



*Sarah McLachlan*  
**SCHOOL OF MUSIC**  
*find your voice*

**Director of Development**

**February 2024**



Founded over 20 years ago by renowned Canadian singer-songwriter Sarah McLachlan, **The Sarah McLachlan School of Music (SoM)** helps children, youth, and adults 55+ find their voice. Using music as a tool to inspire connection, students with different needs, abilities, skill levels, learning styles and backgrounds come together to discover and fulfill their creative potential.

SoM is not a conventional “music school”: the SoM team creates a community space that is welcoming, safe, and supportive and where all students can feel comfortable being themselves and playing music together. By providing access to barrier free and creative music programs, a unique trust is built among staff and students that expands possibility. While music is the foundation of the SoM community, SoM is built upon the intrinsic value of inclusivity, proudly offering a space where young people are encouraged to forge deep friendships and express themselves.

*“We teach music, but we also teach respect, equality, empathy, and the importance of being engaged members of our community. Music connects us to ourselves and to others and we know, now more than ever, that community is vital to our human experience.” – Sarah McLachlan, Founder & Chair*

Over its 20+ year history, SoM has remained true to Sarah’s vision that music programs, transportation, and access to healthy food be offered at no cost for students facing significant financial and social emotional barriers to access. At SoM, in spite of incredible challenges related to poverty, food insecurity, homelessness, family relationships, mental health concerns, gender identity transition and sexual orientation, SoM students are celebrated for their strengths, accomplishments, and resiliency.

SoM has grown from a small pilot project in 2002 to today serving over 1,000 students a year through locations in Vancouver, Surrey, and Edmonton. Continuously adapting to meet the unique needs of our students, SoM has become a highly professionalized organization – while still maintaining a clear line of sight to our grassroots history.

SoM receives no government funding, and has been supported by Sarah’s committed community of friends, event attendees, and important foundation and corporate partnerships. Now, to support the School’s planned growth and ensure its long-term sustainability, we are recruiting a new Director of Development to lead all of our fundraising efforts.

The Director reports to the Executive Director, and partners with an engaged staff group, keen Board members, and Sarah herself. This unique and once-in-a-career opportunity features:

- A supportive and mutually empowering group of artistic and professional colleagues;
- The chance to build and professionalize a development program, while maintaining the School’s creative and organic culture;
- The opportunity to judiciously and strategically partner with an engaged, excited, and keen celebrity Founder;
- A donor and prospect list that would be the envy of many other fundraising programs;
- A leadership role in a school with a direct line-of-sight to improving the lives of children, their families, and society at large.

Please read on for more information about this incredible organization.

**Information for Candidates:**

This search is being led by SoM’s search partner, Christoph Clodius at The Discovery Group, at [christoph@thediscoverygroup.ca](mailto:christoph@thediscoverygroup.ca). If you or someone you know is interested or curious, please be in touch.

**Application Timing & Process:** The deadline for applications is March 8, 2024. Please apply with a cover letter/expression of interest and CV, ideally in the same document, to Christoph.

**Compensation & Benefits:** This is a full-time, permanent position with a starting salary range of \$105,000 to \$125,000 depending on experience. Our comprehensive benefits program features extended medical and dental coverage, a health spending account, holidays, and the opportunity for a flexible office/work from home balance.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** We’ve included the “wish list” of our ideal candidate below, and we realize that women and people of colour are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification.

Everyone comes to the table with a different background and skill set, so if you are excited about the prospect of working with us, and can demonstrate that you can do most of what we’re looking for, we would welcome an application from you.

Sarah McLachlan School of Music is an equal opportunity employer, committed to an inclusive and safe work environment for people of all backgrounds.



## ABOUT THE SARAH MCLACHLAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

### History & Founding

With a deep appreciation for the fact that “music saved my life”, Sarah McLachlan launched a pilot project with Arts Umbrella in 2002 to bring the transformative power of musical expression to multi-barriered children and youth. Growth followed rapidly, and in 2011, we incorporated as a registered charity.

Through the generosity of the Wolverton Foundation and the City of Vancouver, a gift of 16,000 square feet of space allowed our program to expand to 285 students. In 2016, an environmental scan/feasibility study of neighborhoods in Canada determined our program outreach to Surrey and Edmonton were needed.

