



Cuyahoga Arts & Culture

Executive Director

The Agency

Cuyahoga Arts and Culture (CAC) is one of the largest public funders for arts and culture in the nation, making grants to hundreds of organizations that serve millions of people each year. Placing high value on the agency's excellence and transparency, CAC currently distributes more than \$12 million in grants annually throughout Cuyahoga County. Formally, CAC is a political subdivision known as a regional arts and cultural district chartered by the state under Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3381.

Cuyahoga County residents created CAC in 2006 when they approved a 10-year levy of a penny-and-a-half tax on cigarettes to support arts and culture. Since 2007 CAC has invested over \$181 million in more than 400 large and small organizations, helping make Cuyahoga County a more vibrant place to live. In November 2015 county citizens voted overwhelmingly to support the renewal of the tax, providing CAC with 10 additional years to invest in the local arts and culture sector. The campaign to renew the cigarette tax was a collaborative effort led by the Arts and Culture Action Committee, a volunteer-based political action group, together with Arts Cleveland (formerly the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture), local foundations, and a broad consortium of organizations and individuals. The ballot issue passed with an unprecedented 75 percent of voters approving the renewal. The partners and supporters behind the 2015 renewal look ahead to seeking additional and supplementary revenue sources to support Cuyahoga County's arts and culture organizations.

CAC is a grant-making public entity whose mission is to inspire and strengthen the community by investing in arts and culture. Its vision is that all Cuyahoga County residents experience a meaningful cultural life. It is committed to supporting the organizations that create cultural experiences that are important to Cuyahoga County. CAC does so by nurturing relationships and actively seeking opportunities and partnerships that enable organizations to better serve the entire county population.

CAC's passionate commitment to diversity and inclusion informs its policies and practices, including funding criteria, program development, and hiring. CAC is accountable to all county residents, always striving to be worthy of the public's trust. Recognizing that society is challenged to overcome a complex web of inequities, CAC operates with an awareness of privilege and power legacies that affect opportunity, access, and resources.

CAC takes its responsibility as stewards of public dollars seriously. The agency is overseen by a Board of Trustees consisting of five community leaders, appointed by the Cuyahoga County Executive and confirmed by Cuyahoga County Council for three-year terms. Currently the longest-serving CAC Trustee, Chara Sherman is the Board President. The CAC staff consists of nine committed and energetic professionals who embrace the organization's values and strive to fulfill its mission and vision.

Community

Cuyahoga County, one of the most affordable major metropolitan areas in the country, is home to a community whose love of arts and culture is demonstrated by disproportionately high levels of participation and support when compared to any other in the United States. The County has a diverse population of 1.25 million residents representing more than 100 nationalities. With an average population age of just over 40, the community is 59 percent white, 29 percent black, 6 percent Hispanic, and 3 percent Asian. Cleveland, the county's largest community, is known internationally for its world-class arts institutions and new cultural organizations, which are only part of the region's rich arts and culture ecology. In all arts and culture genres, Cuyahoga County's organizations present work that spans a wide range of national and international cultures.

Cuyahoga County is home to many festivals and events that celebrate ethnic cultures throughout the region. In recent decades these activities have fueled economic development in multiple arts districts across the county. With charming mixed-use neighborhoods that are equally historic and hip, the region attracts young professionals and modern families. The area's extensive arts and culture activities, excellent dining options, vibrant nightlife, sporting events, and great shopping are complemented by a low cost of living and high quality of life. The region is known for its excellent education and healthcare options, regarded as some of the best in the country, as well as its innovative and groundbreaking medical research institutions.

Position Summary

A public employee appointed by the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director will be the chief executive officer of CAC, accountable for the agency's responsible stewardship of public funds in support of the county's arts and culture ecosystem. The Executive Director will be one of the region's leading public voices for the importance of arts and culture in daily life through social vitality, educational impact, creativity, and economic development. Responsible for driving performance in the relentless pursuit of transparency in CAC's mission and vision, the Executive Director will also be the organization's chief fiscal officer, managing the effective investment and distribution of CAC funds and ensuring compliance with all legal and regulatory guidelines and requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

External Relations and Strategic Partnerships

- Collaborate closely with partners and supporters who are responsible for the advocacy, research, fundraising, and campaigning for ongoing and increased public funding of arts and culture.
- Actively contribute to a strong and visible public profile for the arts and culture sector in Cuyahoga County.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with grantee organizations leaders, government officials, media, and community leaders.
- Foster productive and collaborative relationships with County Administration and Council.
- Represent CAC in high-profile community activities and events.
- Lead an ongoing strategic planning process in collaboration with the Board.

