



ISAACSON, MILLER  
www.imsearch.com



**President**  
**New England Conservatory of Music**  
**Boston, MA**

## **THE SEARCH**

The New England Conservatory of Music (NEC) seeks in its seventeenth President a collaborative, strategic, and visionary leader who will build upon NEC's rich 150-year history of distinction and innovation, embrace the opportunities and realities of today's complex musical and artistic landscape, support and expand standards of excellence, and guide the Conservatory's evolution into the future.

Founded in 1867, NEC is the oldest independent school of music in the U.S. and a cultural icon of national and international standing. In delivering a superlative educational experience to over 2,700 students across its College, Preparatory School, and School of Continuing Education, NEC draws on the deep reservoir of talent and experience of its 484 distinguished faculty (full- and part-time), a group of internationally esteemed artist-teachers and scholars who work across the Conservatory's three divisions. At all levels, an NEC education is at once rigorous and nurturing. Staff, faculty, and students alike attest to the power of the distinctively inclusive, encouraging, and supportive community one discovers upon arriving at NEC.

NEC's curriculum covers an expansive range of styles and traditions. Student instrumentalists, singers, and composers are trained in a broad array of methods, including classical, jazz, opera, composition, world music and early music. Innovative programming and creativity abounds. The Conservatory boasts an unparalleled chamber music program and was the first conservatory in the nation to offer a degree in jazz. NEC also pioneered an innovative concentration in Contemporary Improvisation, and more recently has introduced entrepreneurship into its curricular offerings. Equipped with an extensive toolkit, NEC graduates step into the world as exceedingly adaptive musicians, going on to fill orchestra chairs, concert hall stages, jazz clubs, recording studios, arts management positions and a broad range of music leadership roles worldwide. NEC produces some of the world's most prolific 21<sup>st</sup> century musicians.

The Conservatory is experiencing an exciting moment in its history with the convergence this year of two major milestones: the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding and the unveiling of the new Student Life and Performance Center (SLPC). A perfect embodiment of NEC's culture of collaboration, the SLPC offers a state-of-the-art setting for student-driven activity and inventiveness. Fused and juxtaposed within NEC's original historic buildings, also in full and active use, the Center is a fitting metaphor for the nexus of the modern and the traditional, key

themes engaged day in and day out at this pre-eminent institution and drawn into sharper focus during the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

The next President will join NEC at an exciting and momentum-building time in the Conservatory's history. The caliber of the faculty and students remains, as always, exceptional, and the musical training is best in class. The College's liberal arts and co-curricular offerings ensure that NEC graduates are well prepared to navigate the dynamics of today's job market with confidence and success. The Prep and Continuing Education programs – key connection points to aspiring musicians and music lovers in the community – highlight the far-reaching impact of NEC across the greater Boston area and beyond. Looking ahead, the Conservatory's next leader will be expected to capitalize on and enhance this impressive foundation, support the pedagogical excellence across campus, encourage continued programmatic innovation, and grow NEC's financial resources and local presence to further strengthen its position as one of the leading American conservatories.

## **ABOUT THE INSTITUTION**

*The mission of the New England Conservatory is to educate and train musicians of all ages from around the world. NEC is dedicated to inculcating the highest standards of excellence and nurturing individual artistic sensibility and creative growth. Understanding that music is one of the transcendent expressions of human civilization, NEC aspires to ensure it a central place in contemporary society.*

### **The College**

Today, NEC enrolls over 800 students across a variety of majors, including brass, chamber music, collaborative piano, composition, conducting, Contemporary Improvisation, jazz studies, music history and musicology, music theory, percussion, piano, strings, voice and opera, and woodwinds. Degree offerings include the Bachelor of Music, Master of Music, and Doctor of Musical Arts, as well as the Undergraduate Diploma, Graduate Diploma, and the prestigious and highly selective Artist Diploma.

