

## Organization

Mass Cultural Council is an independent agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with a mission to promote excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences; foster a rich cultural life for all Massachusetts residents; and contribute to the vitality of the Commonwealth's communities and economy. Based in Boston, Mass Cultural Council's vision is for a Commonwealth where culture elevates the quality of life and well-being of all communities; drives growth and opportunity through the creative economy; is inclusive, equitable, and embraces diversity; and empowers a new generation through creative youth development and education.

Mass Cultural Council is guided by principles about the power of culture and a strategic plan that focuses on five themes: enriching communities, growing the economy, advancing inclusion and equity, empowering a creative generation, and building internal capacity. The strategic plan has five overarching goals, which include to:

- Amplify cultural vitality in cities and towns through integrated community-focused grants, initiatives, and advocacy.
- Enhance the Commonwealth's economic vitality by helping artists and cultural organizations thrive.
- Promote more diverse and inclusive participation in the cultural sector by ensuring equity in policies, practices, and opportunities.
- Enhance creative learning experiences in schools and communities that instill agency in, and support the growth of, creative, productive, independent-minded young people.
- Strengthen Mass Cultural Council's internal capacity to deliver the highest quality services to constituents and enable the Agency to effectively fulfill its mission.

Mass Cultural Council is funded by appropriations from the state legislature and from the National Endowment for the Arts. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, sources of funding totaled \$20.9 million. The Agency provides funding to individual artists, cultural organizations, schools, and other nonprofit organizations to support creative activities throughout the state through a variety of funding and technical assistance programs. Mass Cultural Council's efforts to increase access to the arts, humanities, and sciences for the benefit of residents across the Commonwealth include the Card to Culture programs, offered in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, the Massachusetts Health Connector, and the Women, Infants & Children Nutrition Program. The Local Cultural Council (LCC) Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, with 329 councils in all cities and towns in Massachusetts. Led by municipally appointed volunteers, LCCs award more than \$4 million every year to support more than 6,000 cultural programs, such as field trips, lectures, festivals, and dance performances.

The Cultural Facilities Fund (CFF), managed in collaboration with MassDevelopment, provides major improvement grants to nonprofit cultural organizations in recognition of their economic impacts on their communities. Since its inception in 2006, the CFF has funded 1,063 projects totaling \$129 million. These funds have supported feasibility and technical assistance, systems replacement, and capital projects of 488 cultural organizations from every region of the state.

Mass Cultural Council is governed by a 19-member governing Council appointed by the Governor for staggered three-year terms. Nina Fialkow serves as Council Chair. Governing council members represent various regions of the Commonwealth and by statute must have demonstrated service, creativity, or scholarship in the arts, humanities, or sciences. The more than 30-member staff has been led by Executive Director Anita Walker who retired in June 2020 after 13 years of service.

## Community

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts—the native lands of the Pocumtuc, Nipmuc, Wampanoag, Massachusett, and Nauset people—is the most populous state in New England with 6.9 million people. With 17 percent foreign born and an average age of 40 years old, its residents represent a microcosm of the nation's cultural diversity: 68 percent white, 12 percent Latinx, 9 percent African American, 7 percent Asian, and 4 percent multi-racial.

The Commonwealth and its people have been at the forefront of major societal changes throughout history. More recently, Massachusetts led the nation as the first state to offer universal healthcare and to legalize same sex marriage. In its most recent rankings, *U.S. News & World Report* named Massachusetts as the eighth best state in the nation, ranking number one in education, second in health care, fourth in crime and corrections, and seventh in economy. Education is undoubtedly one of the state's strengths, with more than 90 percent of its residents attaining a high school diploma. A diverse array of educational opportunities is available through nationally ranked K-12 public and private schools, as well as a long list of prestigious private and highly accessible public colleges and universities. Massachusetts is known for its thriving and innovative economy, with education and health services representing the largest employment sectors. The Commonwealth also has a growing technology sector. Sixteen Fortune 500 companies are headquartered in Massachusetts.

Quality of life in Massachusetts is highlighted by its cultural amenities. The state's cultural infrastructure features world-renowned museums, established performing arts organizations, historic sites, regional cultural centers, experimental performing and visual arts groups, emerging and neighborhood-based cultural organizations, and a diverse array of individual artists from all disciplines and genres.

Outdoor recreational amenities abound, taking advantage of the four-season climate. The state's recreational areas offer beaches, hiking, camping, skiing, and ice fishing, among many other outdoor pursuits. Sports are a favorite pastime, with the MLB Red Sox playing at historic Fenway Park, the NHL Bruins and NBA Celtics at TD Garden, and the NFL New England Patriots and the MLS New England Revolution at Gillette Stadium. Massachusetts is also a destination for culinary adventures ranging from farm-to-table to fresh Atlantic seafood to authentic traditional cuisines of the many nationalities represented in the Commonwealth's population.

