EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Job Profile
Erie, Pennsylvania

APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 26, 2020
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Job Profile

Opportunity to write a new chapter in the life of a long-standing regional art museum, building on a base of supporting regional and local artists. Live in a scenic coastal community and a city undergoing a 21st century reinvention.

The Erie Art Museum is looking for an ambitious and multi-talented Executive Director to build on this regional museum’s profile at the center of a multimillion-dollar downtown reinvestment initiative. Located in downtown Erie, Pennsylvania (population 100,000) in a recently renovated, LEED-certified facility, the museum is beloved in the community and a regional draw, known for its distinguished and eclectic programming. Its diverse collection of approximately 8,000 items pays significant homage to regional artists. There is opportunity to further develop collaborations with four area colleges and universities and to connect with the artistic and cultural hubs of the tri-city area around Erie that includes Cleveland, Ohio, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania and Buffalo, New York, all under two hours away. Pre-COVID-19, the museum had an annual attendance of over 15,000 visitors and an annual budget of nearly $1M. It recently established solid financial footing and a small endowment, and growing the museum’s long-term financial security remains a priority for the Board of Directors.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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The Executive Director should be an innovative museum professional with strong curatorial and collections management knowledge and excellent managerial and communication skills. The successful candidate will be a visible leader, open and inclusive, who can lead the Board, staff, and stakeholders through a multi-year capacity-building and fundraising process, while also developing and implementing dynamic programming for broad audiences. There is opportunity to leverage the museum's numerous assets and its current momentum to build larger audiences, strengthen operations, and financially anchor the museum for the future.

RESPONSIBILITIES

OVERVIEW OF JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director is responsible for the management and operation of the EAM, including budgeting; staffing; fundraising; oversight of the development, curation and presentation of exhibitions and related programs; care and development of the collections; and care of the facilities. Special emphasis will be placed on capacity-building, including building and maintaining a professional staff; strengthening finances; broadening audiences and membership; and producing events that generate engagement and revenue. This is a hands-on position working with a small but dedicated staff.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RESPONSIBILITIES

ADMINISTRATIVE, FINANCIAL, AND PROGRAMMATIC OVERSIGHT

- Provide vision and leadership for the museum. Foster its reputation as a significant and relevant cultural resource for the community and region.
- Oversee all museum activities and establish programmatic strategies and priorities. Lead curatorial activities. Working with museum staff, organize temporary and traveling exhibitions, develop and steward the collection, and integrate interpretive programs.
- Work with the Board of Directors to establish, revise, and implement policies, activities, and strategic planning initiatives that will lay the foundation for long-term sustainability in programming, financial management, educational activities, collections, and facility management.
- With the Board’s Finance Committee, develop and monitor the annual budget for the re-opened museum, following its closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Obtain the annual resources needed to continue to meet the current operating needs of the museum and to operate the organization on a sustainable basis from earned income streams, annual giving, grants, and other revenue sources.
- Together with the Board, create a long-term plan for building endowment and financial sustainability.
- Hire, supervise, energize, and review the staff. Evaluate needs and structure staff accordingly. Be an empowering and ethical leader, inspiring staff and encouraging their professional development.
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RESPONSIBILITIES

FUNDRAISING AND MARKETING

○ Provide significant leadership in identifying and raising money for the museum, helping to personally cultivate major donors, working in collegial partnership with an active and engaged Board.

○ Market the museum, its brand and reputation. Expand local and regional visitation and participation.

○ Grow the museum’s regional and national network with peer museums, collectors, and cultural institutions to increase opportunities for partnerships and loans.

○ Provide a welcoming atmosphere for visitors.

○ Engage in the community, attend events, and be available to be onsite on select weekends and evenings for museum events.
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QUALIFICATIONS, DESIRED SKILLSETS, AND EXPERIENCE

REQUIRED

○ B.A. degree (required) in art history, studio art, museum education, museum studies, or a field related to the mission; with an advanced degree preferred.
○ Minimum of four years’ experience as the successful director of a museum or related arts or cultural organization. If at a large institution, the experience could be as a deputy director or department head with substantial management and some fundraising responsibilities.
○ Experience managing professional staff, including hiring, developing, and retaining talent.
○ Ability to multi-task, delegate, and foster a team environment.
○ Ability to develop and execute an ambitious programmatic vision backed by disciplined financial and operational planning.
○ Leadership skills and experience achieving consensus and buy-in for new directions.
○ Strategic thinker, able to put challenges in perspective and make sound recommendations for advancing the museum. Positive, tenacious person.
○ Proven fundraising ability with evidence of successful donor relations, grant writing and funded projects. Enthusiasm for fundraising for operations, programs, and capital projects.
○ Experience working with a board to set strategic priorities and align outcomes with resources. Experience working with a nominating committee and cultivating new board members is a plus.
○ Effective interpersonal skills: a good relationship-builder who is professional, ethical, down-to-earth, diplomatic, and engaging.
○ Excellent written, verbal and listening skills. A public-facing person with strong communication skills. An engaging public speaker.
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QUALIFICATIONS, DESIRED SKILLSETS, AND EXPERIENCE

