



CORO ALLEGRO
DAVID HODGKINS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Request for Proposal Multi-Year Fundraising Program

Purpose:

Coro Allegro is Boston's award-winning LGBTQ+ and allied classical chorus. It was founded in 1991 to perform works by diverse composers, provide access to choral music to broad audiences, and serve as a model LGBTQ+ organization through artistic excellence and visibility.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from consultants experienced in fundraising for nonprofits, particularly performing arts organizations, to develop and implement a multi-year fundraising plan in honor of the 30th Anniversary of the leadership of our Artistic Director, David Hodgkins. The first phase of the work will be an assessment of Coro Allegro's capacity to design and implement the fundraising campaign. This RFP is focused on Phase One (see below).

Summary and Background:

Coro Allegro is a Boston-based classical chorus of 50 to 60 singers, drawn from the LGBTQ+ and allied community, dedicated to the performance of significant choral works for the enjoyment of all. Coro Allegro performs primarily in the Greater Boston area, reaching international audiences through livestreams, online programming and recordings, and festival performances.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director David Hodgkins, Coro Allegro has produced critically acclaimed programming and performances, and four well received commercial recordings. Since its founding, Coro Allegro has performed 23 world premieres, including 14 commissions, by a diverse range of composers. Principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion have been part of Coro Allegro's mission since its founding. All 14 of our commissioned works were by women, BIPOC, or LGBTQ+ composers. Coro Allegro established the annual Daniel Pinkham Award in 2008 in memory of the Boston composer, to recognize outstanding contributions to classical music and the LGBTQ+ community.

Coro Allegro's history is one of collaboration with diverse groups like the Boston Landmarks Orchestra, The Heritage Chorale of New Haven, The Celebrity Series of Boston, Rumbarroco, and the Terezin Music Foundation. Coro Allegro partners with organizations serving populations in need and advocating for equity such as Keshet, the Equal Justice Initiative, and the Matthew Shepherd Foundation. These collaborations offer exciting opportunities for Coro Allegro artistically, allow us to extend our impact as a true community chorus, and help Coro Allegro and our partners advance our missions.

This spring, Coro Allegro will present *Letters to Our Children: Voices across Generations for LGBTQ+ Youth*, which will feature the world premiere of Here I Am: I Am Here by Andrea Clearfield, commissioned by members of the Coro family. It is based on open letters written by two LGBTQ+ advocates, a mother to her transgender son and a non-binary adult to their own 12-year old self struggling with conversion therapy.

Coro Allegro also plans to offer free public workshops leading up to the concert, and in advance of future performances of Here I Am: I am Here. After hearing excerpts of the work and the letters on which it was based, workshop participants will be invited to write their own letters affirming future generations, in response to prompts provided by community partners like the Trevor Project, SpeakOUT Boston and the Boston Alliance for GLBTQ+ Youth (BAGLY). Later, Coro Allegro hopes to present both a performance and letter writing workshop at the International LGBTQ+ GALA Choruses Festival in 2024.

Recent honors for Coro Allegro include the 2012 Alice Parker Award for a premiere by the Syrian-American composer Kareen Roustom, the 2019 Chorus America/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, and the 2020 Choral Arts New England Board Grant for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion via our Amplifying Black Voices series.

In addition to the Artistic Director, Coro Allegro's staff includes a part-time Executive Director, Office Manager, and Rehearsal Accompanist. The Board of Directors is the governing body for Coro Allegro, with a membership that ranges from 10 to 15 members. Board members volunteer in operations roles as well as governance and fundraising roles, due to the limited resources available for paying staff.

Annual revenues for FY 2022 (September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022) are projected to be approximately \$200,000, with expenses just slightly less. Projections for revenues this year have been particularly challenging, given the negative impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on in-person performances. Pre-pandemic, annual revenues ranged from \$225,000 to \$290,000.

The Board of Directors has identified the need to strengthen the infrastructure of the organization to match and support the musical excellence of the organization. If successful, the campaign will fund expanded staffing and operations for approximately two to three years. This financial support will give the staff the time needed to improve the revenue generating activities of Coro Allegro to be self-sustaining, while also attending to the ongoing operational needs of the organization.

An important goal for the desired fundraising plan is to integrate with our ongoing advancement program so as not to compete with the annual fundraising activities, but rather to build on and enhance our overall fundraising capacity.

SCOPE OF WORK – KEY DELIVERABLES:

The scope of work will be divided into three distinct phases. The first phase will be an assessment of Coro Allegro's capacity to engage in a fundraising campaign of this size and purpose. If the assessment demonstrates that Coro Allegro has the capacity and donor base to support this campaign, the second phase will be the design of and preparation to implement the campaign. The final phase will be the implementation of the campaign. The Board of Directors will choose a consultant(s) for the first phase within the next few weeks. The consultant(s) for the second phase will be decided upon completion of the first phase, and may or may not be the same consultants who lead the first phase. As the second phase is nearing completion, the Board of Directors will assess whether additional support from the consultants is needed for the final (implementation) phase.