NEC enrolls an immensely talented student body. For the 2017-2018 academic year, the College admitted 32% of its applicants from a deep and competitive pool. About 40% of the student body is international, hailing from 39 countries. NEC also draws students from throughout the United States, with 46 states represented. Approximately 95% of the NEC student community receives some amount of financial aid or scholarship support from NEC. The College's undergraduate graduation rate is 81%.

NEC's faculty is best in class across a wide array of musical disciplines. The College is home to 234 artists who are pre-eminent in their fields, 40 of whom are members of the renowned Boston Symphony Orchestra, and numerous others who are distinguished composers, soloists, performers, and scholars in their own right. Students are drawn to NEC, first and foremost, because of the caliber of NEC's faculty members and for the opportunity to study with artists who are masters of their craft. The faculty's commitment to excellence and to student achievement is the foundational through-line for NEC's esteemed legacy.

In addition to its core musical training and studio work, NEC places significant emphasis on liberal arts, music history and music theory, which it believes contribute importantly to the development of well-rounded musicians and arts leaders. Full-time NEC undergraduates have cross-registration opportunities at Northeastern University, Tufts University, and schools in the ProArts Consortium: Emerson College, MassArt, Berklee, and Boston Architectural College. Approximately 44 NEC undergraduates are enrolled in five-year joint degree programs with either Harvard College or Tufts University.

As part of its core mission to produce well-rounded musicians, active life-long learners, and responsible citizens, the College has long supported and encouraged cross-departmental collaborations. The music theory and liberal arts faculty have embraced the opportunity to partner, developing interdisciplinary and overlapping coursework for their students. Unsurprisingly, chamber music is at the heart of NEC's approach to musical artistry: most NEC students participate in chamber music nearly every semester, learning the art of collaboration and collective musical decision-making alongside incredible faculty coaches.

NEC has long been a pioneer in musical education beyond the classical canon, as evidenced by the leading Jazz and Contemporary Improvisation programs. The formal jazz program was founded in 1969 under the leadership of President Gunther Schuller, making NEC the first major classical conservatory to offer a degree program in jazz studies. The Contemporary Improvisation program, founded by Schuller shortly thereafter, supports musicians who seek to move beyond traditional genre boundaries with an emphasis on ear training, technique, conceptual ideas, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a wide range of improvisational traditions. It is widely regarded as one of the most innovative programs of its kind in the nation. NEC maintains the highest standard of music-making, with deliberately permeable lines between genres, and supports a confluence of different types of musical study and performance.

As a meaningful complement to these interdisciplinary musical programs, NEC is also home to leading-edge work in Entrepreneurial Musicianship (EM). The EM program offers a range of courses, seminars, and visiting artist programs that help emerging artists articulate the impact they want to make as musicians and build the professional skills to do so. Faculty, staff, and alumni advisors work closely with students to help equip them with a more robust professional toolkit, tackling everything from writing resumes and grant proposals to brand-building and financial planning. EM's grant program provides support for students seeking to work on innovative and impactful projects to further their independent professional growth.

### **The Preparatory School and the School of Continuing Education**

The New England Conservatory Preparatory School (NEC Prep) offers open-enrollment educational opportunities for pre-college students across New England. It currently serves nearly 1,600 students in the region, including those enrolled in NEC through a partnership with Walnut Hill School for the Arts. Prep musicians attend individual lessons and classes, and participate in chamber music and 26 large ensembles, including orchestras, choruses, and wind ensembles. It is one of the largest programs of its kind in the nation.

In 1962, NEC Prep established one of the finest youth orchestras in the world: the highly selective Youth Philharmonic Orchestra (YPO), which tours internationally once every two years and has performed in some of the finest concert halls in the world. Prep is also home to the highly celebrated and selective NEC Youth Chorale, Youth Camerata, Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble, and Jazz Ensemble.

The School of Continuing Education (SCE) opens the doors of NEC to the broader New England community of adult music lovers and learners, offering an expansive array of musical training from private instrument lessons to full certificate programs in a range of subjects. Workshops, masterclasses, ensembles, and summer institutes are all taught by the area's most highly qualified musicians. Nearly 300 students are enrolled in SCE each year.