DESIRABLE

- Experience developing a small arts institution through a transition or growth phase, especially an ability to identify and implement key operational structures for staffing, budgeting and marketing.
- Museum curatorial experience developing and presenting exhibitions and working with living artists.
- Demonstrated commitment to education and community engagement with strong links to exhibitions.
- Technological literacy with on-line platforms and social media.
- Connections in the art and museum world, to facilitate borrowing/lending works and bringing in traveling exhibitions.
HOW TO APPLY

Nominations and Inquiries Welcome

TO APPLY:

Qualified candidates should email their cover letter, résumé (Word documents preferred), salary requirement, and names of 3 references with contact information by October 26, 2020 to retained search firm: Connie Rosemont, Museum Search & Reference, at SearchandRef@museum-search.com. Apply in confidence. References will not be contacted without prior permission of the applicant.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION:

The EAM is an equal opportunity employer. The museum actively encourages candidates with diverse backgrounds to apply. It does not discriminate against any candidate or employee on the basis of race, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or veteran status.
ABOUT ERIE ART MUSEUM

Erie, Pennsylvania

The Erie Art Museum, located in the heart of historic downtown Erie, Pennsylvania, is a major regional museum and a significant community asset with a collection of over 8,000 items, including paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, ceramics, metal works and textiles. In recent years, it has maintained a schedule of 4-5 exhibitions a year. The museum is just over 50 years old, but through earlier incarnations as an artists’ organization and an Art Center, it has supported and exhibited artists since 1898. Its mission is “to maintain an institution of excellence dedicated to the promotion and advancement of the visual arts: by developing and maintaining a quality art collection, by encouraging art in all its forms, by fostering lifelong art learning, and by building community among artists, art students and the public.”

In 2010, the museum settled into its current location and configuration, which includes a modern 10,800-square-foot facility attached to the renovated Old Customs House, one of Erie’s most stately historic buildings. It is a LEED Gold-certified facility, and the museum promotes policies that assure and promote environmental sustainability. EAM is the anchoring arts institution at the heart of a downtown district undergoing a multimillion-dollar public-private reinvestment initiative.
As a collecting institution that celebrates artists from the northwestern Pennsylvania region and showcases those from nearby metropolitan areas, the EAM has traditionally offered its visitors a big-city museum experience rooted in the local community. In addition to a legacy holding of important regional artists from the late 19th century to today, the museum’s collection also includes 200+ works of significant art historical value, including pieces by 20th century art world figures like Joseph Beuys, Andy Warhol, Chuck Close, and Käthe Kollwitz, and a handful of older prints by artists such as James McNeill Whistler, Francisco Goya, and others. In the past year, all 1200 of the museum’s works-on-paper were catalogued and organized, and work is underway to assess and re-catalogue the entire collection.

Its annual endowed, juried Spring Show, done in partnership with Edinboro University, draws big crowds. Juried by a nationally known art-world figure (Aruna D’Souza in 2020, William Wegman in 2018, among others), who also comes to town for a guest lecture, the show celebrates work of local and regional artists. The museum has diversified its membership over the past few years to include more millennials and families. Its bi-monthly Gallery Nights and other artmaking and art appreciation events have established it as a social hub for downtown Erie (many of these programs are paused during the pandemic).

The museum is a designated Regional Folk Art Support Center, and in 2011, it was awarded the prestigious National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
ABOUT ERIE ART MUSEUM

Erie, Pennsylvania

Events around Erie Art Museum
ABOUT ERIE

Erie, Pennsylvania

Erie, Pennsylvania sits on the southern shore of Lake Erie in northwestern Pennsylvania and is the county seat. With a city population of 100,000 and a total county population of 270,000, Erie has recently invested millions of dollars in rejuvenating its downtown, rethinking the use and design of existing structures for business, cultural and residential use. While manufacturing remains an important sector of the economy, there are other industries supporting a diversified economy, including healthcare, insurance, higher education, technology, service and tourism. Erie boasts a formidable set of cultural assets and amenities for a city of its size, including four museums, a playhouse, a philharmonic, four colleges and universities, and a convention center. There is a vibrant arts community, which includes the art department at Edinboro University, and there is a strong local commitment to the commissioning of new works of public art each year. There are also several industrial buildings-turned-artist studios that open their doors on gallery nights. The city is safe and affordable, with good public and private schools, and excellent healthcare resources. It is described by locals as a place “on the way up.” Erie is politically described as a “microcosm of the U.S.,” representing a broad political spectrum and is considered one of the most critical counties in the next election. Erie is a refugee resettlement city and 10% of the city's population is former refugees. For the outdoor enthusiast, Erie offers many recreational opportunities, including 13 miles of uninterrupted beaches at Presque Isle State Park, and water sports, boating, birding, and biking. Summer is beautiful and the winters are snowy, with winter sports activities including cross-country and downhill skiing, hockey, and ice-skating.

Erie is located less than two hours from Pittsburgh, Cleveland, OH, and Buffalo, NY; two hours from Akron, OH; and three hours from Toronto, Canada. The Chautauqua Institution, a vibrant summer cultural destination, is less than one hour away.
ABOUT ERIE

Erie, Pennsylvania

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