

## Organization Overview

### History and Vision

Pioneer Works is a dynamic nonprofit cultural center that opened its doors to the public in 2012. Imagined by its Founder & President, artist Dustin Yellin, as a place in which artists, scientists, and thinkers from various backgrounds converge, this “museum of process” takes its primary inspiration from utopian visionaries such as Richard Buckminster Fuller and radical institutions such as Black Mountain College. Its mission is to build community through the arts and sciences to create an open and inspired world.

The Pioneer Works experience is inextricably linked to its home in Red Hook, Brooklyn. The original three-story red brick building was first built in 1866 for Pioneer Iron Works, which manufactured railroad tracks and other large-scale machinery. Devastated by fire in 1881, the building was rebuilt and remained in active use through World War II. Founder Dustin Yellin acquired the building in 2011 and renovated it with Pioneer Works’ Founding Artistic Director, Gabriel Florenz, and a team of talented artists, supporters, and advisors.

### Existing Footprint and Programming

Each year, Pioneer Works welcomes 150,000 guests to experience programming in the areas of Visual Art, Science, Technology, Music, and Literature—85 percent of which is presented free of charge. Leaders from across these fields present their ideas, lead workshops, and engage with an audience that stretches from Pioneer Works’ direct community to around the world. Its residencies annually host 50 creative professionals at the vanguard of their fields to produce new work and to teach and learn from one another. Pioneer Works provides a unique and powerful array of resources, including a technology lab with 3-D printing, a virtual environment lab for virtual reality and augmented reality production, a recording studio, a darkroom, residency studios, galleries, gardens, a ceramics studio, a press, and a bookshop, as well as a variety of professional curriculum development activities.

Pioneer Works encourages radical thinking across disciplines by providing practitioners a space to work, tools to create, and a platform to exchange ideas that are free and open to all. It is driven by the realization that humanity is facing unprecedented social, intellectual, and spiritual challenges. Its programs explore new ways of facing those challenges by dynamically using the arts and sciences as both a lens and a catalyst. When humanity comes together and combines the ideas and talents of many, people have the ability to engineer what once appeared to be impossible.

### Neighborhood

Brooklyn is the most populous of the five boroughs in New York City, combining urban bustle with numerous parks, accessible sidewalks, close-knit communities, and more affordable housing. Home to numerous museums, libraries, and arts and cultural organizations, Brooklyn does not fit any particular stereotype. It has long been a destination for young professionals, artists, writers, and entrepreneurs. Startups and early stage companies abound and are seeking to fill job opportunities with modern, fresh, and forward-thinking leaders at the forefront of social change.

The waterfront neighborhood of Red Hook mixes a classic New York City vibe with historical perspectives, cobblestone streets, picturesque views, and a developing arts scene. The East River Ferry from Manhattan to Van Brunt Street is an excellent way to travel to Pioneer Works, with extraordinary views of the New York Harbor and its beautiful vistas of the skyline, Statue of Liberty, and Governor’s Island.

Sources: [brickunderground.com](http://brickunderground.com); [streeteasy.com](http://streeteasy.com); [cubesmart.com](http://cubesmart.com)

### Structure and Goals

Pioneer Works is governed by an 18-member Board of Directors, led by Board Chair Leyli Zohrenejad, and has a staff of approximately 40 employees. In 2018 Pioneer Works reached revenues exceeding \$7 million—primarily from individuals, foundations, and corporate sponsors—having doubled its operating size in just two years even while offering free and affordable programs. As Pioneer Works continues to grow as an organization, it looks to formalize a larger \$25 million capital and endowment campaign over the next two to three years to achieve its local and international aspirations with additional property and programming expansions thereafter.

## Position Summary

The Executive Director will guide the realization of Pioneer Works' long-term vision to build a cultural campus with satellite operations. Reporting to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will oversee the organization's development, finances, communications, human resources, community engagement, facilities, and operations. The Executive Director will partner with the Founder & President and the Founding Artistic Director to determine programming, vision, and capital expansion plans. This individual will work closely with the Board and its committees on Board prospect identification, cultivation, and recruitment, regularly advising how best to leverage their critical roles in policy making and community ambassadorship. The Executive Director will identify additional key stakeholders and develop strategies that help define organizational direction within the context of the arts and sciences, the community, and the educational activities to strengthen Pioneer Works locally and increase its visibility internationally.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Strategic Implementation and Organizational Infrastructure