Sources: census.gov, usnews.com, mass.gov, massvacation.com

## Position Summary

As the most senior state cultural official, the Executive Director will serve as an external advocate for the arts, humanities, and sciences, leading the ideation and development of policies and programs that advance the priorities of the Mass Cultural Council. Reporting to and collaborating with the governing Council, the Executive Director will ensure a vibrant and thriving cultural sector throughout Massachusetts as a visible leader who works closely with the Governor, Legislature, and other elected officials. The Executive Director will provide the vision and leadership to promote equitable and inclusive strategies for participation in the cultural sector, ensuring that the Agency's programs and services have an impact in diverse cultural, socioeconomic, and geographic communities throughout the state. The Executive Director will be responsible for the transparent stewardship of public funds, overseeing the distribution of Mass Cultural Council funds in compliance with guidelines and regulations.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Vision and Strategic Leadership

- Provide the vision and strategy for the Mass Cultural Council to ensure that Massachusetts citizens have access to a thriving cultural sector that enhances the state's quality of life and economic vibrancy.
- Foster a culture of innovation throughout the Agency to realize new ideas, concepts, and strategies that amplify the cultural vitality of neighborhoods and communities across the state.
- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access throughout the organization with policies and practices that foster transformative change.
- Balance an exciting vision for the state's creative economy with a realistic understanding of local, state, and federal policy and the political and environmental factors impacting the region and the cultural sector.

### External Relations and Partnerships

- Build and strengthen relationships with local, state, and federal public officials and with civic and business leaders to ensure continued public investment in the cultural sector through the Agency's programs and services.
- Identify, establish, and maintain cooperative and collaborative partnerships with state agencies, municipal governments, local and national funders, and regional and national organizations, such as New England Foundation for the Arts, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and National Endowment for the Arts.

- Actively listen to cultural sector leaders to develop a keen understanding of the needs and resources of the state's cultural assets, including arts, humanities, and science organizations and individual artists, humanists, and scientists.
- Frequently visit and communicate with cultural leaders across the state, conducting site visits to partner and grantee organizations when appropriate.

### **Organizational Excellence and Fiscal Responsibility**

- Lead a high-performing and experienced staff in the operations of grants and technical assistance programs, as well as strategic initiatives designed to achieve the short- and long-term goals of the Agency.
- Serve as an effective partner with the governing Council in its policy-making role, ensuring that its members have timely access to accurate and updated information on finances, policies, indicators, trends, and relevant issues to help them reach decisions that advance the Agency's mission and strategic plan.
- Inspire and maintain an organizational culture that encourages collaboration, accountability, professional development, and mutual respect.
- Establish and uphold efficient procedures and effective controls for the expenditure of public funds in accordance with the adopted budget.
- Prepare and present the annual budget and periodic reports to the governing Council for review and approval, as well as to the Governor's Office and Legislature as required.
- Keep abreast of the latest cultural sector issues and trends through active participation in regional and national cultural service organizations.

### **Traits and Characteristics**

A creative and visionary leader, the Executive Director will be recognized for their ability to engage with a broad and diverse collective of stakeholders and to drive action that advances the cultural sector. A consummate consensus builder and effective negotiator, the Executive Director will inspire trust and confidence with a respectful and diplomatic approach to divergent points of view. They will be a people-oriented leader with the ability to motivate a team. Receptive to new ideas, this individual will have political savvy and an ability to develop, nurture, and leverage authentic relationships with policy makers and civic leaders. The Executive Director will value collaboration, have a history of personal involvement in and appreciation for the cultural sector, and possess a deep awareness of issues and trends impacting the arts, humanities, and sciences regionally and nationally.

Other key competencies include:

- **Leadership** – The capacity to deliver a compelling vision, earn the trust and confidence of others with integrity and clarity, organize and influence people by creating a common purpose, and act with both courage and grace to advance the cultural vitality of the Commonwealth.
- **Diplomacy and Interpersonal Skills** – The aptitude to tactfully address sensitive situations, gain a balanced understanding of cultural and political issues, build rapport with and relate to people of different backgrounds and points of view, and communicate constructively to achieve positive outcomes.
- **Flexibility and Resiliency** – The agility to inspire new ideas, approaches, and methods while striving to adapt to situational demands, overcome obstacles, step outside of perceived comfort zones, and evaluate many aspects of a situation to create a positive outcome.
- **Decision Making** – The ability to make sound and thorough decisions by systematically analyzing data and various aspects of a situation, gathering input from team members, asking questions rather than making assumptions, and evaluating the potential impact or consequences of decisions.
- **Futuristic Thinking and Stakeholder Focus** – The ingenuity to appreciate innovation, envision concepts or ideas that advance the organization's mission and its services, partner with stakeholders to attain visionary goals, and creatively engage constituents to achieve common goals.

## Qualifications

A strong background in and passion for the arts, humanities, and science are required, as well as a demonstrated understanding of the value of creativity for the social and economic wellbeing of people and communities. A minimum of 10 years of progressive senior management experience in a government agency, nonprofit organization, university, or creative industry setting is necessary. Qualified candidates will be knowledgeable of cultural policy development and implementation at the local, state, or federal level, possessing a keen understanding of public policy and legislative priorities. Successful candidates will have excellent written, verbal, and public speaking skills with demonstrated experience in advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and access initiatives.

## Compensation and Benefits

Mass Cultural Council offers competitive compensation, with a salary range between \$150,000 and \$165,000, and a benefits package that includes paid time off; medical, dental, and vision insurance; and state retirement benefits. As a state employee, this position is subject to all applicable laws and regulations. Optional benefits include transit, health, and dependent care spending accounts; life and disability insurance; and a tuition remission program.

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit [artsconsulting.com/employment](https://artsconsulting.com/employment). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

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**Mass Cultural Council is dedicated to creating a workplace that welcomes, respects, and values people of any race, color, age, gender identity or expression, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, creed, ancestry, nationality or ethnicity, geographical origin, immigration status, socioeconomic status, and veteran status. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply for this position.**