

Organization

Brooklyn Arts Council (BAC) has been integral in the creation of Brooklyn’s culture, by forging and continuing to lead with a commitment to equity and inclusion for over 50 years. In 1966, a group of Brooklyn residents passionate about sustaining the borough’s artistic heritage convened in the basement of Charlene Victor’s Flatbush apartment to establish the Brooklyn Arts Council (then known as the Brooklyn Arts and Cultural Association, BACA) as a platform to support individual artists in Brooklyn through vibrant arts programming and services. Victor became the inaugural Executive Director of BAC and was subsequently appointed to New York Governor Hugh L. Carey’s 38-member Task Force on the Arts.

By the 1980s, many local artists had found creative community at BACA Downtown, BAC’s Willoughby Street performance space and gallery. Inclusive and accessible arts education became another one of BAC’s efforts by utilizing innovative curriculum through varied genres. During this same period, BAC expanded in grant-making on behalf of the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. BAC became more than an arts council, serving as a transformative community hub for the borough. Through their current mission—to enrich the quality of life of the residents of Brooklyn through the promotion of the arts in the community—they host large celebrations, judge competitions, sponsor film series, and join forces with local organizations to diversify both fundraising and cultural performances that reflect the city and its communities.

BAC grants support local artists and small arts organizations whose work enhances the cultural climate of its borough, city, and stat. Recognizable Brooklyn natives gained early support and financial assistance through BAC, including filmmaker Spike Lee and playwright Suzan-Lori Parks, before reaching internationally recognized status. In 2022, BAC awarded just over \$1 million in grants to 238 individuals and organizations.

Through the Incubator, BAC provides fiscal sponsorship and supports emerging cultural and artistic projects that have strong artistic merit and align with BAC’s mission. Fostering creativity and artistic expression for K-12 students, parents, and community members, the Arts in Education programs cover a wide-range of diversity and excellence in dance, digital media, theater, visual, and literary arts. The BAC Wellness Studio builds on the mission of empowering artists, which is fundamental to the prosperity and spirit of Brooklyn, and the Cultural Heritage program works with artists in traditional cultural practices to preserve and present arts expressive of the borough’s diverse living heritage. Professional development, on-demand programming, and arts consultancy are supplemental offers that speak to the intersections of art, equity, and accessibility.

Led by Chairman Toni Yuille Williams, BAC is governed by a 17-member board of directors. An advisory group, that includes the Executive Director, Board Chair, and a mix of internal and external stakeholders, brings a diverse set of perspectives to the organization’s mission and goals. The Executive Director oversees a team of 16 staff members covering operations, programming, development, cultural heritage, education, and strategy. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, BAC had total revenue of \$4.14 million, with \$4 million from contributions and grants and \$137,433 from program service revenue. Total expenses were \$4.04 million.

Community

The traditional and unceded lands of the Lenape or “Lenapehoking” was an offspring of Algonquin civilization and included present day New Jersey, New York, and Delaware. The lands were later named Breuckelen by Dutch settlers after a municipality in the Netherlands. Brooklyn was a thriving independent city before becoming a borough on New York City in the late 19th century, shortly after the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge connecting the city to Manhattan. Brooklyn is a consolidation of other cities and counties that were combined to form a borough in the modern City of New York; however, it continues to maintain a distinct culture.

Brooklyn is home to the largest number of the world’s leading artists, New York City’s most populous of the five boroughs and second largest in size. It’s population in 2022 reached 2.59 million, and if it were its own city, Brooklyn would be the fourth most populous in the United States. In the 2010 census, Brooklyn was 35.8% white/non-Hispanic, 35.8% African American, 11.5% Asian Pacific Islander, 2.2% Mixed Race, 8.9% other race, 1.0 % Native American, including 19.8% Hispanic or Latino of any race, with 38% of residents being immigrants. It is a vibrant community where many languages are spoken, including Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Yiddish, French Creole, Italian, Hebrew, Polish, French, Arabic, Indic languages, and Urdu.

