

Position and Candidate Specification

CURRIER
MUSEUM
of ART

Currier Museum of Art

Director and CEO

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Position Summary and Candidate Profile

The Currier Museum of Art seeks a visionary, community-minded individual to lead the Museum at this pivotal moment. As the leader of the largest art museum in northern New England, the next Director and CEO of the Currier Museum of Art will serve as the leading advocate and spokesperson for the Museum and for the importance of the arts to all of the institution’s stakeholders and visitors. The next leader will shepherd the museum and its extraordinary collection, communicate the value of the Museum, and engage and energize a wide range of audiences. An ambassador for the Currier as well as its executive leader, the Director and CEO will be an excellent communicator who can engage and delight diverse audiences about the programs and objects of the Museum and the role that arts and cultural institutions play in the City of Manchester, the State of New Hampshire, and beyond. An empathetic, effective manager, the Director and CEO will attract and support a strong team, build a healthy working culture, and establish an organizational structure that supports the mission. Finally, and importantly, the next Director and CEO will be a magnet for resources and will build relationships that ensure the ongoing preeminence of the Museum.

The Director and CEO is the chief executive of the Currier Museum and has responsibility for all aspects of the organization’s performance, internally and externally. Working in partnership with the Board of Trustees and the senior leadership team, the Director provides vision and strategic leadership for all of the Museum’s programmatic, education, fundraising, and community engagement activities. As Director and CEO, this individual will serve as the lead ambassador and fundraiser for the organization while also driving initiatives to generate new sources of earned revenue, develop new audiences, and enhance and expand the way the Museum engages with both the arts community and the public. The Director and CEO will ensure fiscal soundness through astute strategic planning, fundraising and business management.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- Reports to** Board of Trustees

- Executive Team** Chief Curator
- Direct Reports** Chief Operating Officer
Director of Engagement
Director of Finance

- Other Key Relationships** All staff of the museum
Current and potential donors
Local and regional business and cultural leaders
Manchester city officials and New Hampshire state leaders
Regional and national arts/culture leaders

KEY PRIORITIES AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

- In partnership with the Board of Trustees and the senior leadership team, develop, communicate, and implement a strategic vision that guides the programs and assets.

- In concert with the Chief Curator, steward and leverage the Museum's treasured collections and houses and ensure that public-facing programming such as exhibitions and education serve the needs of an increasingly broad and curious community.
- Expand the Currier's financial resources. As the lead fundraiser for the organization, build and leverage relationships with individuals and philanthropic organizations, ensuring that they view the Currier as one of their key priorities. Establish positive relationships with existing donors and identify and cultivate new donors.
- Build and support an internal culture and organizational structure that empower and recognize a talented, committed staff and that reflect best operational practices.
- Cultivate relationships and sustain collaborative partnerships within the immediate community, regionally, nationally, and internationally to grow a diverse audience base and increase awareness of the Museum's excellent collections and reputation for outstanding exhibitions and social and educational programs.
- Continue to integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into every aspect of the Currier. Ensure that the Museum reflects the diverse audience it serves and inculcate a culture that is inclusive and responsive to societal change.
- Maintain the fiscal sustainability of the Museum and ensure that the allocation of resources reflects the priorities and mission of the institution. Strengthen and leverage the museum's assets, including its distinctive real estate portfolio.
- As the key ambassador to the Museum, seek ways to raise the profile of the Currier, both within the state and beyond its borders. Continually invest the time to build relationships with individuals and institutions that will accrue value to the Currier and its mission.
- Leverage technology to drive improvements in the visitor experience so that the Museum is an essential place for residents and tourists alike to return to again and again and to create a sense of community and engagement beyond the Museum's walls.
- Be visible and accessible internally as well as in the broader field of art museums.
- Build a productive relationship with the Board of Trustees, ensuring a healthy balance between governance and leadership and supporting the continued evolution of a strong, supportive board.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Organizational Leadership

Has provided visionary and executive leadership to support an organization's progress, raise its profile, and elevate its impact. At least ten years' senior-level leadership experience in a cultural, arts, education or similar institution with an appreciation for the unique operating requirements of a mission-driven, public, audience-focused organization, including collections management, exhibitions planning, public outreach, conservation and accession policies, and institutional development. A discerning and trained eye for acquisitions and collection development.

Proven Fundraiser (or the competencies to be successful)

Demonstrated experience (or the competencies to be successful) raising money from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government. Experience designing and implementing a capital campaign is preferred.

Demonstrated Impact in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work

Has had meaningful impact on diversity and inclusion within an organization serving a varied set of stakeholders. Has demonstrated a commitment to including and engaging historically underserved communities.

