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CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Applications Open April 1 for First Class of Fellows in the 2022-23 season

Program Aims to Expand Professional Training Opportunities for Musicians from Traditionally Underrepresented Backgrounds

CHICAGO—The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association (CSOA) announces a Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) Fellowship Program that will launch with auditions for its first class of up to three Fellows in the 2022-23 season. Applications for the new program will be accepted beginning April 1, 2022, with a deadline of May 27, 2022, to submit online audition materials. In its first year, the new fellowship program seeks to welcome three musicians from populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in American symphony orchestras, including, but not limited to, those who identify as Black, Latino or Indigenous. Fellows will gain significant experience rehearsing and performing with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with the opportunity to work with renowned conductors and receive training and mentorship from CSO musicians to better equip them to win auditions in U.S. orchestras. Fellows will play a minimum of 20 subscription weeks with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and will have access to up to 10, one-hour private lessons with a CSO musician annually. Additional benefits such as financial support for initial relocation expenses and auditions will also be available. Application information for the CSO Fellowship Program will be available at cso.org/fellowship as of April 1, 2022.

CSOA President Jeff Alexander noted: "We are excited to launch the CSO Fellowship Program, coming out of our renewed conversation about, and commitment to, expanding opportunities and support for talented musicians from diverse backgrounds eager to pursue a career performing in symphony orchestras. We must remain focused on this important work to ensure a strong and equitable future for this wonderful and life-enriching artform."

James Smelser, Chair of the Members' Committee of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra added: "We take seriously the responsibility of mentoring the next generation of musicians, and we look forward to welcoming the musicians of the fellowship program on stage with us. We will be proud to continue performing music at the highest level together with our fellowship program musicians."

The CSO Fellowship Program has been developed with full support from Zell Music Director Riccardo Muti as part of his ongoing commitment to training the next generation of musicians, as well as the CSO

Members' Committee and the Chicago Federation of Musicians. The program builds upon the CSOA's longstanding focus on the training and development of musicians that began more than 100 years ago with the establishment of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago—the preprofessional training orchestra affiliated with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The CSOA has gone on to create or participate in programs that support young musicians from communities that are traditionally underrepresented in the orchestral field, specifically those interested in gaining entrance to top conservatories and post-secondary music schools as they seek a career in classical music performance. These programs include the [Percussion Scholarship Program](#), [Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative \(CMPI\)](#) and [Sphinx Orchestral Partners Auditions](#).

Program Eligibility

The CSO Fellowship Program is open to early-career string players (violin, viola, cello, double bass) who are attending or have graduated from college, university or conservatory and are from populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in American symphony orchestras, including, but not limited to, those who identify as Black, Latino or Indigenous. Additionally, applicants must have U.S. citizenship, permanent U.S. residency, or an O-1 or OPT visa at the time of application and must be a member in good standing of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), or willing to join the AFM if accepted to the Fellowship. If accepted, a Fellow may be invited to remain in the program for up to three years.

Application information will be available as of April 1, 2022, at cso.org/fellowship. Applications for the 2022-23 season are being accepted April 1 through May 27, 2022, with final auditions taking place in June 2022. The CSOA will cover round trip domestic transportation and up to two nights' accommodation for the audition finalists.

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