Brooklyn Arts Council sits in the Dumbo neighborhood, close to the Manhattan Bridge, full of cobblestone streets, and surrounded by converted Brooklyn warehouse buildings. Within the neighborhood, there are independent boutiques, high-end restaurants, and trendy cafes. Brooklyn has more than twenty distinct neighborhoods and world class cultural organizations including Kings Theatre, Brooklyn Museum, and the NY Transit Museum. Designed by Central Park creators, the 526-acre Prospect Park is home to a zoo, the first urban area Audubon center in the nation, an ice rink, and dozens of athletic and recreations facilities.

Sources: brooklynartscouncil.org; bklynlibrary.org; nycparks.org; worldpopulationreview.com

Position Summary

- Serve as the primary fundraiser, principal spokesperson, and chief storyteller for the organization, identifying and stewarding philanthropic relationships, working with donors across all divisions of the organization.
- Actively engage with the borough's local communities, identify and create new partnerships, diversify funding opportunities, and deeply understand and learn about BAC's impact on Brooklyn.
- Enhance the development and implementation of comprehensive marketing, branding, and development strategies that maximize revenue opportunities from major donors, foundations, public agencies, corporations, and individuals.

The Executive Director (ED) will serve as a dynamic and visionary leader for Brooklyn Arts Council and key advocate for the borough's arts and cultural sector. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the ED will serve as the public face of the organization and a convenor within the Arts and Culture community. They will advance the institution as a leading voice, ensuring the achievement of the organization's philosophy, mission, and core values. This individual will leverage organizational resources to sustain and expand partnerships and grow the vitality of the Brooklyn borough's creative sector. They will provide the strategic and inspirational vision to strengthen the resiliency and sustainability of arts and cultural organizations and expand their capacity to serve diverse communities, embracing the principles of equity, inclusion, and access.

The ED will collaborate with the Board of Directors, advisory group, corporate partners, and civic partners in the active pursuit of financial resources to support the strategic plan. They will facilitate relationships with cultural partners, institutional funders, and individual donors, keenly aware of their motivations and interests for funding the arts. Direct reports include the Operations Manager, Development & External Affairs Director, the Programs & Strategy Director, and the Executive Assistant & Special Projects Assistant. The ED will be responsible for overseeing the organization's financial, operations, fundraising and development, human resources, and programmatic strategies, while giving direction and supervising a close-knit team of talented arts professionals dedicated to developing Brooklyn's cultural sector.

Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic Direction and Vision

- Develop and guide a vision and strategy to accomplish the mission for an innovative, forward-thinking organization that inspires and engages a diverse set of stakeholders in a borough that has rapidly changing demographics and generational changes.
- Foster a culture of collaboration centered on the empowering and transformative power of the arts locally across Brooklyn as an international art center, while setting the tone for BAC's next chapter.
- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access throughout the organization, with policies and practices that foster transformative change.
- Balance an exciting new vision for Brooklyn's creative economy with a realistic understanding of local policy and the political and environmental factors impacting the region and the arts sector.
- Strengthen BAC's image through effective community relations activities, making presentations in public forums and convenings in the business, philanthropic, and civic sectors to promote the organization's work and enhance the entire cultural sector.
- Embrace other strategic building responsibilities as needed.

Resource Development, Community Engagement, and Board Governance

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- Enhance the development and implementation of comprehensive marketing, branding, and development strategies that maximize revenue opportunities from major donors, foundations, public agencies, corporations, and individuals.
- Promote Brooklyn as an arts capital; develop compelling tactics that promote BAC's presence and increase its appeal to local artists, as well as engage positively with potential supporters from Brooklyn's diverse communities.
- Cultivate and nurture transparent and positive relationships with the board and staff, ensuring open communication and honest assessment of programmatic and performance milestones, and enacting necessary steps that will most benefit BAC and maintain mission-aligned goals.
- Embrace other resource development and community engagement responsibilities as needed.

