh is also home to a historic Aeolian-Skinner organ, Opus 878. Both have been funded by generous support from the Wyncote Foundation.

The OHS is governed by a Board of Directors with seven people serving four-year terms. The Chief Executive Officer manages the OHS’s operations and oversees a small staff, with dedicated volunteers running many of the OHS’s programs.

OHS’s finances have stabilized significantly in recent years. The OHS manages endowed funds of \$4 million and its financial records are audited annually. In addition to Wyncote Foundation grants, the OHS has also received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Bradley Foundation to support the OHS Library and Archives.

The OHS is the center for promoting the North American pipe organ. With its unique programs and resources, enthusiastic membership, and international reputation, the OHS is poised for growth through increasing membership, enlarging endowments, creating new educational programs, and pursuing innovative ways to share the King of Instruments in the 21st century.

The OHS is seeking a Chief Executive Officer who will lead the organization effectively and enthusiastically.

OHS PROGRAMS

The Organ Historical Society is proud of its programs, including:

- **The OHS Press** — the only publication house dedicated to the pipe organ, producing a quarterly journal and one scholarly book on an annual basis
- **The OHS Library and Archives** — the world's largest collection devoted to the pipe organ, with books, journals, pamphlets, and more, as well as an ever-growing archive of records from organ building companies, organ composers, and performers
- **The OHS Pipe Organ Database** — an online database that aspires to have an entry for every pipe organ in North America and currently stands at more than 73,000 entries
- **OHS Conventions** — biennial gatherings featuring historic and new pipe organs in a specific location or region in North America, attracting attendees from all over the world
- **The E. Power Biggs Fellowship** — an educational fund to encourage a new generation of organ performers, researchers, and builders to appreciate and preserve the value of the pipe organ
- **The James M. Weaver Prize in Organ Scholarship** — an educational fund to foster scholarly research through a combination of academic research and performance, highlighting connections between repertoire, performance practice, and a specific instrument
- **The Historic Pipe Organ Registry** — recognizing important instruments of historical merit
- **The OHS Catalogue** — an online store for books, recordings, videos, sheet music, and other resources

GOALS FOR THE NEXT CEO

The CEO of the Organ Historical Society will be responsible for leading the organization towards demonstrable strategic growth, institutional strengthening, and renewed membership engagement. Building on the significant progress achieved by the current CEO and Board of Directors, the next leader will be responsible for expanding the OHS's reach, deepening its impact, and ensuring its long-term sustainability. The following points outline in priority order areas of focus for the next era of leadership:

STRATEGIC VISION: The OHS is in a strong position, with a home base at Stoneleigh, a strengthened endowment, a thriving archive, and a committed membership. The next phase of leadership requires a renewed, collaborative vision for how our resources can best serve the Society's mission. Working closely with the Board of Directors, the CEO will lead a process to clarify priorities, align programs with member value, and ensure that resources are used wisely and effectively. This includes:

- Engaging the Board, staff, and membership in defining a refreshed organizational direction
- Evaluating existing programs to ensure they deliver meaningful value for annual dues
- Identifying opportunities to expand the OHS's public impact with existing and new programs
- Making disciplined decisions about where to invest, where to innovate, and where to streamline
- Ensuring that Stoneleigh, the archives, and other OHS assets are leveraged to their fullest potential

GOVERNANCE: The CEO will work closely with the Board of Directors to continue refining governance practices, ensuring that the organization's structure supports its mission, strategic goals, and future growth. One explicit goal will be helping the Board continue towards a self-perpetuating body that recruits, develops, and renews its own membership to ensure continuity, diversity of expertise, and sustained leadership capacity. The CEO will:

- Support the Board in strengthening recruitment, orientation, and succession planning
- Collaborate on refining governance policies, committee structures, and decision-making processes
- Promote transparency, accountability, and strategic alignment between leadership and membership
- Ensure that Board-staff relationships are constructive, mission-driven, and have clear boundaries

COMMUNICATIONS: Effective communication is essential to advancing the mission and maintaining the visibility of the OHS. The CEO will lead the effort to strengthen communication across all channels, particularly with the membership. This includes motivating:

- Internal communication among staff and Board
- Member communication and engagement
- Public relations and media presence
- Digital strategy, including social media and online content

FUNDRAISING: The CEO will lead a major fundraising initiative to increase the OHS's endowments, ensuring the long-term stability of programs, staff, and operations. Our location at Stoneleigh presents an opportunity to engage donors, cultivate new philanthropic relationships, and secure support from private and governmental foundations. The CEO will be expected to:

- Develop and execute a multi-year fundraising strategy
- Strengthen donor stewardship and expand the donor base
- Pursue grants and institutional partnerships
- Position Stoneleigh as a compelling philanthropic destination

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH: Expanding the OHS community and increasing the number of members remains a critical objective. The CEO will:

- Develop strategies to attract new members and increase the diversity of the OHS's membership
- Strengthen engagement with existing members

EDUCATION: Education is central to the mission of the OHS. The CEO will lead the development of a revitalized educational program based at Stoneleigh and supported by members and affiliates across the country. This will include:

- Designing and planning innovative, accessible educational initiatives
- Expanding youth and emerging-artist engagement
- Securing funding to sustain and grow educational offerings
- Strengthening partnerships with schools, universities, and cultural institutions

STAFF: The CEO must be an effective and inspiring manager who maintains the current culture of accountability, responsiveness, and collaboration. Responsibilities include:

- Establishing clear expectations and evaluation processes
- Supporting professional growth and staff development through a regular presence at Stoneleigh
- Maintaining clear communication with remote staff
- Recruiting and mentoring the next generation of staff, volunteers, and Board members

CONVENTIONS: Biennial conventions and gatherings like them are likely the OHS's most meaningful activity for the membership. Working with the Executive Assistant and other staff, the CEO will:

- Oversee the planning and execution of OHS conventions
- Ensure high artistic and educational standards are maintained
- Position conventions as tools for outreach, membership growth, and public engagement

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

To achieve these goals, the incoming Chief Executive Officer of the Organ Historical Society should:

- Have demonstrated success in managing nonprofit organizations
- Have a history of effective financial management and development work
- Possess an excitement for the pipe organ and some understanding of its history
- Be visible in the arts community and the pipe organ world
- Be an inspirational and energetic leader, effective at delegating
- Work well with people at every level — staff, the board, volunteers, members, donors, and the public
- Be able to manage multiple projects at once
- Be comfortable with public speaking

For a leader with these characteristics, the Chief Executive Officer position with the Organ Historical Society offers an excellent opportunity for innovative arts management and education in a thriving and uniquely focused organization headquartered in beautiful surroundings near Philadelphia.