### Our Vision, Purpose, and Values

SoM is guided by our Vision, Purpose, and Values. They are:

- Vision: Transforming lives through the power of music.
- Purpose: Building inclusive and barrier-free communities of musical learning where children and youth find their voice.
- SoM's Values:
  - Acceptance
  - Care
  - Collaboration
  - Commitment
  - Curiosity
  - Flexibility
  - Innovation
  - Social Responsibility



### SoM Participants

We know that kids with different needs, abilities, skill levels and learning styles can participate in music, and through this participation they find their voice. Many of our students face mental health issues such as anxiety or depression, while others have experienced bullying. A majority deal with significant financial difficulties, specifically:

- Nearly three-quarters of participants have high financial needs that prevent them from accessing extra-curricular programming and expressing themselves in safe, alternative, creative environments.

- More than a third of participants have high social-emotional needs such as ADHD, autism, anxiety, and depression.
- Nearly 300 community and school partners help us to identify individuals who could benefit most from our programming.
- Our program impacted 1135 participants over the 2022-2023 school year.

We operate as an after-school program five days a week for 38 weeks, accounting for approximately 60,000 hours of instruction per year. Students range in age from 8-24; we also serve a smaller number of children under five as well as our Senior's Ukulele Choir 55+. With a retention rate of over 80%, most of our students stay with us for an 8-year period.

We prioritize access, acceptance, and flexibility at every stage of our model working to reduce barriers by providing free transportation from schools designated as high need. We offer a healthy snack program so that students are nourished, and hunger doesn't prevent them from getting the most out of their class.

As of September 2023, 1060 students are enrolled at our three locations: Vancouver, Surrey, and Edmonton.

### **Our Approach**

Staff are central to our programs and SoM is committed to investing in their development; we follow best practices for recruiting, training, supporting, and retention. Our Teaching Artists have incredibly unique skill sets. All are professional musicians (recording, actively working in music) with exceptional technical abilities. Each Teaching Artist has the capacity to adapt to various learning contexts with young people from diverse backgrounds.

SoM's flexible approach is designed to meet the needs of our students, improve their quality of life, and make an impact on their mental health and well-being by providing a space to be themselves and feel a sense of belonging. Once in class, students have the chance to explore music and express themselves in a way that is meaningful to them. Our success lives in the deep belief that our approach prioritizes elements of evidence-based beneficial music education, including active music-making, group participation, and being open to all. Success in a SoM classroom involves:

- Group goal setting.
- Active music making.
- Appropriate challenges for mixed abilities.
- Community building.
- Positive leadership and mentoring.

### **Our Impact: Evaluation Results**

Evaluation on a short-term basis is collected at the end of the school year to assess the student experience. We conduct student surveys, creating an opportunity for feedback and to quantify the social and emotional benefits of our program. Our questions ask whether the students experienced any positive benefits because of the program such as new things learned, new friends and feeling supported by SoM staff. We have found these are indicators of the overall social- emotional impact of their class. We aim to have over 80% of students report experiencing three or more positive benefits because of being at SoM.

In May 2023, SoM surveyed students across all three locations. The results from 429 students indicate the SoM is having a remarkably positive impact on their lives:

- 92% say they had a good year overall
- 90% say they learned new things about music
- 80% say they did something they are proud of
- 60% say they made new friends
- 94% say there are staff here that support them
- 92% say teachers and staff listen to what they have to say
- 89% say they would recommend SoM to a friend

More details about the school and program can be found at <https://www.sarahschoolofmusic.com/>

### Looking Ahead

As we continue to build on our over two decades of experience, we expect to accomplish the following over the next years.

- We will continue to develop and increase our service delivery to students in Surrey and Edmonton;
- We will develop our Strategic Plan for 2024-2027;
- We will continue to develop our leadership team to ensure that our staff are fully supported in their important work;
- We will continue to stabilize our organizational structure ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion in our policies, transparency, and accountability.

### Fundraising at SoM

Last year, SoM's budget of over \$2.6 million was predominantly supported by the Sarah McLachlan Foundation. Additional support from foundations, friends of SoM, events like Barefoot in the Backyard, and other donors provided the balance. The Sarah McLachlan School of Music Foundation holds investments totalling \$7.5, which includes both the School's growing endowment (over \$4 million) and operating reserve.

The program is therefore stable and ripe for growth: the Director will be tasked with ensuring the School has an effective, comprehensive, and diverse fundraising program appropriate to its goals and ends. This includes, but is not limited to, continued relationships with the School's major and potentially major donors, growing the SoM Foundation endowment, and ensuring annual and community-level donors are given the chance to support this incredible institution. Our fundraising goal this year is just under \$2 million.

