



Visionary Executive Leadership Opportunity in the Non-Profit Arts

About the Painted Bride Art Center

paintedbride.org

Who the Painted Bride Is

The Painted Bride Art Center—known to many Philadelphians simply as The Bride—is a nonprofit producing and presenting arts organization with over five decades of radical imagination and cultural stewardship. Founded in 1969 in a former bridal shop on South Street, the Bride emerged as part of the national Alternative Space movement, offering a vital platform for artists traditionally excluded from museums and commercial venues. From its earliest days, The Bride has served as a cultural trailhead for underrepresented voices—women, people of color, LGBTQ+ creatives, disabled artists—and continues to ask: What do artists and communities need now?

The Bride has always been more than a venue. It's a living, evolving platform for interdisciplinary creation, civic dialogue, and collective transformation. From legendary performances to neighborhood-based rituals, from early hip-hop showcases to community-based healing rituals, The Bride creates the conditions for honest exchange, joyful disruption, and cultural reimagining.

What the Bride Does

The Painted Bride develops and presents boundary-pushing programs that center art as a catalyst for dialogue, reflection, and belonging. Through its rotating Programming Committee—a paid cohort of artists, thinkers, and community members—The Bride co-creates experiences with, not just for, the people it serves. This model ensures that programming is not only innovative, but accountable, inclusive, and relevant.

More than a presenter, The Bride is a creative collaborator—working shoulder-to-shoulder with artists to workshop ideas, forge partnerships, engage communities, and bring new work to life. Programs span performance, visual art, jazz, social practice, civic ritual, education, and more. Signature projects have included Power to the Prompt, Resistance Garden, Off the Wall, and Building Bridges: On the Rise—each inviting Philadelphians to reimagine shared space, voice, and purpose.

Since its founding, The Bride has supported over 25,000 artists, commissioned more than 100 new works, and presented over 5,000 events. Its alumni include cultural icons such as James Baldwin, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Zakir Hussain, Spalding Gray, Toni Morrison, Ursula Rucker, The Roots, and Rennie Harris.

To Apply: Send your resume and cover letter to Marni Murphy at administrator@criterionsg.com



Why the Bride?

At a time of transformation—across the sector, across the city—the Painted Bride remains a place of purpose. Following the sale of its longtime Vine Street building in 2022, The Bride has become more mobile, nimble, and community-embedded than ever. With its newly launched Project Space in West Philadelphia, an invested endowment, and an active network of citywide partners, The Bride is poised to model a new kind of cultural institution: rooted in care, co-creation, and collective wisdom. Leading the Bride means stewarding both a remarkable legacy and a living experiment. The next Executive Director will join an organization that honors its past while boldly inviting the future—one that welcomes the challenge of building equity not only into what it programs, but into how it operates. The Bride doesn't just reflect culture, it helps remake it. For those who believe that art can transform lives and neighborhoods, the question is not why The Bride?—but what's next?

Mission

Painted Bride is an artist-driven organization supporting the conception, development, and presentation of socially resonant work by mobilizing the creative process with respect, integrity, and care.

About the Opportunity

The Painted Bride seeks a visionary leader with proven executive leadership experience in arts organizations to shape our vibrant future as an artist-centered organization.

Job Title: Executive Director

Reports to: Board of Directors

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Responsibilities

Artistic Vision and Programming

The Executive Director is responsible for establishing and implementing The Bride's artistic vision. The Executive Director will:

- Provide executive leadership grounded in direct experience managing arts or cultural organizations, ensuring operational excellence, artistic integrity, and alignment with the Painted Bride's mission.
- Develop strategic partnerships with a diverse pool of artists and organizations that create a network that addresses the needs of our cultural community and our city.
- Develop artistic initiatives and program goals in collaboration with the program committee.
- Advocate for artists and seek support for them in organizations at the local and national levels, both private and public.
- Participate in local and national networks of like-minded arts organizations.
- Provide leadership to the Program Committee and Program Manager to align with the Painted Brides values and goals.