Institutional Planning and Governance

- Communicate and interact regularly with Board members to ensure effective governance.
- Stay at the forefront of regional and national trends and inform the Board of arts and culture sector conditions and needs.
- Ensure that CAC's communication, access, and oversight are conducted as required by and appropriate to a public sector entity.
- Craft an annual workplan with the Board President.
- Serve as the primary liaison for all Board meetings and any Board committees or initiatives, as appropriate.

Grantmaking Policy

- Devise grantmaking policies with staff for Board consideration and action.
- Oversee existing grantmaking policies and programs.
- Partner with staff to transparently engage in public dialogue with grantee organizations on changes to grant guidelines.
- Ensure responsible and effective peer review of grant applications.
- Develop and communicate financial forecasts for cigarette tax revenues and grantmaking expenses.

Fiscal Oversight

- Serve as the chief fiscal officer and confirm that budgets, financial information, grants, and other records are appropriately maintained by statute.
- Maximize the proportion of CAC funds used for grantmaking and minimize expenditures on non-grantmaking activities and administration.

- Oversee preparation of annual operating budget, ensuring that financial resources are allocated in keeping with CAC's mission.
- Engage the audit committee in the review and timely completion of the annual financial audit with representatives from the Auditor of State's office.

Administrative Leadership

- Maintain full responsibility and accountability for staffing, with regular communication to the Board regarding changes.
- Oversee compliance with all laws and regulations, engaging outside counsel as needed and in consultation with the Board President.
- Develop annual goals and objectives for the agency with senior staff as well as specific goals for staff members, who are evaluated through annual performance reviews.
- Encourage professional development and enhanced training opportunities for staff.

Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be an open, transparent, and collaborative leader who will understand the breadth and depth of grantee challenges and support their efforts. Equally comfortable attending casual and formal activities in a variety of community settings throughout the region, the Executive Director will be at the forefront of arts and culture life in Cuyahoga County. This individual will evidence a high value on creating supportive relationships using political savvy and the diplomacy required to move from problem solving to decision making. With superior interpersonal skills and as a passionate advocate for arts and culture organizations of all sizes in both urban and suburban areas, the Executive Director will emphasize equity and diversity, including how the arts can best address social issues in a dynamic community setting.

Seen as a servant leader, convener, and peer to the field, the Executive Director will recognize and understand the ecosystems, policies, and procedures of a public sector entity in advancing artistic and organizational impacts. Driven by knowledge and information, the Executive Director will be receptive to new ideas and opportunities for the sustainability and growth of a vibrant arts and culture sector.

Other key competencies include strong interpersonal skills and the diplomacy to consider various points of view, listen carefully, interact in a positive manner, treat others fairly, communicate transparently, and inspire others. The Executive Director will also have integrity and dexterity in leadership and teamwork, mentoring others to accomplish organizational and community goals. Problem solving and decision making are critical in defining, analyzing, and diagnosing challenges while considering multiple perspectives before making objective decisions.

Qualifications

A bachelor's degree and demonstrated leadership experience and accomplishments in public agencies, arts councils, grantmaking organizations, creative industries, or similar institutions are required. A deep commitment to and knowledge of the arts, artists, and challenges of cultural organizations are expected. Demonstrated expertise relevant to communicating with elected and appointed officials, coordinating grantmaking panels, managing nonprofit boards, and leading teams is essential. Successful candidates will have excellent written and verbal skills with demonstrated experience in advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and access initiatives.

Compensation and Benefits

CAC offers very competitive compensation, commensurate with experience, and a benefits package that includes medical, dental, vision, and prescription coverage; healthcare and dependent daycare flexible spending accounts; life and disability insurances; 457 deferred compensation plan; paid time off, holiday, and sick pay; parking/public transportation pass; and participation in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System.

Applications and Inquiries

Please submit a letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred) to:

Dr. Bruce D. Thibodeau
President



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Cuyahoga Arts & Culture is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion. It embraces and encourages its employees' differences in age, color, ethnicity, ancestry, sex, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental disability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, citizenship status, and other characteristics that make its employees unique.