With a clear understanding of SoM's strategic plan and annual goals, the Director will play an integral role in developing the fund development strategy and ensuring the implementation of donor-centered fundraising programs that will drive growth, build a strong donor pipeline, deepen donor relationships, and provide donors with excellent stewardship.

The Director is a member of SoM's leadership team that reports to the Executive Director, working closely with the ED, SoM's leadership team, School and Foundation Board members, and Sarah to help facilitate and envision organizational growth and expansion initiatives for SoM's future.

Specific duties include:

### Strategy & Planning

- Develop, in partnership with the ED and leadership team, the long-range fundraising strategy, aligned with the SoM's strategic goals and mission.
- Assess and explore viable fundraising programs as appropriate; work with the ED and the program leads to understand priorities and donor opportunities.
- Ensure buy-in and excitement for the plan, enabling a culture of philanthropy across internal and external constituents.
- Set and meet fundraising objectives and evaluate results.

### Development & Fundraising

- Establish and implement an annual fund development operational plan with key strategic priorities, performance measures based on goals and budget considerations.
- In partnership with the ED, Founder, and lead volunteers, create and implement strategies for the cultivation and solicitation of major gift prospects, including individual, foundation, and corporate donors.
- Research, design, and write proposals.
- Produce stewardship and impact reports to promote donor retention and growth.
- Participate in key donor event planning and strategy by engaging sponsors, recruiting, and coordinating volunteers, guest list management, sourcing items for auction, and coordinating participant gifts as needed.
- Create and manage meaningful donor visits, tours, and cultivation events as needed.
- Ensure alignment between the best and most viable fundraising activities and SoM's potential; work to create financial sustainability and revenue diversity.
- Clearly articulate, prepare, and promote strong cases for support.
- Deploy best-practices in moves management and data tracking systems.
- Ensure leadership, including but not limited to the ED, staff, and Boards, and Founder, are fully engaged with philanthropy, leveraging their time as efficiently and strategically as possible.

### Community and Public Relations

- Actively expand SoM's networks with key and influential community leaders.
- As part of the leadership team, represent SoM in public and private events, the community at large and other relevant engagements.
- Assure SoM and its mission are consistently presented in a positive manner to all stakeholders.
- Represent SoM by effectively communicating its mission, vision, and program priorities.
- Cultivate, build, and maintain strong and authentic relationships with a wide range of partners, community, and business leaders to understand and articulate evolving needs.
- Support the Executive Director in seeking out and developing key strategic partnerships and leveraging these partnerships to maximize fundraising efforts.

### Financial Management

- In collaboration with the Director of Finance, prepare the annual fund development budget and quarterly Board reports on performance measures and results.
- Develop and manage fundraising expenses through integrated planning, ensuring fiscal responsibility and return on investment.
- Maintain an ongoing dialogue on successes and challenges against key strategic priorities, recalibrating as needed to achieve stated goals.
- Manage the organization's resources within budget guidelines.

- Ensure the development and implementation of policies and procedures for gift processing and timely donor acknowledgement, database management, and financial reports including industry reporting.

#### Human Resources Management

- Provide leadership, direction, and mentorship to contracted staff and external contractors.
- Ensure work tasks are completed on schedule and work is completed in adherence with SoM standards and policies.
- Foster a culture of respect, positivity, and trust, as well as an environment that supports teamwork and cooperation.

### The Ideal Director of Development

SoM's development program requires leadership skills and extensive experience as a fundraiser, including invaluable donor prospecting and stewardship, technical, logistical, and financial management skills to the role. This position requires a self-starter who thrives in a busy, self-directed environment and can work well both independently and as a part of the leadership team.



The Director will ideally be:

- **A Natural collaborator** - able to quickly connect and build relationships with a diverse group of people, both in person and remotely. You bring appreciative curiosity, asking questions to understand, engage, and improve.
- **Dynamic and relational** - you default to action, are an excellent listener, and can pick up nuance in dealing with others. A self-starter, you're willing to roll up your sleeves and are motivated to achieve. You're excited to build.
- **Confident and assertive** - you deploy your expertise with tact and diplomacy, and aren't overawed by working with celebrities or high net worth individuals. You are adaptable, flexible and bring a low-ego, high EQ approach to wanting what's best for the School.
- **Passionate and curious** - you question the status quo, and are not afraid to try new ways of doing things. You lead with heart and uphold the values that we are all in it together.
- **A leader that inspires commitment to strengthening community through music** - confident using your communication, delegation, planning, technology, and operational skills to deliver. You can take in all the wonderful things the School does, and distill it into clear and compelling language and calls to action for our donors.
- **Inclusive and Respectful** - actively contributes towards creating an inclusive, welcoming, and safe work environment, where all of our people feel like they belong. Your ambition and autonomy fit in well with our culture of creativity.
- **Visionary** - able to create a compelling vision for your colleagues, partners, donors, and area of work, to get buy-in, and to engage and empower others to deliver on your plans for the



future. You understand that music is in the air we breathe, while at the same time it's a tool to achieve phenomenal things.

