



Steelpan Teaching Assistant

WHO WE ARE

CYSO's mission is to inspire and cultivate personal excellence through music. As one of the country's leading youth orchestras, we offer a continuum of programs that serve young musicians 6-18 years old through on-site ensembles, neighborhood programming, and concerts serving Chicago Public Schools students and the entire Chicagoland community.

Each season, we serve approximately 650 young musicians in weekly rehearsals and multiple performances at a variety of area venues, including Symphony Center, and an additional 8,500 students and families through community programming. Bi-annually, CYSO students perform in a multi-city, international tour.

Founded in 1946, CYSO is entering its 80th anniversary season in 2026. From one orchestra at its inception, CYSO has grown to include 13 large ensembles (including symphonic, jazz, and steel pan orchestras), over a dozen chamber ensembles, composition seminar, commissioning projects and citywide education concerts. CYSO's small but mighty team is filled with dedicated professionals who are passionate about music, education, and nurturing the next generation of creative leaders.

ABOUT THE STEELPAN PROGRAMS

The CYSO Steel Orchestras Program provides steelpan instruction to students in grades 1–12 through weekly rehearsals focused on technique, ensemble performance, repertoire development, and music theory. Led by Program Director Scott McConnell, the program offers a welcoming and supportive environment for students of all experience levels from across the greater Chicagoland area.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Steel Orchestras Teaching Assistant works closely with the Director of Steelpan to support student learning and ensemble development. Successful candidates will possess comprehensive knowledge of all steelpan voices, be able to play multiple steelpan voices, and demonstrate the ability to work effectively with students of varying ages and skill levels.

Responsibilities include:

- Assisting with instruction in steelpan technique, musicianship, and music theory
- Leading and coaching sectional rehearsals
- Performing alongside students during rehearsals and performances
- Supporting student engagement and ensemble growth
- Providing and/or teaching musical arrangements as needed throughout the season

QUALIFICATIONS

Required:

- Steelpan performance experience
- Teaching and/or ensemble coaching experience
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to create a positive, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for students and families

Preferred:

- Bachelor of Music in Music Education or Performance
 - Master of Music degree in Music Education or Performance
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WORK SCHEDULE

The Teaching Assistant is expected to attend all rehearsals and performances throughout the season.

- Rehearsals: Saturdays, 9:00 AM–5:15 PM (includes 4 levels of ensembles)
 - Location: Fine Arts Building, Chicago, IL
 - Season Length: Approximately 30 weeks
 - Season Dates: Late August, 2026 - early June, 2027
 - Performances: 1 performance per concert cycle (Fall, Winter, Spring), and others as scheduled
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COMPENSATION

- \$8,000 annual salary, commensurate with experience and expertise.
 - This is a 1-year part time employee position, with possibility for renewal annually
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APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please email smcconnell@cyso.org to submit your cover letter and resume. No phone calls please.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The successful candidate(s) will proceed onto each progressive step:

- Initial submission of:
 - Resume
 - Cover letter
- Zoom conversation with the Director of Steelpan and Program Director
- In person interview with the Director of Steelpan, Program Director, and Executive Director
- Phone conversations with referrals and background check of the final candidate