



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AVA Gallery and Art Center (AVA), a recognized leader in the arts and cultural life of the Upper Valley region, seeks an experienced and innovative Executive Director. The Board of Directors and Search Committee are currently accepting nominations and applications for the position.

To apply: Email resumé and letter of interest (both in PDF format) with at least three references to careers@avagallery.org

For more information: <https://avagallery.org/about-ava/employment-opportunities/>

AVA's Mission: As a catalyst for creativity, AVA Gallery and Art Center cultivates an openness of space and mind to inspire, nurture, and showcase the artistic spirit.

Our Vision: AVA serves its mission by offering dynamic educational programming for artists of all ages and abilities and maintaining vibrant artist studios and influential exhibitions. With an emphasis on building community, AVA also hosts and promotes special events that foster interaction between artists, patrons of the arts, and the general public. All of our work is done with a priority of environmental sustainability and with the recognition that art enriches our lives. Located in downtown Lebanon, New Hampshire, just off the town's classic New England green, AVA is one of several vibrant arts and cultural institutions in Lebanon and the surrounding towns of the Upper Valley of New Hampshire and Vermont.

Position Summary: Under the direction of a committed Board of Directors (Board), AVA's Executive Director (ED) leads a vibrant and well-established community arts organization that celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2023-24. The ED is responsible for building audiences and engaging donors, artists, and the wider community in AVA's ever-expanding work. Through collaboration and visionary leadership, the ED plays a visible role in guiding AVA into the future. The ED creates and supports balanced financial plans that continue to sustain AVA on solid fiscal footing through fundraising and donor stewardship. The ED partners with the Board to bring strong management and people skills to maintain and support arts education and exhibition programs. The ED engages with staff to create a roadmap to achieve goals and objectives.

Key Responsibilities:

Organizational Leadership:

- Work collaboratively with the Board to ensure that AVA is fulfilling its mission and aligning with its strategic plan and that its policies and practices support AVA's mission and goals.
- Actively engage with and motivate AVA's staff, board members, volunteers, and other AVA community members to encourage a collaborative, mission-focused environment.
- Provide leadership and mentorship for staff and support professional development through management and collaborative, team-based work.
- Provide educational opportunities for volunteers.
- Work with key board and staff members, volunteers, and relevant stakeholders to ensure a vibrant schedule of programs, classes, exhibitions, and events that further AVA's mission and goals and are attractive to the Upper Valley and regional community.
- Develop a process for ongoing assessment of current programs and new initiatives to ensure they meet community needs and strategic goals while remaining fiscally viable.
- Review the staff structure and volunteer roles continuously to meet the organization's needs.
- Organize a strategic planning process every five years and oversee an annual review of progress on the plan's goals and objectives.
- Improve internal and external communication, especially regarding operational needs.

Community Outreach and Engagement:

- Work with the Board and staff to develop strategies that position AVA as an advocate for the arts and as a leader in the Upper Valley arts and culture community.
- Build stronger community connections and engage new audiences to develop and support an appreciation for the arts for guests of all ages while developing collaborative partnerships with diverse community organizations.
- Serve as the principal voice representing AVA to artists, students, families, donors, and the community and maintaining a visible presence at AVA exhibitions, events, and classrooms.
- Create and execute comprehensive communication and marketing strategies to increase AVA's visibility and engage audiences in AVA's programming. Work with staff members to ensure consistency in AVA's branding and marketing.
- Develop a targeted marketing plan to raise awareness.
- Advance AVA's commitment to diversity and inclusion within the organization and its exhibition programs, emphasizing age, ethnicity, and inclusion of underrepresented groups.
- Develop and enhance volunteer programs that engage community members in AVA's mission and ongoing operations. Establish processes and procedures for program management.

