

Rothko Chapel

Chief Development Officer

Sorrell is proud to partner with the Rothko Chapel, which is seeking a Chief Development Officer (CDO) to lead its fundraising strategies, manage donor relations, and lead the organization's work in increasing philanthropic support for the Chapel and its myriad programs.

About the Rothko Chapel:

The Rothko Chapel is an independent, nonsectarian cultural and spiritual landmark that welcomes 100,000+ visitors annually to experience Mark Rothko's immersive art, housed in the celebrated contemplative space, and public programs at the nexus of art, spirituality, and social justice. Signature initiatives include the annual INSPIRIT benefit (conversations with leading thinkers + *art auction*) and a nationally recognized program slate, all unfolding alongside Opening Spaces, a multi-year, \$42M campus expansion and restoration initiative (Phase II now underway).

In August 2025, the Chapel appointed Abdullah Antepli as President, signaling a renewed emphasis on global reach, interfaith dialogue, and civic healing through culture. The next CDO will partner closely with the President and Board to harness this momentum, and complete the Opening Spaces capital campaign, further build the endowment, cultivate new donors, manage annual giving programs, all while building durable, diversified contributed revenue for the Chapel's next 50 years.

For more information, see <https://www.rothkochapel.org/>.

Position Overview

Reporting to the President, the Chief Development Officer's mission is to design and lead a modern, values and mission aligned advancement enterprise to complete Phase II of the Opening Spaces capital campaign, grow sustainable annual support, double the Chapel's endowment, and deepen a culture of philanthropy across staff, Board, and community—locally, nationally, and globally. Direct reports include the development team, working in close collaboration with Rothko's marketing and communications function. The position is located in Houston, Texas and is on-site, with flexible hybrid norms during non-event periods.

The ideal candidate will have a successful track record in fundraising and relationship building, will be knowledgeable about and well networked in Houston's philanthropic community, as well as nationally, and will have experience growing a Development team and collaborating closely with the marketing and communications, finance and program functions. Priorities for this position are to cultivate and steward donor relationships, play a major role in development strategy, increase fundraising results, grow and manage a team, and to fully leverage Rothko's Board toward fundraising efforts. Effectiveness in this role will require quickly learning the organization's work, meeting partners who support the Chapel's mission, and developing a practical understanding of the projects that shape the organization's impact.

Key Responsibilities:

Strategy & Revenue Leadership:

- Develop a 3 to 5-year revenue strategy balancing both campaign and operating growth.
- Partner with the President and Board to craft a compelling case for support.
- Build and manage a robust major-gifts pipeline, personally managing high-level portfolios.
- Design and implement a comprehensive strategy that aims to double the Rothko Chapel's endowment within a defined timeframe.
- Develop and execute strategies for successful national and international fundraising efforts to expand the Chapel's reach and donor base.

Campaign Management (Opening Spaces):

- Drive remaining fundraising for Phase II, coordinating gift strategy and recognition.
- Oversee campaign committees, volunteer engagement, and naming opportunities.

Team, Systems & Operations:

- Structure and mentor a high-performing development team.
- Modernize infrastructure: CRM, analytics, prospect research, and stewardship.
- Ensure ethical fundraising aligned with the Chapel's inclusive values.

Board & Executive Partnership:

- Staff the Development Committee and equip Trustees with clear fundraising roles.
- Serve on the senior leadership team contributing to organizational planning.

Communications & Community Engagement:

- Integrate fundraising with brand and digital presence.
- Represent the Chapel at donor, arts, and interfaith events to broaden networks.

Candidate Profile:

Desired Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree.
- 10+ years of development leadership with major gifts and campaign experience.
- Experience completing capital campaigns and crafting donor-centric cases for support.
- Strong management, goal-setting, and coaching skills.
- Exceptional communication and cultural fluency across diverse communities.
- Proven record of building and overseeing strategies to differentiate an organization in a competitive environment.
- Evidence of securing multiple seven figure gifts annually.

Preferred Qualities:

- Familiarity with Houston's philanthropic and arts landscape, especially in the areas of spirituality and social justice circles.
- Passion for the Chapel's mission at the intersection of art, spirituality, and justice.
- Experience in relevant national and international development efforts would be preferred.
- Experience aligning capital growth with long-term sustainability.

Goals & Success Metrics (first 12–18 months):

- Campaign momentum: Complete Opening Spaces Phase II fundraising goals (working with the Chapel's external campaign consultant).
- Major-gifts pipeline: Add and cultivate 60–100 qualified prospects.
- Annual & events growth: Strengthen INSPIRIT revenue and donor retention.
- Endowment growth: Launch and begin measurable progress toward doubling the endowment.
- Infrastructure: Implement CRM dashboards and stewardship systems.
- National and international reach: Establish key fundraising partnerships and donor engagement abroad.
- Culture of philanthropy: Engage Board and staff in development culture, working in partnership with the President.

Compensation:

The Rothko Chapel offers a competitive salary with comprehensive benefits, reflecting Houston arts and culture benchmarks and candidate experience.

Application and Referral Process

Applicant review is currently underway and will continue until the candidate has been selected. To be considered for this position, please submit a résumé, cover letter aligning with the Chapel's mission and Opening Spaces, and two sample materials (case statement, campaign plan, or stewardship piece) electronically to Priscilla Plumb at priscilla@sorrellco.com / 281.224.0881. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

About Sorrell

Sorrell is a highly relational provider of executive recruiting. Our mission is to serve as partners with our clients to accelerate their efforts to attract, hire and retain talent that impacts the future of the organization. For more information, call 713.840.1870.