

# MASS MoCA

## Position Description Chief Advancement Officer

June 14, 2024



[MASS MoCA](#), one of the world's largest and liveliest centers for making and enjoying today's most ambitious and evocative art, seeks an entrepreneurial, strategic, and goal-oriented candidate to lead the growth of its membership and fundraising efforts at an exciting time in the museum's 25-year history. The new Chief Advancement Officer (CAO) will join the institution as it releases an ambitious seven-year strategic plan that centers sustainability, equity, and community building in its mission.

MASS MoCA is unique in the art world. It is a non-collecting museum with a dual performing and visual arts mission and has an extraordinary setting that is at once urban and rural, set in the bucolic hills of the Berkshire Mountains, just three hours from both Boston and NYC. With more than 300,000 square feet of exhibition space set on a 16-acre repurposed [factory campus](#), MASS MoCA's sprawling campus comprises a good portion of the small city of North Adams, Massachusetts. In its vast galleries and stunning collection of indoor and outdoor performing arts venues, MASS MoCA embraces all forms of visual and performing art: music, sculpture, dance, film, painting, photography, theater, and boundary-crossing works of art that defy easy classification. MASS MoCA thrives on helping artists create and fabricate work that is fresh and forward-looking. More than 170,000 visitors a year come to the Berkshires from around the country and the globe.

Central to MASS MoCA's mission is our commitment to serving as a catalyst for community revitalization. We at MASS MoCA are ardent believers in the power of the creative economy. We believe that advancement of the arts, increased tourism, deeper community participation, and regional economic redevelopment are mutually reinforcing and inextricably linked.

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As it enters its [25th anniversary year](#), MASS MoCA celebrates its history defined by tenaciousness, vision, risk-taking, artistic excellence, and a commitment to the revitalization and economic growth of the region. Following the retirement of MASS MoCA's founding Director, [Kristy Edmunds](#) – a world-renowned arts director, curator, and creative producer – was appointed in October 2021 to move the organization forward and to build a durable, sustainable future. Reflecting on this critical moment, Kristy, working with our dedicated [Board of Trustees](#), authored a new, seven-year Strategic Plan (2024-2030) in which we seek to realize a new vision for cultural institutions at a time when museums and all arts organizations must reevaluate their role and relevance in society. Specific initiatives in the Strategic Plan include the significant greening of the campus; creating new housing for artists; developing a curatorial exchange program to bring in perspectives of under-represented curators to the museum; and deepening MASS MoCA's partnership with the City of North Adams on interconnected civic development projects. To support these ambitious goals, MASS MoCA aims to grow the annual budget to add staff capacity and significantly expand the current \$28 million endowment through the development and execution of a comprehensive capital campaign.

**In this exciting time of evolution, MASS MoCA seeks a forward-thinking, innovative fundraiser and dynamic community builder to join the museum's leadership team as our new Chief Advancement Officer.** The CAO will have the opportunity to build and lead a growing Advancement team as we create a new culture of philanthropy at the museum. The CAO will lead the team at MASS MoCA – in Advancement and across the institution – a program that develops, nurtures, and manages joyful and mutually beneficial philanthropic relationships across sectors. The CAO will lead the design and implementation of a comprehensive fundraising program to grow MASS MoCA's contributed revenue in membership, annual and major gifts, institutional fundraising, and events to strengthen the museum's engagement with stakeholders, patrons, and supporters. This position will also play the lead role in designing, planning, and launching the next comprehensive capital campaign.

The CAO will serve as a key member of MASS MoCA's senior leadership team, the Director's cabinet. The CAO will also work closely with the Secretary to the Board to engage with – and help shape the development of – the Board of Trustees to advance long-term, sustained support for the health of the museum. The CAO will be a collegial and responsive partner with colleagues on the Director's cabinet as well as with staff in departments across the institution, including public programs, visitor experience, visual arts, performing arts, real estate, and buildings and grounds/campus planning. The CAO will lead by example in their work with the Advancement team, as well as with all staff and volunteers, to bring the highest standards of cultivation, stewardship, and engagement to MASS MoCA. The CAO will work closely with finance and communications teams to ensure coherent and consistent engagement with donor, volunteer, and member constituencies.

The successful candidate will be excited to build on the entrepreneurial first 25 years of MASS MoCA and help to usher in a new chapter for a new moment. The CAO should have broad experience in philanthropy (ideally in arts and culture), an understanding of the challenges facing arts institutions, and an excitement about charting new paths for accessibility, equity, sustainability, and the use of technology to serve and reach new audiences. We seek a CAO who has 10+ years of demonstrated experience leading fundraising programs and campaigns; the CAO will be a gifted relationship-builder and manager and a collaborative, creative partner and strategist. MASS MoCA will thrive with a CAO who is inspired by the many opportunities ahead.

