

## **Ann Arbor Summer Festival Executive and Artistic Director - Position Job Description 2017**

### **ORGANIZATION HISTORY**

The Ann Arbor Summer Festival is an eclectic, dynamic, and far-reaching celebration of performing arts, outdoor entertainment, and community spirit. A boutique music and arts festival, the nearly four-week gathering offers dozens of performances, activities, exhibitions, and screenings representative of the best in music, dance, contemporary circus, public radio shows, comedy, film, spectacle, street arts, and family entertainment. The Festival's mission is to present a world-class celebration of arts and entertainment that enriches the cultural, economic, and social vitality of the region. Its Core Values are: Excellence, Diversity, and Relevance.

Founded by University of Michigan regent Eugene Power as an independent 501c3, and established as an equal partnership between the City of Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan, the Festival presented its first full season in 1984. Today, the Festival produces two concurrent programs, one indoor and one outdoor, at various spaces across the U-M campus and downtown. The indoor ticketed Mainstage series now typically features eight to twelve performances by world-class talents. The admission-free outdoor program, Top of the Park, is held along a beautiful campus green and offers concerts, movies by moonlight, open-air spectacles, hands-on kid's activities, wellness classes, private parties, culinary tasting events, and family attractions.

Enjoying its 34th season in 2017, the Festival offers a progressive mix of local, regional, national, and international artists of all disciplines, six-nights per week during parts of June and July. Now presenting over 175 scheduled events each season and attracting a diverse audience of over 80,000 people, the Festival continues to grow as a major cultural event in the region.

For over three decades, the Festival has hosted such luminaries as Ella Fitzgerald, Johnny Cash, Dave Brubeck, Ray Charles, Dizzy Gillespie, Marcel Marceau, Aretha Franklin, Tony Bennett, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Garrison Keillor, Willie Nelson, Elvis Costello, Bonnie Raitt, Diana Krall, Ingrid Michaelson, Michael Franti, Andrew Bird, Lily Tomlin, Circa, Steve Martin, Trombone Shorty, The Indigo Girls, John Waters, Cake, Momix, Ira Glass, Buddy Guy, The Moth Mainstage, and Wait Wait, Don't Tell Me! In addition to its marquee ticketed presentations and many outdoor musical performances, recent outdoor spectacle performances supported by grants have included Australia's Strange Fruit, The U.K.'s Architects of Air, Spain's Wild bytes' Superhero, Erth's Dinosaurs, March Fourth!, and more.

The Festival is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors drawn equally from U-M affiliated nominees, who are then approved by the University Regents, and Ann Arbor community nominees, who are then approved by the City Council.

The Director works closely with the Board to set long-term objectives, develop and approve the Festival's budget, and implement policy initiatives that successfully serve the Festival's varied constituents. The Festival operates on an annual budget of roughly \$1.4 million. Revenue sources are typically 65% earned and 35% contributed. At present the Festival employs 3.5 year-round staff members, more than 150 seasonal staff and brings on 200+ volunteers annually.

### **POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Festival is seeking an Executive Director who is a visionary and innovative leader, capable of creatively advancing an established Festival in a vibrant University community with strong interests and engagement in arts and culture.

The Executive Director duties encompass:

- Being the "face" and the chief executive officer of the Festival, reporting to the Board, with responsibility for all aspects of the Festival's operations;
- Vigorously represent the Festival to the region's artistic, political, business, university, and social communities and maintain active community-based constituencies in support of the Festival; Execute annual promotional campaigns and maintain high level engagement with the media in support of the ticketed series.

The Executive Director must be an effective manager.

- Oversee preparation and management of annual operating and capital budgets while maintaining appropriate information systems.
- Provide creative and innovative leadership for the continued development, long-term sustainability, and improved operations of the Festival and its programs while working closely with the Board to develop, revise, implement, and maintain long-range and strategic plans.

The Executive Director should be an innovative and compelling programmer.

- Execute the booking and programming of the Festival in a manner that appeals to broad popular community interests, with varied entertainment and educational activities in a financially responsible and successful manner while highlighting the unique offerings of the Festival distinguishing it from neighboring events.
- Work with both community organizations and university-based groups for 'win-win' collaborations that serve the Festival's goals and further expand the Festival's audiences.

The Executive Director must be an energetic fundraiser.

- Take the leadership role and support the development officer's execution of annual fundraising campaigns including:
  - Act as the lead for federal, state, city, university, and other grants.
  - Sponsorship acquisition and cultivation for major cash, in-kind, and trade support.
  - Advance solicitation of foundations, individual gifts, and annual campaigns while cultivating major donors and bequests.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

Preferred qualifications include:

- Significant progressive leadership experience in arts and/or arts management with a substantial annual budget, supervision of professional staff and volunteers, work with a board of trustees.
- A degree and senior experience in the presentation of the performing arts.
- Artistic knowledge, interest and experience in the performing arts industry and production and the ability to work with a broad cross-section of genres, artists, businesses, media, promotional partners and the public to enhance interest in and support for the Festival.
- The ability to make sound business decisions regarding artistic and programming options. Experience using industry metrics to assess the financial 'value' of a particular performance and sales history and an understanding of basic deal structures, production costs, ticket pricing, and market interest.
- Working knowledge of fiscal management, including fund accounting, accrual accounting, deferred revenue, multi-year agreements, grant reporting, and budgeting.
- Highly effective public speaker, exceptional written and oral communication, and organizational-growth oriented interpersonal skills.

- Experience in fundraising, including major gift cultivation, donor stewardship, sponsor cultivation, and successful grant authoring.
- Maturity, discretion, exemplary integrity, a high level of day-to-day energy, flexibility, resiliency, personable nature with the ability to 'shift-gears' to connect with a variety of constituents, positive leadership demeanor in high-pressure public environments, and the willingness to be accessible and to pro-actively engage key members of the community, staff, board, and other relevant constituencies that may further the organization's goals.

### **ABOUT ANN ARBOR**

The Ann Arbor area is a leading national educational and high-tech research center nestled in a peaceful rural setting yet close to a major international airport. It's a close-knit community with a rich mix of cultures. With a population of 117,000, Ann Arbor is a top ranked place to live in the U.S. and combines a cosmopolitan atmosphere with the small-town allure of friendly and charming neighborhoods and easy accessibility. Home to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor is small enough to bike across in an afternoon, yet diverse enough to attract top visual and performing artists to fairs and festivals. Located 45 miles west of Detroit, the city boasts a vibrant arts and cultural scene, including live music venues, historic film theaters, museums, extensive recreational opportunities, galleries, many restaurants, nationally recognized libraries, good schools, and a variety of street fairs. The Festival is one of the area's key attractions, with the warm weather offering a perfect opportunity for outdoor concerts, movies under the stars, picnics on the lawn, and dining al fresco.

### **SALARY, BENEFITS AND START DATE**

Salary and benefits will be competitive. The Festival is an equal opportunity employer. The position becomes available in August 2017.

### **PROCEDURE FOR APPLICANTS**

Submit a brief cover letter and a resume with salary history, available start date, relevant qualifications, and experience, in confidence to the following address. References will be requested at a later point in the process.

Wendy Lawrence, Chair, Ann Arbor Summer Festival

2740 Laurel Hill Road, Ann Arbor MI 48103

Or [wwlawrence1@yahoo.com](mailto:wwlawrence1@yahoo.com)

Deadline for applications is September 15th, 2017