Operational Management

Exhibits strong financial and operational acumen and has experience managing a complex, multi-source budget. Is able to build and motivate a strong, unified team.

External-Facing Leadership

Has served as the ambassador for an organization with broad awareness and a wide range of audiences, ideally including public officials and business and community leaders. Brings a strong network of contacts in the art field including museum leaders, scholars, and relevant professional associations.

Subject Matter Expertise

Has artistic literacy and the ability to communicate effectively and credibly about the importance of art and culture.

Inspiring Communication

Possesses strong written and verbal communication skills and the ability to inspire people.

Board Savvy

Has reported to or interacted substantively with a Board of Trustees.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- Develops and articulates an inspiring and inclusive vision and strategy for the Currier; generates new ideas that will extend the Museum's impact while ensuring financial sustainability.
- Listens to and seeks data from a variety of sources to support decisions; sets clear priorities and makes difficult decisions with transparency.

Driving Results

- Fosters a culture of creativity and innovation in the service of expanding the Museum's reach and influence with existing and new audiences.
- Sets continually higher goals to strengthen and sustain the organization – its exhibitions, programs, public outreach, collections management, fundraising, and internal systems and processes – that are ambitious but realistic and aligned with its mission.
- Ensures that the right structures are in place (e.g., operating model, organizational structure, processes, technology) and fosters new ways of working so that the institution achieves greater impact and staff members are energized by what they can accomplish.

Leading and Developing People

- Communicates the vision and purpose of the Museum with enthusiasm and passion.
- Prioritizes being visible and accessible to staff members at all levels of the organization, creating a sense of engagement and community.
- Serves as a unifier, team builder, mentor, and motivator; a deep listener who fosters a culture of collaboration, respect, and empowerment.
- Brings an authentic personal commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in all aspects of the Museum's work.
- Delegates effectively and manages performance with accountability; widely viewed as a leader who develops others and trusts and leverages the expertise of staff.

Collaborating and Influencing

- Inspires and builds trust and confidence inside and outside of the Museum among a broad range of constituencies.
- Builds strong external visibility through a dedicated commitment to engaging with the broader community of Manchester and throughout New Hampshire and the region.
- Strengthens existing and builds new donor and partner relationships that extend the impact and reach of the Museum and secure its long-term financial sustainability.

OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Socially adept and confident; enjoys interacting with a wide range of people.
- Energetic, motivated, and willing to roll up your sleeves and dive into hands-on work.
- Dedicated, disciplined, and exhibits the ambition to turn vision into achievement.
- Mission-driven: sees art and museums as a means for social and community change.
- Intellectually curious and willing to learn from others.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, and a good sense of humor.

The Currier Museum was established in 1929 due to the generous bequest and vision of former New Hampshire Governor, Moody Currier, and his wife, Hannah A. Currier. Originally known as the Currier Gallery of Art, the museum was established to fulfill Governor Currier's dream of opening a world-class art museum in his hometown of Manchester. The Currier family's founding gift funded the construction of the Currier's original building and established the museum's initial operating endowment. The Curriers partnered closely with the museum's founding Trustees and Directors to acquire renowned artwork from around the world to form the core of the Currier's impressive collection. Today, the Currier Museum's permanent collection consists of 13,000 works from across a variety of time periods, media, and geographies.

The Currier's permanent collection includes significant works of European and American painting, decorative arts, sculpture from the late Gothic period to the present, and a growing collection of international contemporary art. Select highlights of the Currier's collection include works by Jacob van Ruisdael, Albert Bierstadt, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso, Charles Sheeler, and Faith Ringgold among others. The Currier has been dedicated over the last 20+ years to diversifying its permanent collection to include significant representation of works by female, LGBTQ, BIPOC and other traditionally underrepresented artists. In addition, the museum continues to calibrate its collection and exhibition policies to reflect the seismic shifts in the way museums engage with modern audiences today.

Two of the Currier's most significant and popular holdings include its iconic 1950's Frank Lloyd Wright homes. The first home, the former Isadore J. and Lucille Zimmerman House, was donated to the Currier by the Zimmermans in 1988. The Zimmerman's gift also included their impressive personal collection of modern art, pottery, and sculpture. The second house, the Kalil House, was purchased by the Currier in 2019 through the generous donation of an anonymous donor. These homes, which are the only two publicly accessible Wright homes in New England, attract many visitors from around the world each year.

In 2020, the Currier also purchased the historic 19th century George Byron Chandler House, which sits directly across the street from the museum. The main floor of the Chandler House features original antique stained-glass windows, wallpaper, and fine wood carvings. The Chandler House is currently under restoration and will be open to the public as an expansion to the Currier to highlight the history, art, and architecture of New Hampshire in the 19th century. Finally, the Currier owns a fourth additional property at 647 Beech Street, which houses the museum's Artist in Residency program. This program allows renowned artists to engage meaningfully with the Manchester community as well as with the Currier's celebrated collection.