Resource Development and Management:

- In collaboration with the Board, Director of Development (DD), and Development and Membership Committee, create a comprehensive and long-term development strategy for annual giving, membership, campaigns, fundraising events, grant writing, and donor cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- Work with the DD to actively cultivate and document donor relationships, solicit donations, and steward major donors.
- Work with the DD to identify grant opportunities and prepare grant proposals.
- Enhance revenues by exploring new earned income projects.

- Develop and implement a plan to develop partnerships with local businesses and corporations to build revenue from sponsorships while offering tangible benefits to businesses and their employees.
- Work with key board and staff members to create and oversee long-term fiscal strategies and annual budgets and optimize the utilization of AVA's personnel, space, equipment, and other resources.
- Foster financial sustainability, including fully funding operations and ensuring a sustainable operating model.
- Manage budgets, cash flow, and financial policies through best practices and solid organizational management.
- Oversee and assess cost/revenue balance on an ongoing basis of all operations and programs, including membership, classes, exhibitions and art sales, Bank Street Gallery, events, Sculptural Studies Building operations, studio leasing, and others.

Administration:

- Provide strong leadership for management, support, and future development for staff members. Draw out the skills and talents of staff to engage their creative thinking in achieving AVA's ambitions.
- Conduct formal staff reviews on an annual basis and meet with staff as needed to promote and support professional development. Ensure that staff members are fulfilling their roles effectively and work with them to identify opportunities for improvement and growth.
- Oversee and manage the operations and maintenance of AVA's buildings and grounds, including relevant staff and contractors. Budget and plan for necessary and desirable facility renovations that serve AVA's strategic goals.
- Oversee all recordkeeping and communications systems and related vendors and personnel, including databases, software, internet/WIFI, etc.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal government regulations and grantor and donor requirements.
- Upgrade AVA's facilities to ensure they meet future needs.
- Further AVA's commitment to environmental sustainability and continue the process toward becoming a net zero energy organization.

Skills & Knowledge

The Executive Director will demonstrate experience in the following competencies:

- **Leadership:** Ability to organize, inspire, motivate, mentor, and educate staff and volunteers to accomplish goals while facilitating order, direction, and active participation among diverse stakeholders. Experience managing and coaching staff to work as a team to fulfill an organization's day-to-day activities, long-term goals, and strategic initiatives.
- **Goal Achievement:** Experience working collaboratively with a board and staff, particularly in setting realistic and attainable goals and prioritizing activities to meet objectives, including advancing the robust fiscal health of the organization while planning for long-term strategic initiatives.
- **Decision Making:** Has the ability to make informed and timely decisions, creating clear communication strategies to explain actions.
- **Administration:** Experience managing, sustaining, and upgrading the physical plant of a multi-use facility and managing budgets and financial systems that sustain the financial operations of AVA.

- **Communication:** Experience building relationships internally and externally and possesses superior interpersonal and communication skills. Has the ability to expand the audience for AVA, particularly among younger adults, and to foster strategic marketing to raise the organization's profile.
- **Fundraising:** Experience and knowledge about fundraising and donor cultivation and stewardship. 2-3 years of experience preferred.
- **Technology:** Possesses basic knowledge of database software pertinent to managing a nonprofit, including financial/sales and membership. Computer skills include Word software and Excel.

Professional Qualifications

The successful candidate will have a strong background in all aspects of nonprofit management, with a keen interest in and deep connection to the visual arts. Qualified applicants will have experience managing multiple revenue streams, supervising and coaching staff skills, and the ability to positively engage with AVA stakeholders, including donors, community members, and individual artists. A bachelor's degree is required, and a relevant advanced degree is preferred. The position requires solid personal communication skills and a proven track record in leadership, fundraising, organizational strategy, marketing, and community engagement. 7 to 10 years of senior management experience with increasing levels of responsibility and 2 to 5 years of fundraising experience preferred.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Competitive compensation commensurate with experience and a standard benefits package, including health insurance, paid time off, and sick pay.

AVA Gallery and Art Center is an equal-opportunity employer.