Both the Preparatory School and the School of Continuing Education help to deepen NEC's ties to and reach within the wider Boston community and play an important role in supporting the Conservatory's overall mission.

## **Facilities and Finances**

Located in Boston on the Avenue of the Arts in the Fenway Cultural District, the NEC campus consists of four buildings that stretch along St. Botolph Street and Huntington Avenue in the heart of downtown Boston. The campus is bounded by commercial and residential buildings, Symphony Hall, the YMCA, and the Northeastern University campus.

NEC's premier performance venue, the historic and acoustically superb Jordan Hall, is one of the world's most admired concert halls. It provides an intimate and versatile setting for a wide variety of performances and recording sessions featuring NEC students and faculty, with seating for just over 1,000. On weekends, the hall is used by some of Boston's top professional music organizations, including Boston Baroque, Boston Early Music Festival, Celebrity Series, and Handel and Haydn Society. In April 1994, NEC and Jordan Hall jointly earned National Historic Landmark status. (NEC was the first music school in the nation to receive this distinction.) And in 1995, Jordan Hall underwent a major renovation, and has received several more awards post-restoration. Additional performance spaces on campus include Brown Hall, Williams Hall, Keller Hall, Pierce Hall, the Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre, Burnes Hall and Eben Jordan Ensemble Room; NEC's array of concert venues host 1000+ student performances each year.

The new Student Life and Performance Center (SLPC) was dedicated and formally opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony in September 2017. Designed to foster collaboration and spark creativity, the SLPC provides a central resource for NEC students with exceptional facilities for rehearsal, performances, and recording. In addition to the Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre and several rehearsal and recording rooms equipped with state-of-the-art acoustic design, the Speed Dining Commons provides a space for nourishment and student social gathering; the two-level Blumenthal Family Library consolidates print and audio resources alongside NEC's rare collections; and seven stories of residential housing doubles the on-campus occupancy. Additionally, with the renovation of the campus' former dormitory into a Welcome Center with over 80 practice rooms, NEC now boasts one of the lowest student-to-practice-room ratios of any conservatory.

To sustain the enterprise and its \$40.1 million annual operating costs, NEC – like many other conservatories – relies heavily on tuition. The Conservatory draws roughly 75% of its revenue from tuition, room, and board (\$29.7M), 14% from the endowment (\$5.8M), and 11% from major gifts and annual fund support (\$4.6M). As of June 2017, the Conservatory's endowment totaled \$116.9M, and the Conservatory raised just over \$10M through annual fundraising efforts in each of the last couple of years. In the most recent academic year, NEC provided \$20.9M in aid to students; \$14.2M was direct scholarship support.

## **THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

NEC's last permanent leader, Tony Woodcock, stepped down from the NEC presidency in June 2015. Since then, the Conservatory has been ably run by Tom Novak, Interim President, Provost and Dean. The Conservatory's senior leadership and Board have overseen a period of continued growth and sustained musical and academic excellence across the institution, and NEC's next leader will, as a result, inherit a well-tended and forward-focused operation. The Board is deeply committed to supporting and partnering with NEC's next President, and there is great enthusiasm and strategic consensus about the search and NEC's future. The foundation is strong for leading the Conservatory boldly into its next chapter, and there is tremendous excitement across the NEC community about welcoming a new leader to campus.

The President will report to the Board of Trustees, a select 41-member group of alumni and supporters (23 voting members and 18 lifetime trustees), who advocate for NEC's cultural and educational mission, its standing in the community, and its overall institutional well-being. She or he will work closely with a dedicated and talented executive team, including the Provost and Dean of the College, Senior Vice President of Finance and Operations, Vice President of Marketing and Communications, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, and Vice President of Administration. The President will provide strategic leadership toward a unifying vision for the Conservatory's future and, specifically, will work to address the following opportunities and challenges:

***In partnership with the Board, senior administrators, and the broader NEC community, lead a comprehensive and inclusive strategic planning process and establish a forward-looking agenda that will position NEC for continued success into the future.***