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## Job Summary

The new CAO will work in partnership with MASS MoCA's Director and lead the advancement team in the development and implementation of strategies for contributed revenue across all channels – membership, annual giving, major, institutional (corporate, foundation, and government grants), and planned giving – supporting annual operations, capital projects, and endowment priorities.

## Major Job Responsibilities/Activities

- Build and lead a dynamic and growing Advancement team that manages the museum's full scope of philanthropic giving: major gifts, individual and corporate memberships, foundation giving, corporate sponsorships, patron groups, travel programs, and special events, including the biennial MASS MoCA Gala and art auction.
- Develop and execute a comprehensive, data-driven, and relationship-centered fundraising program to meet the annual fundraising goals for the operating budget, with a particular focus on further developing a pipeline of leadership annual and major gift individual donors;
- Serve as a member of the senior leadership team, the Director's cabinet and through collaborative relationships with colleagues, bring the philanthropy and donor engagement lens to all areas of the organization;
- Serve as chief liaison and strategist to the Director and other relationship managers assigned to donors, supporting the fullest and most effective engagement plans for each donor;
- Support Director, trustees, and other relationship managers to guide strategic cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship strategies, including the preparation of briefing materials;
- Serve as the primary relationship manager of 40 to 50 prospects and donors; lead the team in developing a systematic process for identifying and qualifying prospective donors; lead in the development of creative strategies to engage donors; solicit and steward major gifts;
- In close partnership with the Deputy Director and Director of Finance, provide keen and regular oversight of progress toward annual fundraising goals, including the development of quarterly management reports;
- Develop and manage the annual department operating budget and department expenses;
- Collaborate with colleagues in communications & content to ensure the Advancement perspective on web and other electronic communications, and on donor engagement and solicitation design development;



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- Be committed to building a depth and breadth of understanding MASS MoCA's programming, exhibitions, and artists, as well as field-wide philanthropic trends, in order to be conversant with art collectors and philanthropists;
- Serve as primary staff liaison to and staff the resource development subcommittee of the board; engage with other board committees, including budget and finance, as needed to present on fundraising progress and goals;
- Serve as a manager and mentor to a growing team of development professionals;
- Travel nationally and internationally on behalf of MASS MoCA; and
- Manage and monitor all external consulting contracts, as needed.



## Other Job Responsibilities:

### Staff Leadership:

- Model organizational values and lead with collaboration and empathy;
- Inspire passion and commitment toward common organizational goals;
- Create a work environment that embraces change and support new ideas; and
- Work through complex issues and problems to optimize performance

### Institutional Responsibilities:

- Support MASS MoCA's mission, vision, and core commitments to the visitor experience, constituent engagement, and institutional relevancy for the future;
- Contribute to and support the MASS MoCA's new strategic plan, annual priorities, and institutional initiatives including diversity, equity, access, and inclusion and environmental sustainability;
- Contribute to building a team and organization based on mutual respect, a spirit of collegiality, cooperation, and an openness to multiple perspectives; and
- Help to shape MASS MoCA's institutional culture of ongoing learning, collaboration, innovation, creativity, and community engagement.



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## Qualifications and Experience

- 10+ years of fundraising experience at a senior level, ideally at a cultural or arts institution, and an understanding of cultural philanthropy regionally, statewide, and nationally;
- Experience strategizing and managing engagement and solicitation strategies for individuals, foundations, and corporations and a proven record of nurturing lasting relationships that match donor interests with organizational priorities;
- Demonstrated success in soliciting, closing, and stewarding gifts of \$100,000+;
- Understanding and success in developing and leading fundraising efforts for current use/annual goals while also building endowment and capital strategies;
- Experience with multi-year fundraising campaign planning, implementation, and management and a commitment to building and sustaining a culture of philanthropy across an institution;
- Facility with donor database management and systems and an appreciation for using data and research to build and develop prospect pools and inform engagement strategies;
- Experience working in partnership with a range of stakeholders and partners to achieve fundraising goals, including leadership, trustees, staff, patrons;
- An empathetic listener with an ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with donors, staff, and peers;
- Willingness to travel nationally and internationally as well as the flexibility to work as needed to accomplish the organization's fundraising goals;
- A donor-centered, collaborative approach to fundraising;
- An entrepreneurial spirit and ability to balance short and long-term priorities;
- A passion for cultivating a team of professionals and providing positive leadership that inspires;
- A commitment to diversity; a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability and socio-economic circumstance, and ability to work with diverse individuals within the organization and broader community;
- Deep curiosity, authenticity, high emotional intelligence, and a sense of humor and joy;
- Conversant in visual art and performing arts; fluency with philanthropic trends in arts and culture; appreciation and understanding of the interconnectedness of contemporary art and larger social issues;
- Bachelor's degree; Master's degree preferred;
- Passion for and belief in MASS MoCA's mission and the power and importance of art in society and democracy.

