POSITION PROFILE

Executive Director
Philadelphia Folklore Project

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For more information:
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ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

For nearly 40 years, the Philadelphia Folklore Project has documented, supported, and promoted Philadelphia-area folk arts and culture, including the arts of people who have been here for generations and those who have just arrived. In collaboration with local artists and community groups, we preserve and strengthen Philadelphia’s folk cultural life because of its power to be transformative in community-level social change.

We are well known for highlighting the dynamic cultural resources of Philadelphia’s underserved communities, which are often overlooked due to systemic and structural inequities. We do this through ethnographic work grounded in a practice of deep listening to the lived experiences and struggles of local people. We identify traditional artists, community leaders, and grassroots organizations, and then build partnerships to help them attain their own ideals for cultural and community sustainability.

Annually, we offer exhibitions, concerts, workshops, and professional assistance to artists and communities. We conduct ongoing field research of community-based local arts, history, and culture, and we preserve a record of Philadelphia’s folklife in our 80,000+ item Folklore Archives, housing documents of Philadelphia’s folk communities and cultural resources for over three decades.

Philadelphia Folklore Project (PFP) is well-respected, both locally and nationally, and is viewed as a pioneer and vital part of the region’s heritage. While COVID disrupted our work, we continued to support artists and communities throughout the pandemic. We have been rebuilding for the past two years and see myriad opportunities to reinvigorate PFP and folk arts in Philadelphia.

www.folklorepolicy.org

Mission: The Philadelphia Folklore Project works to sustain vital and diverse living cultural heritage in communities in our region through collaborative projects, research, documentation and education, prioritizing folk and traditional arts in service of social change.

Values: Team-Building • Learning • Critical Lenses • Authenticity and Personal Investment • Respect • Collective Knowledge, Ownership, and Possibilities
POSITION SUMMARY
Together with a small, dedicated, and caring Board of Directors, the Executive Director (ED) has overall strategic and operational responsibility for PFP’s programs, partnerships, funding, and the execution of our mission. They are an influential, energetic, relational, culturally competent leader who delivers on organizational goals by planning strategically, building authentic relationships, publicly representing PFP, managing all operations, and raising funds.

The next ED will guide the organization in defining its vision, strategic direction and the optimal structure, staffing, and governance model to support the strategic direction. While the organizational goals remain the same, this is an opportunity for a new perspective on how to reach those goals and to energize and extend PFP’s reach.

The ED is both a big picture and strategic thinker who is able to translate vision into action. They spend their time evenly between strategic thinking and executing the work of the organization by seamlessly blending strategy and implementation.

The ED has a solid foundation on which to build their work. PFP has deep trust in the community, meaningful relationships with artists, and decades of good work in a city rich in culture and folk traditions. While candidates with a background in folk arts or cultural heritage are preferred, the next ED must be experienced engaging diverse cultural communities, building connections, and sustaining relationships. They are responsible for addressing underserved and underrepresented identities and perspectives in the field of folklore today.

This is an ideal position for a person who has a background in both the arts and nonprofit management. The generous leave policy (including an annual month-long sabbatical) allows the candidate to focus on the success of PFP and, during the sabbatical, pursue their personal goals.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS
The ED reports to the Board of Directors. The ED is responsible for recruiting, managing and retaining staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers in delivering the work of the organization.
KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

• Lead strategy, finances, and operations including planning, monitoring, evaluating, reporting, on progress, and adapting strategy as necessary to achieve organizational goals.

• Build sustainability through fundraising, partnerships, and board development.

• Develop and execute an annual and longer-range strategic fundraising plan to raise a minimum of $400,000 a year.

• Manage finance and administration including designing and overseeing the annual budget, audit, compliance, and risk management.

• Serve as a non-voting member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

• Support the Board in their governance role by providing education, training, and the information the Board needs to make good decisions.

• In coordination with the Board Chair, ensure proper governance practices, Board management, communications, and recordkeeping.

• Engage the Board to identify and recruit potential Board members with diverse perspectives to expand the organization’s reach and to establish Board expertise in identified skill sets.

• Serve as the public representative of the organization with partners, funders, peers, artists, and communities.

• Connect and build relationships across diverse communities.

• Ensure ongoing programmatic excellence and rigorous program evaluation.

• Oversee all aspects of marketing and communications including website, social media, defining and delivering PFP’s brand promise, and increasing visibility.

• Ensure adequate staffing by recruiting, supervising, supporting, coaching and evaluating full-time and part-time staff.

• Identify areas to outsource and oversee consultants, contracted employees, and interns.

• Oversee management and care of PFP’s extensive archives.

QUALIFICATIONS

• Minimum of five years of nonprofit or other management experience in increasingly more responsible positions.

• Skills and experience to deliver on key responsibilities.
• Background, education, knowledge and/or deep appreciation of folklore, folk arts, and/or cultural arts.
• Ability to raise funds through diverse channels including grants, sponsorships, individual donors, etc.
• Deep understanding of the needs of artists and communities that have been under-resourced due to varying kinds of oppression.
• Experience building the capacity of small nonprofits.

LOCATION

PFP is headquartered in Philadelphia and is a hybrid workplace with work required in the office. The candidate will need to live in or be willing to relocate to the Philadelphia region.

COMPENSATION

The starting salary for the ED is $80,000. Generous leave time includes an annual month-long sabbatical plus an additional 41 paid days off. Compensation package includes a medical insurance contribution and a 5% employer contribution to a Retirement Savings Account.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The anticipated interview process, includes:

• Email and telephone screenings
• Two interviews, the first virtual and the second in person with travel subsidized if necessary
• Position-appropriate exercise

The Philadelphia Folklore Project has a longstanding tradition of centering the experiences of people who have been historically marginalized, including people of color, immigrants, women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ individuals. PFP is committed to continuing that work. We strongly encourage all qualified candidates interested in the opportunity to apply and encourage applications from people with diverse identities.
CONTACT

To apply, please submit your cover letter, resumé, and two work samples to folkloreprojectED@fairmountinc.com. All inquiries and discussions are strictly confidential.

To make recommendations, please contact Lori Blair (Vice President, Fairmount Ventures) at lblair@fairmountinc.com.

ABOUT FAIRMOUNT VENTURES

Fairmount Ventures is a women-owned and led consulting business committed to catalyzing social impact and equity in cities and communities by building the capacity of the nonprofit and public sectors. Our multi-disciplinary team and collaborative approach provides clients with insightful guidance and deep connection to resources as they work to advance the well-being and life prospects of their constituents. A thought partner to 500+ organizations since 1992, Fairmount leverages our unparalleled knowledge of the nonprofit, public, and higher education sectors in the Philadelphia region and beyond to benefit every client. We position the sector to grow and thrive through a continuum of related services including strategic and business planning, fundraising, board development, and executive search.

Fairmount’s full-time professional team is purposefully recruited from diverse backgrounds, experience, and academic training. Visit fairmountinc.com for a complete overview of the firm.