

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE

Senior Donor Engagement Officer

Status: Full-Time | Exempt | Benefits Eligible

Location: On-Site – Paper Mill Playhouse (Millburn, NJ)

Reports to: Associate Director of Major Gifts

About Paper Mill Playhouse

Founded in 1934 and recipient of the **2016 Regional Theatre Tony Award**, Paper Mill Playhouse is an internationally recognized leader in American musical theater and a cornerstone of arts education and access across New Jersey. In addition to producing groundbreaking new works and acclaimed revivals for more than 200,000 audience members each year, Paper Mill reaches more than 40,000 students, educators, and families through robust arts education programs, in-school partnerships, and access initiatives that nurture creativity, build confidence, and cultivate the next generation of theater lovers.

Our Mission

Paper Mill Playhouse entertains, inspires, and enriches lives. As the nation's premier musical theater, we foster a creative environment to advance the art form, educate students, develop future theater lovers, nurture inclusion, and provide access for all.

Why This Role Matters

Paper Mill Playhouse is in an exciting period of growth, creativity, and deepened community engagement—and individual philanthropy is fundamental to that momentum.

At Paper Mill, we believe philanthropy is built on trust, belonging, and authentic connection—not transactions. ***This role is central to how we move beyond traditional fundraising tactics and toward donor relationships built upon shared values, curiosity, and care.***

The **Senior Donor Engagement Officer** (SDEO) plays a highly visible role in shaping how donors experience, connect with, and invest in Paper Mill. This position blends frontline fundraising with strategy, storytelling, and donor experience design. You will steward meaningful relationships, oversee the Annual Fund renewal program, and help grow a sustainable pipeline of supporters who believe in the power of musical theater to inspire, educate, and bring people together.

Who We're Looking For

This is an ideal role for **an experienced, relationship-driven fundraising professional who:**

- Values **trust, listening, and long-term partnership** as much as short-term results.
- Is excited to help **evolve how donors connect** with a leading cultural institution.
- Enjoys both **hands-on donor engagement and big-picture thinking**.

Position Overview

Reporting to the Associate Director of Major Gifts, the SDEO manages a portfolio of individual donors while serving as a key partner in the planning and execution of the Annual Fund strategy.

You will lead the day-to-day execution of renewals and appeals, collaborate across departments on donor-centered communication, and help design engagement pathways that move supporters from first gift to deeper, sustained involvement—**with an emphasis on clarity, trust, and long-term relationship building**. The role balances autonomy with collaboration and offers meaningful exposure to leadership, donors, and organizational strategy.

This role is well-suited for a fundraising professional who sees philanthropy not as a series of transactions, but as an evolving relationship rooted in shared purpose.

Key Responsibilities

Percentages are approximate and reflect how time is typically allocated across responsibilities.

Donor Portfolio + Relationship Management (40%)

- Manage and strategically steward a portfolio of approximately 150-200 donor households.
- Guide donors through a thoughtful relationship journey—from first connection through long-term partnership—with an emphasis on retention, trust, and sustained philanthropic engagement.
- Serve as the primary point of contact for Annual Fund donors giving up to \$3,000, delivering a high-touch, personalized donor experience.
- Conduct thoughtful donor outreach via phone, email, meetings, and events to strengthen relationships and inspire continued support.

Annual Fund Strategy + Campaigns (25%)

- Partner with the Associate Director of Major Gifts to execute the full Annual Fund renewal process, including solicitations, reminders, acknowledgments, and benefit fulfillment.
- Help plan, execute, and continuously refine multi-channel annual giving campaigns across direct mail, email, web, and social media.
- Collaborate with Marketing + Communications to develop donor-centered storytelling that reflects Paper Mill's mission, programs, and impact.
- Track and analyze renewal performance, donor engagement trends, and campaign results to better understand donor behavior, improve experiences, and strengthen long-term relationships.

Donor Engagement + Pipeline Development (25%)

- Identify and cultivate new donors from ticket buyers, education families, and audience segments, helping expand and diversify the donor base.
- Support and attend donor engagement opportunities such as opening nights, receptions, backstage tours, and other special events—with a focus on connection, access, and shared experience over exclusivity.
- Work closely with Development colleagues to ensure smooth pipeline transitions and donor handoffs between giving levels.
- Contribute ideas for evolving donor engagement strategies that prioritize connection, belonging, and long-term loyalty.
- Actively listen to donor motivations, feedback, and lived experiences to inform engagement strategies and strengthen relationships.

Operations, Data, + Collaboration (10%)

- Maintain accurate donor records, activity notes, and tracking in Tessitura (CRM).
- Assist with donor reporting, segmentation, and list preparation for campaigns and leadership.
- Partner with Development Operations Manager and Development Assistant on gift processing, acknowledgments, and benefit delivery as needed.
- Actively contribute to a collaborative, mission-driven culture of philanthropy centered on stewardship excellence.

You Should Have

- **4–7 years of frontline professional fundraising experience**, preferably in arts, education, or cultural nonprofits.
- A bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience; CFRE certification a plus.
- A demonstrated track record of managing donor portfolios and growing annual support.
- Experience working with donor circles, giving societies, and/or membership programs.
- Excellent donor-centric written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, with the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic experiences, free from prejudice and aggression.
- Comfort working with CRM systems (Tessitura preferred) and strong data fluency.
- Strong organizational skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities and maintain attention to detail.
- A collaborative, thoughtful approach and energy for relationship-building and mission-driven work.
- **Willingness to work evenings and weekends as required** for events and performances.
- **A passion for theater and belief in the role of the performing arts in building community and fostering connection.**

Compensation + Benefits

Salary range: \$70,000-\$75,000, commensurate with experience.

Paper Mill Playhouse offers a comprehensive benefits package that includes health, dental, vision, life, and disability insurance; paid time off; a 403(b)-retirement plan with a 3% employer match; a flexible health spending account; and access to performances, education programs, and professional development opportunities.

How to Apply

Please submit a resume and cover letter describing your interest in the role and highlighting your **relevant professional fundraising experience and results** to Recruiting@PaperMill.org.

Subject line: Senior Donor Engagement Officer

No phone calls, please.

Paper Mill Playhouse is an Equal Opportunity Employer where the spirit of inclusion feeds into everything we do. We are committed to providing an environment of mutual respect where equal employment opportunities are available to all applicants and teammates. We strive to create opportunities, access, resources, and rewards that are available to and benefit everyone. Paper

Mill Playhouse is committed to equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, creed, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, citizenship status, marital status, disability, gender equity, gender expression, and veteran status.