

2026 National Conference Agenda—Conductors

All times below are Eastern Time. Agenda subject to change.

Constituent Liaison: David Styers, Director of Learning and Leadership Programs
dstyers@americanorchestras.org
646 822 4033

The following agenda describes sessions specifically designed for the above-mentioned constituents. For a full listing of Conference events and larger sessions, please visit <https://leagueconference.org/full-schedule>.

Monday, June 1, 2026

1:00pm-2:30pm Constituency Meeting Block 1

1:00pm-2:30pm Welcome and Introductions

*Facilitators: **John Devlin**, Music Director, Wheeling Symphony Orchestra, and **Julius Williams**, Artistic Director and Conductor, Berklee Contemporary Symphony Orchestra*

1:30pm-2:30pm Children's Adventures in Music

Youth education outreach programs and concerts for children are an increasingly important part of the music education role of orchestras. This discussion will focus on best practice ideas, such as developing a complete curriculum for classroom music teachers, providing pre-concert on-campus professional musician demonstrations, and performing engaging full-symphony concerts.

*Facilitator: **Eugene Dowdy**, Conductor and Artistic Director, Symphony of the Hills*

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

3:00pm-5:00pm Constituency Meeting Block 2

Composing Community: Composers and Conductors Cross-Constituency Session

Collaborative and ongoing relationships between music directors and living composers whose works they champion can forge new pathways for public engagement for orchestras. In this session, we explore practical considerations for initiating and maintaining these

partnerships over time, and unpack new, generative residency models that bring the public into the creative process through participation.

*Moderator: **Melissa Ngan**, President, American Composers Orchestra*

*Speakers: **John Devlin**, Music Director, Wheeling Symphony Orchestra; **Jacob Gotlib**, Creator Corps Program Manager, Louisville Orchestra; **Jonathan Posthuma**, Artistic Planning Director, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra; **LaRob K. Rafael**, Director of Composer Advancement, American Composers Orchestra*

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

11:15am-12:45pm Constituency Meeting Block 3

(Un)Hidden Musical Gems

Conductors have an important role in advocating for neglected American composers' music. Come to discover new programming possibilities and to share works that you champion.

Notice: It is important to keep in mind antitrust rules governing competition that apply to this group discussion. While the agenda for this group includes discussion of a variety of issues that are crucial to orchestras' planning and strategies, the goal is not to agree on a single approach to these issues. With the benefit of analysis and discussion, each orchestra will be able to decide independently what course of action is best for its own organization. We ask you to avoid comments that relate to your orchestra's current or future plans for ticket or event pricing (actual ticket prices, discount amounts), bargaining (including collective bargaining agreements or with vendors), or compensation. Please consult the [League one-page Antitrust Overview](#) for more information, available at www.americanorchestras.org.