

NORTHERN CLAY CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH

Title: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Reports To: Chair of Board and Board of Directors
- Hours: Full-time salaried, requiring schedule flexibility
- Direct Reports: Business Manager
Digital and Marketing Manager
Coordinator of Artist Services and Storytelling
Manager of Education and Studio Artist Programs
Manager of Community Engagement
Director of Galleries & Events

The executive director is responsible for leading all facets of Northern Clay Center (NCC) operations that address the Center's mission of advancing the ceramic arts for artists, learners, and the community through education, exhibitions, and artist services. This includes, but is not limited to, providing artistic vision, strategic planning, and organizational management. The executive director provides oversight and leadership for the Center's three primary program areas (education, exhibitions, and artist services) within the overall policies established by the Board of Directors. The executive director works closely with senior staff members to realize the goals and objectives of NCC's Strategic Framework designed and implemented in 2017.

TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The selected individual will be a charismatic leader who will pursue the Center's Strategic Framework with enthusiasm and diligence. This individual will be knowledgeable about both historical and contemporary ceramics in the Midwest and the state of Minnesota, as well as trends in: ceramic arts education; fundraising; and audience participation. The individual will have the ability to balance short- and long-term priorities for the organization, and will possess strong business and leadership skills. They are a thoughtful risk-taker. They have the ability to read and interpret financials, as well as create and manage intricately detailed budgets. Interpersonal skills are key, given the Center's myriad constituencies. This individual will be a clear and concise communicator who will work to maintain an environment of creative thinking, brainstorming, and collaboration with staff and the Board of Directors. The individual will also possess passion for the ceramic arts; they must be committed to quality in all they do; and they must have the ability to build trust, to solicit and listen to feedback, and to exercise decisiveness.

Other Key Competencies Include:

- **Leadership and Service:** The ability to organize and motivate others to work toward a common goal and to embrace change, with attention to quality at the core of your efforts; the mindset of service to the organization and to the field of ceramics; and the ability to lead without ego or personal agenda.
- **Project Management, Planning, and Organizing:** The ability to identify and cultivate the resources and systems needed to obtain results; the capacity to prioritize tasks to establish appropriate courses of action.
- **Diplomacy and Interpersonal Skills:** The ability to embrace myriad points of view in a constructive way, to resolve conflict, to find a common ground for the array of stakeholders, and to treat individuals fairly.
- **Collaboration and Accountability:** The ability to build diverse and meaningful relationships, the confidence to accept responsibility for the consequences of both personal and professional actions, to follow through with commitments, and to learn from the past while planning mindfully for the future.



Qualifications

Applicants must have at least a bachelor of arts or bachelor of fine arts degree; a master's degree is preferred. A minimum of 10 years of management and administrative experience in a nonprofit, artist service organization, foundation, private entity, or academic institution is strongly encouraged, with five years in a leadership role. Applicants who have worked exclusively in the for-profit sector must demonstrate meaningful volunteer experience in and passion for mission-driven nonprofits. Excellent written and oral communication skills are a must, as is proficiency in Mac-based programs. Applicant must demonstrate an understanding of and a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity.

AREAS OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY

Strategic and Business Planning: 10%

In consultation with the Board of Directors, the executive director:

- Develops and follows the Center's strategic framework, long- and short-term goals, and operating policies.
- Works with program heads to plan long-term program policies and strategies and current-year operational plans, and to resolve short-term issues as appropriate.

Program Administration: 20%

The executive director:

- Oversees programs, financial administration, fundraising and cultivating new donors, staff development and management, and public relations and external partnerships.
- Exercises final authority over developing and approving the Center's exhibition schedule, roster of artists represented in the sales gallery and included on the Center's teaching roster, and the overall structure of education and artist services programs.
- Approves all major NCC promotional materials and content, editorial publications (virtual and print), and external communications.
- As appropriate: Directly develops and manages periodic special programs and projects, such as visiting artist and special lecture series, exhibitions and related educational content, and editing and designing publications.

Financial Administration: 20%

The executive director:

- Ensures that all resources of the organization—human, facility and equipment, and financial—are used as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- Ensures adequacy and soundness of the Center's financial structure and reporting systems, including development of annual and long-term operating and capital budgets.
- Manages the analysis and production of monthly financials.
- Participates in the annual audit process.

Fundraising and Development: 20%

The executive director oversees all fundraising activities:

- Develops and maintains relationships with NCC's donor base.
- Edits, and generates (as appropriate) content for all program-specific grant writing.
- Prepares proposals for individual, foundation, corporate, and government sources of support for general operations.
- Ensures that appropriate reports are provided to funders on schedule.

Human Resource Management and Development: 15%

The executive director:

- Provides the conceptual and creative tone for the Center.
- Creates a positive, productive, and collaborative climate for staff and volunteers through regular and effective communication.
- Provides appropriate support and recognition for staff and volunteers.
- Ensures proper human resource policies are in place, procedures are followed, and the organization's staffing reflects programmatic needs and budget realities.



Board Development and Engagement: 5%

- Assists the Board of Directors in developing and maintaining an effective board. The executive director serves as an ex-officio member of the board and on all board committees.
- Identifies, cultivates, and assists in the recruitment of able and committed board and committee members who represent the broader community and whose skills, experience, interest, diversity, and capacity are a match for NCC.
- Promotes the ongoing education and involvement of board members to maximize participation in their contribution toward NCC's success and growth.
- Communicates effectively with the board, provides timely and accurate information, and supports all board activities, including meetings and subcommittee meetings as necessary.

Community and Public Relations: 10%

The executive director:

- Represents the Center in the regional community and in the international clay community.
- Promotes awareness of the organization as a valued arts resource.
- As needed and appropriate, works with other organizations to meet the needs of NCC and the larger arts community.
- Represents the Center in its relationships with funders, the community, various governmental agencies, professional societies, media, and other groups.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

This is a permanent, full-time salaried exempt position. Salary is commensurate with experience, qualifications, performance, and NCC budget. Benefits include vacation and holiday pay, sick and safe time, a monthly benefits allowance, and a 403(b) plan.

ABOUT NORTHERN CLAY CENTER

NCC has been an innovative cornerstone of 20th-century ceramics. In this spirit, the Center has continued to evolve as a guiding light, through an active exchange of fine craft dialogue that has surrounded our organization since its inception. Northern Clay Center has consistently advanced the ceramic arts for artists, learners, and the community through education, exhibitions, and artist services. Renowned for visionary leadership, compassionate teamwork, and unsurpassed hospitality, NCC is now seeking new executive leadership as Sarah Millfelt departs. Sarah's efforts over her 20-year tenure have been critical to our continued growth and prosperity. The organization is well-positioned for the future. The successor will assume the helm of a dynamic, multi-faceted, financially sound organization with a passionately engaged board and a staff devoted to supporting an expansive horizon. We seek a new director who possesses the energetic combination of strategic thinking, creative vision, fiscal awareness, and compassionate collaboration to carry on our strategic goal of excellence in service to the ceramic arts.

TO APPLY

Please send a cover letter describing your interests and experience, a résumé that highlights a commitment to the arts and the communities they serve, and a list of three professional references and their contact information to: NCC's Transition Committee, nccdirectorsearch@northernclaycenter.org.

Northern Clay Center is an equal opportunity employer.