Phase One – Assessment of Capacity:

1. Meet with members of the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders to assess the following: (estimated timeframe – 4 weeks)
 - a. Internal readiness to design and implement a successful campaign
 - b. Additional supports or infrastructure needed for the campaign
 - c. Training needs for Board, staff, and volunteers
2. Design a survey of former singers and donors who have not supported Coro Allegro in recent years to assess their willingness to support a campaign to support Coro Allegro's infrastructure and growth needs. It is anticipated that this survey will be conducted by phone, but other methods will be considered. (estimated timeframe – 4 weeks)
 - a. Work with staff and Board Members to identify who should be included in the survey.
 - b. Identify who should have the conversation with each potential donor identified – David Hodgkins, a specific Board Member, the consultant, or someone else.
 - c. Train the people who will be contacting the potential donors in how to conduct the survey
3. Identify other information and data points that should be gathered and considered in making the decision about implementing the fundraising campaign. (estimated timeframe – 2 weeks)
4. Work with the Advancement Committee to design a campaign pyramid with donation levels and identified target donors for each level (estimated timeframe – 4 to 6 weeks)

- a. Research the financial capacity of Coro Allegro's existing donor base
 - b. Assist in the identification of potential additional donors for the campaign
5. Deliver a report to the Board of Directors on the findings of the assessment phase, including recommendations about whether to proceed, timing of the campaign phases, and other findings that would affect the success of the campaign if implemented. (estimated timeframe – completed within 18 weeks of the beginning of Phase One).

Phase Two - Campaign Design and Preparation (timelines to be determined)

1. Work with the Board and Staff to identify key components and timelines for campaign implementation
 - a. Lead the Board and staff in designing the three phases of the campaign (planning, quiet, and public), goals for each phase and realistic timelines
 - b. Work with the Board to estimate the amount of time that each Board Member will be asked to devote to the campaign
 - c. Assist in the development of timelines and organization of volunteers to implement the strategies identified.
 - d. Work with the staff and the Board of Directors to develop a budget for the campaign.
2. Design and implement trainings needed for staff, Board members, and volunteers
 - a. Identify the training topics needed for each group that will participate in the campaign implementation
 - b. Work with the staff and campaign committee members to develop training curricula and materials.
 - c. Collaborate with the Campaign Committee to implement the trainings as needed.
3. Design campaign strategies and materials
 - a. In collaboration with the campaign committee, identify the best strategies for cultivating and soliciting donations from each potential donor identified, including but not limited to individual meetings, pre-and post-concert gatherings, house parties, and on-line based events

- b. Assist in the development of materials needed to achieve the goals of the campaign, including print materials, videos, web pages, donor incentives, and social media content.
- c. Assist in creating tools (ideally using ArtsPeople) for tracking fundraising goals and outcomes (i.e. monthly report, donor contact sheet, donor acknowledgements, etc.)
- d. Identify the best ways to thank donors and acknowledge their generosity to develop and maintain donor loyalty.

Phase Three – Campaign Implementation

1. Oversee the implementation of the fundraising strategy for an agreed-upon time following the completion of the plan.
 - a. Meet with Board, staff, and volunteers on a regular basis to assess progress.
 - b. Identify additional training needs if necessary.
 - c. Work with Campaign Committee to identify areas that require adjustments in strategy or implementation

PROPOSAL ELEMENTS AND REVIEW:

PROPOSAL FORMAT:

Bidders are required to include the following information in their proposals:

1. Contact Information – A description of the bidder and detailed contact information.
2. Price Schedule – A description of the bidder's price schedule for Phase 1
3. Capability Statement – A detailed response to the service/specifications requested in Phase 1, along with an outlined work plan.
4. Professional References – A list of at least three professional references with detailed contact information.

BUDGET & TIMELINE

- The budget for Phase One of this project shall not exceed \$5,000.00. Phases Two and Three combined are anticipated to cost no more than \$10,000; the amount will be re-assessed after completion of Phase 1.
- The proposed timeline for the Phase One is expected to be a maximum of 18 weeks. (The entire fundraising campaign is expected to take between 2 to 3 years from assessment to completion).

The following requirements are to be addressed in the proposal for consideration:

- Proven track record for creative excellence in fundraising and developing organizational fundraising capacity
- Familiarity with fundraising for performing arts
- Experience with and comfort working with small organizations and volunteers
- Ability to work independently with a focus on outcomes
- Experience working with diverse communities, including but not limited to the LGBTQ+ communities
- Excellent written and verbal communications

Proposals and all questions pertaining to this proposal may be submitted electronically via email to president@coroallegro.org

Proposals are due by: 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 18, 2022. The selection is expected to be completed by April 15, 2022, but may take more or less time.