Over the years, the Currier has received significant gifts from devoted supporters to enhance the museum's acquisitions and operations, including sizable bequests from Henry Melville Fuller and legendary ceramic artists Ed and Mary Scheier, and an endowment to support arts programming and enrichment for the citizens of Nashua, NH.

Since its founding, the Currier's physical footprint has expanded twice and grown to over 100,000 square feet today. In 1982, two pavilions designed by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer were added to accommodate the Museum's growing collections. An additional 33,000 square foot addition by Ann Beha Architects opened in March 2008. This expansion added space for special exhibitions, two classrooms for educational programming, a 180-seat auditorium, a Winter Garden Café for dining and special events, and a glass-enclosed entrance plaza. The intricate mosaics surrounding the original entrance are now on display inside the Winter Garden, and the commission of a wall painting by Sol Lewitt on the opposite wall creates an intriguing dialogue between early 20th century and late 20th century American art.

The Currier is deeply committed to engaging meaningfully with its surrounding community. The Currier offers frequent programming, outreach initiatives, and in-depth educational programs to engage the public and welcome visitors into the space. *The Living Forest: UYRA* kicked off a new slate of inspiring exhibitions this summer. Key upcoming exhibits include an immersive installation by artist Saya Woolfalk, and a travelling exhibition by Kara Walker: *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated)*. Recent exhibits have included noted Latinx ceramic artist Roberto Lugo: *Te traigo mi le lo lai – I bring you my joy*, and *Critical Cartography: Larissa Fassler in Manchester*; in the summer of 2019, Fassler explored Manchester while artist-in-residence. She walked Manchester's downtown core, observing, sketching, and mapping the movement of people through shared public spaces.

In 1939, the Museum established the Currier Art Center to provide a wide range of studio art education programs to students of all ages in the Manchester area. Although the Art Center was sold in 2021, the museum classrooms were renovated that same year to incorporate state-of-the-art technology and equipment to support accessible on-site and on-line learning. Today, the Currier studio programs educate up to 1,200 students each year, with classes, camps, and workshops in sculpture, drawing, painting, printmaking, and a variety of other media. These courses are taught by a dedicated team of professional teaching-artists. The Currier's art education programs offer scholarships to local students who could not otherwise attend. The Currier's school tour programs serve over 4,000 students annually, largely from the region's public schools. Free and accessible School Tours are available to Title 1 Schools through fundraising, related endowed funds, and the Tomie De Paola Art Education Fund.

The Currier is one of seven museums in the country to have an Art Therapist on staff. Over the past five years, the Currier has grown its Art and Wellness programs focused on historically underserved communities. These programs engage active military, veterans and their families; families coping with substance use disorder; adults with cognitive disabilities; cancer survivors; people with memory loss and their care partners; teens struggling with isolation and depression; and new Americans. The museum's commitment to its art and wellness initiative is distinctive and offers robust programming to diverse local communities. Recently, the museum was awarded the NH Governor's Arts Award for Art in Wellness.

LOCATION

With a population of ~115,000, Manchester offers a rich combination of history, industry, and culture. The metropolitan area of Manchester-Nashua-Concord has 405,000 residents, which comprises about one-third of the state's total population. Manchester is about an hour's drive away from the city center of Boston.

Manchester's downtown has become a desirable commercial, entertainment and residential center, with historic homes and mills repurposed for shopping, restaurants, condominium living and higher education. The University of New Hampshire at Manchester has moved into retrofitted downtown properties. The 12,000-seat SNHU Arena, opened in 2001, is the area's premiere entertainment venue and the centerpiece of the downtown district. Together, the Currier Museum of Art, the Millyard Museum, and the historic Palace and Rex Theatres form a vibrant cultural hub in the largest city in New Hampshire.

KEY CURRIER MUSEUM OF ART FACTS

The Museum's 2024 operating budget is \$5,500,000. The Currier has a 36-person full-time staff and 77 part-time employees. The Currier has an active and supportive 22-person Board of Trustees and three Trustees emeriti. There are 75 members of the Guild of Volunteers. The total Museum endowment is \$77.6 million, of which \$34.8 million is restricted for acquisitions. Of the \$34.8 million of restricted funds, \$26.6 million is permanently restricted and \$8.2 million is temporarily restricted.

APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

The Currier Museum is being assisted in this important recruitment by Spencer Stuart. If you wish to confidentially submit application materials or nominate someone for this role, please email:

CurrierCEO@SpencerStuart.com.