NEC's next President will take office at a moment in the field of music where constant change is the norm. As they work to establish sustainable and fulfilling careers in music, graduating students face uncertain and demanding vocational terrain. It will be important for NEC to pay close attention to the trends impacting alumni and continue to adapt conservatory training to prepare students to tackle the ever-changing opportunities in the field, to chart new career pathways, and to become the leaders who push music into new realms and to new heights. The future is about celebrating traditional paths to musical excellence while fully acknowledging and intelligently, proactively, and creatively addressing shifting realities within the industry and thus the changing needs of students today.

With this as context, the next President will be expected to engage the entire NEC community in a strategic planning process that sharpens institutional focus on a set of key opportunities, builds shared purpose and establishes clear priorities, and moves NEC toward greater financial sustainability for the future. This work should encompass each of NEC's component parts – the College, the Preparatory School, and the School of Continuing Education – and should articulate a core unifying vision for the whole. It is a comprehensive endeavor that will require strong leadership and listening skills, the ability to build consensus, and a firm grasp of the current trends in conservatory education coupled with a creative, big-picture approach for tackling the challenges on the road ahead.

***Compellingly and enthusiastically share NEC's mission and story with alumni, donors, and friends of the institution. Grow the Conservatory's fundraising function in order to support student scholarships, curricular innovations, and co-curricular programming.***

While NEC maintains a strong fiscal position, it will be critical for the new President to bolster and expand the Conservatory's financial foundations. The next President will assess the current revenue streams, targeting growth in those already established and identifying additional opportunities for revenue generation, both contributed and earned. She or he will work with the Board and the development team to broaden overall philanthropic engagement and expand the support the Conservatory receives from their community of donors. While the fundraising landscape in Boston remains quite competitive, there are significant opportunities for donor cultivation both locally and on a national and international scale with audiences, alumni, and long-time evangelists. The next President will be on the front lines of donor stewardship as NEC's public face, primary ambassador, and fundraiser-in-chief.

In particular, addressing the financial needs of NEC's student body must be central to the Conservatory's ongoing fundraising efforts. Many of NEC's peers offer programs that are tuition-free or largely subsidized. In

order to remain competitive in this landscape, the President must demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring access to NEC for the most talented students regardless of financial need.

***Recognize, embrace, and preserve NEC's special culture of collaboration and its deep-rooted commitment to training and educating the next generation of musical performers and leaders.***

NEC maintains the highest standard of music-making and music education while holding fast to a set of shared cultural values and principles that define the institution. Faculty, staff, students, and trustees describe a cooperative community of learning built on open-mindedness, high standards, mutual respect, an innovative spirit, artistic integrity, individual expression, life-long learning, responsible citizenship, and a fierce belief in the life-changing power of music. NEC's leadership and faculty alike are dedicated to creating a supportive and collegial learning environment that maximizes the individual attention each student receives and enables self-exploration; they feel a great sense of responsibility to reinforce and expand the position of music in society by educating the next generation of music leaders, incubating new work, and sharing their students' sublime art with the widest possible audiences. In all her/his endeavors, the incoming President will uphold and maintain these core values, actively working to enhance the conditions that enable all community members to thrive.

***Foster a culture of inclusion and acceptance across NEC's campus. Celebrate the existing diversity of NEC's faculty and student body while continuing to promote broader access to the most talented students from underrepresented and underserved communities.***

In its next leader, NEC seeks a President who is passionate about enhancing the quality and strengthening the diversity of conservatories and the performing arts more broadly. This important work stretches across NEC – from the Prep program's community engagement efforts in and around Boston to inclusive and far-reaching admissions and recruitment strategies at the College; from scholarship support for prospective students to faculty and staff hiring across all music and academic programs; and from community-building and diversity-oriented programs on campus to preparing students for the global and multi-cultural world they will enter after graduating. It is critical and ongoing work, and the next President should take care to lead these efforts robustly and thoughtfully.