Fiscal Responsibility and Organizational Excellence

- Partner with the board chair to engage board members and leverage their networks to secure resources that will advance the organization's mission, while establishing strong reciprocal communication channels with the board, inclusive of triumphs and challenges in operations, finance, and programmatic initiatives.
- Partner with the Board of Directors to refine and implement the strategic plan, aligning goals with the organization's core mission and allocating financial and human resources to achieve the goals.
- Recruit, hire, mentor, and retain a diverse and qualified staff, creating a culture of welcome and belonging, while fostering a culture of learning, empowerment, and discovery that supports professional growth and agency.
- Optimize and implement equitable operational policies, processes, and procedures that increase efficiency, establish quality customer service to grant recipients and artists, promote integrity, strengthen internal controls, and ensure a brave and healthy workplace for staff.
- Manage financial resources with integrity and transparency, establish and monitor financial controls, and oversee audit standards and money management policies.
- Oversee the organization's financial health to establish short- and long-range financial goals, develop and monitor the annual budget, and ensure adherence to strong financial controls.
- Embrace other fiscal responsibilities as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

A strategic and versatile advocate for the arts, the Executive Director will be an authentic and diplomatic communicator with the ability to interact and guide a diverse group of stakeholders towards the common goal of creating a vibrant and healthy cultural sector. This individual will be an engaging and motivational strategic leader and thinker who can bring together multiple constituencies to achieve a common vision. The ED will be resourceful and decisive, valuing efficiency and weighing the return on investment of time, energy, and resources. They will adapt to changing circumstances with ease, using their collaborative style to reach difficult decisions for the benefit of the organization's mission.

The ED will be a skilled public administrator with the ability to balance service to the community and artistic and cultural partners with the prudent management of people, finances, and programs. An inclusive and human-centered leader, this individual will have the ability to motivate and guide a team. They will be responsive to internal ideas and have the agility to communicate these innovative resources to the Board of Directors and external stakeholders. They will use their passion for the arts to inspire and build relationships that strengthen the support systems for the cultural sector. They will value collaboration and possess a deep awareness of issues and trends impacting the arts locally, regionally, and nationally.

Other key competencies include:

- **Personal Accountability and Diplomacy** – The capacity to deeply respect others, effectively and tactfully handle difficult or sensitive issues, while being answerable for personal actions. The ability to be honest and communicate directly while still maintaining a sense of respect.

- **Planning and Organizing and Time and Priority Management** – The utility to prioritize and complete tasks in order to deliver desired outcomes within desired time frames. The ingenuity to collaboratively establish strategic goals, while assessing risks, organizing activities, and operationalizing priorities to meet or exceed mutually agreed upon expectations.
- **Resiliency** – The ability to self-evaluate, accept responsibility for their own and their team’s actions and decisions, and overcome setbacks or obstacles with optimism.
- **Leadership and Teamwork** – The dexterity to organize, inspire, and influence people to believe in a vision, creating a sense of common purpose centered on creativity, artistry, and diversity and guide the team in support of their values and those of the organization.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have five to seven years of progressive leadership experience in public or nonprofit administration and management. High levels of supervisory, administrative, and budgetary experience are required. A master’s degree in the arts, business, public administration, or other related field is preferred. A demonstrated leadership capacity and experience with advanced communication strategies including social media is necessary. A background in coalescing diverse interests and managing complex collaborative partnerships will be advantageous. The ideal candidate will be a strategic thinker with a wealth of experience in public administration, particularly with programs involving public funds. Knowledge of the City of New York, and its surrounding arts communities, as well as the political landscape, will be helpful attributes. Qualified applicants will have a history of personal involvement in and appreciation for the cultural sector and committed to embracing and advancing the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and access.

Compensation and Benefits

Brooklyn Arts Council provides a competitive and equitable compensation package with a salary in the range of \$160,000 to \$180,000 and benefits that include paid vacation, sick leave, personal days, and holidays; health insurance options, long-term disability, term life, and accidental death insurance; a dental plan; and a 403(b)- retirement plan.

Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit artsconsulting.com/employment. For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

Wyona Lynch-McWhite, Senior Vice President
Jane Hsu, Senior Advisor



1040 First Ave, Suite 352
New York, NY 10022-2991

Tel (888) 234.4236 Ext 225 (Mrs. Lynch-McWhite) or Ext. 223 (Ms. Hsu)

Email BrooklynArtsCouncil@ArtsConsulting.com

Brooklyn Arts Council strives to foster a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace where our employees and volunteers – whatever their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education, or ability – feel valued and respected. We are committed to being a nondiscriminatory organization that provides equal opportunity for employment and advancement in our programs and at our worksites. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages, and work to ensure that all voices are valued and heard. We are committed to modeling diversity and inclusion for the arts community in Brooklyn, and to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable treatment for all. Brooklyn Arts Council prohibits any form of workplace harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.