- Lead the implementation of a three-year strategic plan and collaborate with senior leadership to balance the mission and artistic vision with financial outcomes that ensure institutional stability.
- Determine the size, scale, and scope of the capitalization needed for a revitalized facility-adjacent property, incremental programs, and associated infrastructure.
- Refine the organizational structure, strengthen department management through effective mentorship, and model an environment that reflects organizational values.
- Develop systems and infrastructure in finance, human resources, and facilities to meet ongoing growth, funding, and operational demands.
- Determine performance metrics with the Board and staff to increase team accountability at all levels of the organization.
- Oversee the administrative team, including finance (budget planning, monitoring, audit, banking), legal (outside counsel), operations (facility, construction), and human resources (staffing, insurance, policies).
- Secure and allocate key financial and physical space resources throughout the organization, collaborating with the Founding Artistic Director on future planning with specific timelines that support increasing financial capacity.
- Guide the communications team in delivering robust public visibility, marketing, branding, and content messages in electronic, social, and print media as appropriate.
- Welcome other strategic implementation and organizational infrastructure responsibilities as needed.

### Philanthropic Support and Community Engagement

- Create a multiyear fundraising plan to meet capital needs and annual programmatic goals.
- Lead an imminent capital campaign in conjunction with the Board, campaign committee, and development team.
- Diversify earned and contributed revenue streams, including exploration of nontraditional funding opportunities, impact investing, and public/private ventures that capitalize on Pioneer Works' unique market position.
- Identify and cultivate individual, foundation, corporate, and government resources with the Board and development team.
- Oversee development team in the implementation of best practices in donor research, database growth, and donor prospect segmentation.
- Cultivate relationships with a variety of external stakeholders and community partners.
- Inspire conversations about the future and ways in which the arts and sciences bring socially, economically, and culturally diverse communities together.
- Welcome other philanthropic support and community engagement responsibilities as needed.

## Fiscal Accountability and Board Governance

- Oversee short- and long-term budget development, monitoring, and financial sustainability with accountability for the overall operating and capital needs of the organization.
- Deliver succinct, timely, and relevant financial and organization information to the Board so it can effectively fulfill its executive oversight and fiduciary responsibilities.
- Mobilize Board members' talents and resources, pique their interest, encourage their involvement, and work closely with them to ensure strong fiscal accountability and the health of the organization.
- Create opportunities for Board prospect identification, cultivation, and recruitment.
- Develop orientation, education, and engagement activities that maximize Board effectiveness while visioning effective Board leadership and committee succession planning.
- Publicly and privately recognize the volunteerism, contribution, and success of the Board and its members.
- Partner with Board committees on their short-term goals, in tandem with staff liaisons who support those committees.
- Welcome other fiscal accountability and Board governance responsibilities as needed.

## Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be an instinctive leader who is receptive to an array of new ideas and opportunities. Thoughtful and intentional in words and actions, the Executive Director will be extremely resourceful in maximizing time, talent, energy, and resources. This individual will be collaborative yet have a clear sense of direction. Highly visible in the public, the Executive Director will possess a vitality that inspires donors, Board, staff, strategic partners, and many others who value Pioneer Works' mission and goals. Interactive and personable with a keen sense of humor, the Executive Director will have an urgency that propels strategic initiatives and supporting infrastructure forward in meeting the organization's critical needs.

Additional competencies and driving forces embedded in the role include:

- **Self-Starting and Goal Orientation** – The ingenuity to conceptualize options, assess risks, establish ambitious goals, and develop implementation plans with the Founders that deliver measurable and achievable results.
- **Planning and Project Management** – The ability to determine and secure the human, financial, and technological resources needed to develop realistic project timelines and deliver beneficial outcomes.
- **Leadership and Teamwork** – The acuity to lead distinct yet complementary groups of people, be socially aware, understand differing viewpoints, and mentor an evolving staff and Board.
- **Decision Making** – The dexterity to prioritize strategic initiatives, create a sense of direction, and make decisions that advance organizational growth and community impacts.

## Qualifications

A bachelor's degree and a minimum of 10 years in a senior management role, preferably in the arts and sciences, are required. An advanced degree is preferred. A track record of working in a complex, entrepreneurial, and rapidly growing organization with diverse stakeholder interests and multi-sector strategic partnership opportunities is necessary. Demonstrated experience in increasing philanthropic support and best practices in donor identification, cultivation, and stewardship required of capital campaigns is an asset. Excellent communication, interpersonal, and emotional intelligence skills are needed to channel creative ideas and support artistic initiatives. Periodic travel and attendance at evening and weekend events are expected. Multiple language capabilities are welcomed.

## Compensation and Benefits

Pioneer Works offers a very competitive salary, commensurate with experience. The organization provides full-time employees with health, dental, vision, and short-term disability insurances in addition to paid family leave, four weeks of full paid parental leave after one year of service, paid time off, and standard vacation, sick, and personal days.

## Applications and Inquiries

Please submit a cover letter and resume highlighting demonstrable contributed revenue accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred) to:

Dr. Bruce D. Thibodeau  
President



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