***With careful planning and input from the NEC community, guide the continuing evolution of programming and curriculum while sustaining its excellence.***

The Conservatory has established a strong foundation for the kind of innovative programming necessary to prepare its graduates for the variety of career pathways available to professionally-trained musicians today. The new President should enthusiastically pick up this effort, working closely with the staff and faculty to continue to innovate and build upon the successful initiatives already underway. Current offerings within the Jazz and Contemporary Improvisation departments as well as the Entrepreneurial Musicianship program (the first of its kind among American conservatories) will serve as useful origin points for further exploration and development.

The next President will partner with program leadership, administrative colleagues, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and others in the NEC community to update the strategy for the Conservatory's current offerings and plan for their next iteration. Critical to this work is the support and expansion of an exemplary faculty, upon which NEC's pedagogical model depends; robust and ongoing faculty recruitment and retention should be prioritized. The next President will also work to deepen relationships with the accomplished alumni community, whose lived experiences and pioneering achievements in music and beyond will provide invaluable lessons and inform NEC's approach to planning the curriculum of tomorrow.

***Strengthen NEC's presence and external relationships across the greater Boston area and among the Boston arts ecosystem. Capitalize on the Conservatory's musical assets in order to grow its impact and reputation locally.***

NEC operates within a thriving and diverse arts community in Boston, and should capitalize on opportunities to establish formal and informal partnerships with other arts and education organizations across the city and in its own backyard. The President should welcome the opportunity to represent NEC with external stakeholders and community leaders, strengthening existing ties and initiating new connections. Given the city's robust arts landscape, the President must work to distinguish NEC among the many other cultural institutions, articulating clearly and persuasively all that is special and preeminent about NEC. The Prep and Continuing Ed programs already support these efforts and will likely be key anchors in the President's ongoing community-building work. Ultimately, the Conservatory's strengthened reputation should paint the picture of an NEC that is more open and integrated within Boston and, at the same time, clearly seen as best in class among its peers.

## **QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE**

New England Conservatory seeks an inspiring, innovative, and unifying leader who will energetically support and guide this world-class learning and performing institution. She or he will be committed to the powerful expression of the highest caliber art and craft. In addition to a passion for the performing arts and appropriate administrative and management experience, the successful candidate will be an enterprising, creative leader who puts student success and well-being above all else.

The search committee seeks candidates with the following experiences, characteristics, and abilities, understanding that no single candidate will have all of the ideal qualifications:

- Deep respect for the culture and community of New England Conservatory; an appreciation for the spirit of partnership among faculty, students, and staff, and the ability and inclination to protect and cultivate it
- Profound understanding of excellence in the arts with a personal commitment to supporting the role of the arts in society and the training of the next generation of musicians and arts leaders
- A track record of innovation and strategic risk-taking, creative problem-solving, and impeccable judgement; a confident, engaging leadership style and a deep respect for community input
- Administrative and operational smarts; a record of success managing a large staff and budget, and experience leading a complex, multi-faceted organization or unit during a time of dramatic change and growth
- Proven and engaging relationship-building and fundraising skills; a clear, persuasive, and effective communicator and a passionate storyteller
- Experience engaging external audiences and partners on a local, national, and international scale
- An understanding of the shifting conditions within the larger arts and culture field, including a strong grasp of the role of technology in the future of the arts

- A demonstrated ability to manage, delegate, prioritize, motivate and build strong teams
- Emotional intelligence, including warmth, approachability, and empathy

**TO APPLY**

All inquiries, nominations/referrals, and resumes with cover letters should be sent electronically to the following via [www.imsearch.com/6530](http://www.imsearch.com/6530):

Sheryl Ash, Katie Rockman, or Chloe Kanas  
Isaacson, Miller  
263 Summer Street, Floor 7  
Boston, MA 02210  
[www.imsearch.com/6530](http://www.imsearch.com/6530)

*New England Conservatory of Music does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, genetic make-up, or veteran status in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, employment policies, scholarship and loan programs, or other Conservatory-sponsored activities.*