**Salary:** Minimum starting salary \$150K. MASS MoCA is committed to offering competitive benefits and benefits packages designed to support the well-being and professional growth of our employees. Current benefits include: comprehensive medical and dental coverage, 401(k) plan with employer match, generous vacation, sick leave, and holiday pay, and wellness programs including employee assistance, mental health support, and wellness activities.

**To apply:** We enthusiastically welcome applications from experienced candidates of all backgrounds. Review of applications will begin immediately. To apply, please upload your resume and a cover letter [here](#). In your cover letter, please describe your relevant experience and share what about this position (and MASS MoCA's multi-faceted mission) most inspires or appeals to you.

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## Background on MASS MoCA

Founded in 1999, MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest centers for making and enjoying today's most evocative art. MASS MoCA is not only a contemporary art museum and performing arts venue, but also a creative campus with a regional, national, and global impact. Through innovative collaborations, MASS MoCA helps artists and their supporters create and show important new work, bringing to visitors bold visual and performing art in all stages of production, while also creating a stimulating center of creativity and commerce that brings life and economic vibrancy to its hometown, North Adams, and the surrounding community.

2024 marks MASS MoCA's 25th anniversary, and the museum will use the year to honor the partnerships and work that brought us to this moment, and to present a vision of institutional growth and evolution for the next 25 years. The founding of MASS MoCA was an audacious experiment fueled by public-private funding: a plan to both successfully create a unique contemporary art museum and performance venue *and* to create an engine for economic revival, in partnership with the community, even though sited in a rural part of the state. This experiment has resoundingly succeeded, with new and recent commercial and artistic investment across the Northern Berkshires directly tied to the presence of MASS MoCA, including [TOURISTS](#), [Greylock Works](#), and [Porches](#).

North Adams, with a population of 13,000, attracts scores of artists, makers, outdoor enthusiasts, and creatives to the region for the music, outdoor attractions, natural beauty, and concentration of art – within a six-mile radius is the Clark Art Institute, Williams College Museum of Art, and the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

For more about MASS MoCA, please visit [massmoca.org](https://massmoca.org)

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## Background on Kristy Edmunds

Noted curator, producer, artist, and arts leader Kristy Edmunds was unanimously appointed Director of MASS MoCA in October 2021 following a national search. Since then, Edmunds has proven to be a thoughtful listener in the effort to gain a deep understanding of the museum and the community at large, and a strategic thinker in laying the groundwork for MASS MoCA's bold future. In her first two+ years, she has made catalytic shifts in programming, led an inclusive strategic planning process, and attracted significant funding for new initiatives including a full campus-wide facilities assessment and the implementation of a museum-wide digital strategy.

In 2023, with national foundation funding, Edmunds established a new Public Programs department that integrates artists, community, and expanded education by focusing on knowledge exchange, inquiry, and collaboration. Through Public Programs, Edmunds launched initiatives that include the Research and Development (R&D) Store, which combines gallery and retail space focused on exhibiting and producing affordable, contemporary artist editions and books. In addition, she brought to campus *The Plastic Bag Store* – an immersive, multimedia experience by Brooklyn-based artist Robin Frohardt that questions our culture of consumption and convenience, especially the enduring effects of single-use plastics. As MASS MoCA looks to build an environmentally responsible organization, *The Plastic Bag Store* begins a conversation about the museum's role in a sustainable future.

In partnership with staff leadership and the Board of Trustees, Edmunds authored a 7-year strategic plan that aims to build a durable future for MASS MoCA, with a commitment to civic partnership and place, increasing resources, and accelerating sustainability through the greening of the campus.

Prior to MASS MoCA, Edmunds was the Executive and Artistic Director of UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance in Los Angeles (CAP). In her 11 years at CAP UCLA, she transformed the organization into one of the nation's most innovative platforms for producing and presenting contemporary performing art in all stage-based disciplines. Previously, she served as the inaugural Artistic Director for the now critically heralded Park Avenue Armory (PAA) in New York (2009–2012). Under her creative leadership, she established the formative identity of the PAA with commissioned work by artists such as Ann Hamilton, the final performance event of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company; Tom Sachs, Janet Cardiff, STREB, Ryoji Ikeda, and many others.

Edmunds' early career included founding the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA) and the TBA Festival (Time Based Art) in Portland, Oregon. After 10 years leading PICA, she left to become the Artistic Director of the Melbourne International Arts Festival (2005-2008) and was the first to serve an unprecedented four-year term.

Edmunds' robust career has included work as a visual artist, an independent filmmaker, a playwright, a director, and a creative producer. She holds a bachelor's in film direction from Montana State University and a master's in playwriting and theater direction from Western Washington University.

In recognition of her contributions to the arts, Edmunds was bestowed with the honor of Chevalier (Knight) de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Government in 2016 and was the inaugural recipient of the [Berresford Prize](#) from United States Artists in 2019.