### Desired Qualifications, Education, and Credentials

- Significant and demonstrated fund development experience in a broad and comprehensive fundraising program, ideally including a combination of major gifts, grant applications, digital fundraising, events, and annual giving.
- A genuine interest in youth with a passion to help them succeed; strong mission-alignment to the SoM goals.
- First-hand experience in a community service, mental health, youth, or grassroots education organization will be valuable.
- Significant knowledge of fund development best practices
- Proven ability to maximize existing revenue streams while identifying and pursuing new revenue streams.
- Experience in cultivation, solicitation, and closing gifts; demonstrated skills in relationship-building.
- Demonstrated ability to work with a high-profile celebrity and its inherent dynamics.
- Knowledge and experience of special events planning and management.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Demonstrated team - based skill set; ability to work independently while thriving on a team.
- Experience dealing with confidentiality and sensitive information.
- Excellent people skills and the ability to communicate with enthusiasm and energy.
- Organized with attention to detail and strong time management skills.
- Experience with a variety of tech tools, such as a donation CRM (ie: Raiser's Edge) and Gmail, Google Docs, Slack, Discord
- Knowledge of Society legislation, CRA guidelines and regulations.
- A relevant post-secondary degree or combination of relevant training, education, and experience
- A Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) designation is an asset.
- Some travel around the Lower Mainland will be required, potentially in Alberta as well; working hours are variable to attend events and meetings.

**BIO: Sarah McLachlin, Founder & Chair**

Sarah is the Founder and Chair of the Sarah McLachlan School of Music. Over her celebrated music career, she has sold over forty million albums, received three Grammy Awards, twelve Juno Awards and was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame.

In addition to her personal artistic efforts, Sarah founded the Lilith Fair tour, which showcased female musicians and brought together more than two million people over its three-year run. Lilith Fair raised over \$7 million for local and national charities and helped launch the careers of numerous female performers.

For her contributions to the community, Sarah has received recognition including the Queen Elizabeth II Golden and Diamond Jubilee medals, as well as honorary doctorate degrees from Capilano University, Simon Fraser University, the University of Alberta, and Emily Carr University. She is an Officer of the Order of Canada and a Member of the Order of British Columbia.



As the key visionary, Sarah brings an enthusiasm and passion to every facet of the School of Music and she has an active presence as an advocate for the profound potential of music education to empower, motivate, and transform lives.

**Dan Cleland, Interim ED, SoM; CEO & VP Sarah McLachlan Entertainment Corporation**



Dan Cleland has over 30 years of experience within the music industry. His path has included work as audio engineer, production manager, tour manager, and music school board member. Following his tour management of such celebrity musicians as Avril Lavigne, the Barenaked Ladies, Norah Jones, and The Chieftains, Dan has come to work as a major member of Grammy Award winning singer-songwriter Sarah McLachlan’s management team.

Dan brings a wealth of energy, industry knowledge, and professional acumen to his work, and though he is undoubtedly a workaholic, he does maintain one of his favorite hobbies as a pilot, as well as his own endeavors in music.

## Volunteer Leadership:

Sarah McLachlan School of Music Board of Directors:

- Sarah McLachlan, Founder and Chair
- Dan Cleland, Vice Chair, and Interim ED
- Donna Molby, Treasurer
- Jane Muckle, Secretary
- Sue Bauman, Board Member
- David Martin, Board Member
- Jennifer Traub, Board Member

Sarah McLachlan School of Music Foundation Board of Directors:

- Sarah McLachlan, Founder and Chair
- Dan Cleland, Vice Chair, and Interim ED
- Kenna Danyliw, Treasurer
- Jane Muckle, Secretary
- Doug Goss, Board Member
- Joyce Ip, Board Member
- Jeffrey Latimer, Board Member
- Ashif Mawji, Board Member