Strategic Vision and Leadership

Assess The Bride's opportunities for growth and impact centered on its mission and align its artistic direction accordingly towards a visionary new future state that can continuously evolve and inspire.

- Create and support a global ecosystem of independent and emerging artists in Philadelphia and beyond.
- Inspire and engage stakeholders as the chief spokesperson and ambassador for the organization.
- Serve as a committed, visionary, and accessible leader with a consistent and deep connection to the organization's stakeholders including artists, staff, board, donors, funders, audiences and community members.
- Proactively maintain knowledge about best standards and practices in the ever-evolving performance presentation and arts management fields.

Fundraising and Financial Oversight

The Executive Director serves as the chief financial steward of the organization, responsible for ensuring fiscal health, sustainability, and accountability. This includes overseeing all aspects of financial management and ensuring that the organization operates within a sound, transparent framework.

- Develop and oversee fundraising plans that reflect emerging trends and opportunities in the arts and culture landscape.
- Build and nurture relationships with foundations and individual donors proactively.
- Oversee financial planning and well-being of the organization and ensure transparency, integrity, and accuracy in all financial reporting.
- In collaboration with the Board Treasurer and the finance team, develop and recommend a

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sustainable (i.e., balanced) annual budget that advances the year's objectives, and remain ultimately responsible for the appropriate expenditure of that budget.

- Develop and execute fundraising strategies that align with the organization's artistic mission and fiscal goals.
- Explore and implement innovative business models, including earned income opportunities.

Community Engagement and Partnership Development

The Executive Director is responsible for developing strong relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders, current and future, including audiences, other arts organizations, artists, the Board, local businesses, funders, and other relevant parties.

- Develop relationships with venues and partners for collaboration.
- Research, produce, and present programming with diverse organizations that share The Bride's mission to nurture artists.

Team Management and Culture Building

Build upon a supportive workplace culture that values respect, collaboration, and innovation with structures that will ensure accountability.

- Hire, support, and evaluate professional and support staff and external consultants.
- Execute forward-thinking policies that ensure a healthy workplace that embraces equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Supervise the operations, development, programming, marketing, and administrative teams.
- Encourage self-initiative, collaboration, and accountability among the staff and provide staff members with professional growth opportunities.
- Cultivate board members and their connections to secure future vitality and community relevance.

Board Collaboration and Development

In collaboration with the Board of Directors, establish and nurture policies and long-term goals that are consistent with the organization's mission and finances.

- Work with the Board to identify and secure adequate financial resources for The Bride to accomplish its goals and objectives. Monitor changes in financial resources to ensure funding for those goals or, in the event of an anticipated budgetary shortfall, make the necessary programmatic reductions.
- Make recommendations to the Board regarding the Bride's annual and long-term goals, its annual programmatic plans and needs, annual fiscal plans and needs, and the hiring and management of staff and external consultants.
- Assist the Board as needed with meetings, recruitment, committees, fundraising, etc.

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Attributes, Qualifications + Skills

Experience should include leading nonprofit or preferred arts-driven organizations, supervising staff, overseeing budgets, and guiding strategic vision in an arts or cultural context.

- Minimum of 5-10 years of progressive leadership experience in arts or cultural organizations, with a demonstrated ability to manage staff, budgets, and programs at a senior level.
- The ability to develop and communicate an inspiring vision that engages stakeholders.
- Deep understanding of the arts ecosystem, with strong ties to artistic communities and hands-on experience managing arts programming and cultural initiatives.
- Skilled at bridging the needs of artists and funders with care, empathy, and professionalism.
- Proven ability to lead teams, fundraise effectively, and manage complex organizational structures.
- Demonstrated cultural competency and experience working within or alongside BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and underrepresented communities.
- Preferably an artist or individual with deep care for the artistic process and artist experience.
- Strong commitment to ethical leadership, equity, and adaptive change.

Compensation Range: \$110,000 – \$120,000, commensurate with experience and local cost of living considerations. The benefits package includes Health, dental and eye with dependent coverage; Retirement match at 5% of salary; Professional development for meetings, events, travel; Up to 4 weeks paid vacation annually.

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