

Organization

Founded in 1970, Milwaukee Ballet has grown to become the leading ballet company in the state of Wisconsin and one of the country's most admired. Its mission is to transform lives and connect communities through inspiring dance, community engagement, education, and training. Renowned for delighting audiences with a rich mix of full-length classical ballets alongside exciting contemporary works, the company of 25 dancers offers performances each season at the 2,200-seat Marcus Performing Arts Center and the historic 1,300-seat Pabst Theater in downtown Milwaukee.

In its 50-year history, Milwaukee Ballet has had significant tenures from seven Artistic Directors: Founder Roberta Boorse, Jean-Paul Comelin, Ted Kivitt, Dane LaFontsee, Richard Weiss, Simon Dow, and Michael Pink, who has been in the role since 2002. More than 60 new works have been created by and for the company since 2002, including five full-length narrative works and Michael Pink's theatrical productions of *Dracula*, *Esmeralda*, *Swan Lake*, *Giselle*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *La Bohème*, *Don Quixote*, *Mirror Mirror*, *Dorian Gray*, and *Beauty and the Beast*, which have been hailed as 'Classical Ballet for the 21st Century.' Milwaukee Ballet also hosts the GENESIS Bi-Annual International Choreographic Competition. In 2019, the organization opened the Baumgartner Center for Dance (BCD), a new building headquartered in the Historic Third Ward district just south of downtown Milwaukee. With seven studios, expanded production space, a 200-seat black box theater, and administrative offices, the building is also the primary location for the Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy (MBSA). The Rolando Yanes Pre-Professional Program opened in 2019 after moving into BCD.

MBSA is recognized as one of the top ballet training institutions in the nation. With more than 1,000 students participating in a range of different divisions from ages three and up, it is among the largest ballet schools in the country. MBSA offers exceptional dance training at three branches in the Greater Milwaukee area, located in Fox Point, Brookfield, and in Downtown Milwaukee. In recognition of MBSA's rigorous set of national standards for excellence in dance training, it is the only professional dance school accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance in the Midwest. Students are coached by an experienced international faculty that includes professional dancers.

The most advanced students from MBSA may be invited to join the second company, Milwaukee Ballet II (MBII). MBII performs alongside the main company in mainstage productions, as well as in its own repertoire, at the BCD and venues throughout Milwaukee. MBII consists of the next generation of dancers in pursuit of a professional career. Many alumni of MBSA and MBII ultimately achieve a career in dance at Milwaukee Ballet or other leading ballet companies across the country and around the world.

Deepening community engagement is pivotal to Milwaukee Ballet's mission. Its award-winning community engagement programs reach more than 30,000 people annually in Greater Milwaukee and Southeastern Wisconsin. Milwaukee Ballet collaborates with local organizations to enhance its programmatic offerings and build connections with new audiences. It partners with local libraries, Boys & Girls Clubs, and Milwaukee Public Schools on multiple programs that bring performance, dance instruction, and educational workshops directly to students. Together with the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Ballet's award-winning Tour de Force program provides inclusive ballet lessons to children with disabilities and brings dance to senior centers, hospitals, and hospices. The BCD contains dedicated community space, which affords an opportunity for local groups and artists to provide dance instruction and performance in Milwaukee Ballet's state-of-the-art facility.

Milwaukee Ballet believes that the arts are a powerful force and that dance should be accessible to all—on stage, backstage, in the studio, in the audience, and as a workplace. It celebrates diversity and strives to be inclusive of all individuals. Doing so strengthens Milwaukee Ballet's ability to serve its community, drives innovation, enables it to attract and retain the best talent, and supports all individuals who have the desire to perform, learn, or enjoy dance. Milwaukee Ballet estimates that its community currently consists of 40 percent BIPOC students, 23 percent BIPOC company dancers and staff, and 20 percent BIPOC board members, as well as patrons from more than 40 states. Its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Council is a peer-group of representatives from administrative staff, MBSA faculty, and artistic staff, which engages with the leadership team and board. It focuses on equity issues within the art form as well as the company's role supporting change in the Milwaukee region.

The organization presents a sensory-friendly performance of *The Nutcracker* each year for neurodiverse families. Its student matinees feature full-scale ballets, including live music, to local schools. Through its partnership with the United Performing Arts Fund, Milwaukee Ballet provides free tickets to community groups such as the Ronald McDonald House and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Milwaukee.

Milwaukee Ballet is governed by a 27-member board of directors, comprised of business and community leaders from across the city and led by Board Chair and President Jan Pirozzolo-Mellowes. There are 31 artistic and administrative staff members in a variety of areas that support the organizational mission, vision, and values. For the fiscal year ending July 2022, total operating revenue is expected to be \$7 million, with approximately \$4 million from performance, school, and other income, as well as \$2.7 million from contributions and grants.

Community

Wisconsin's largest city, Milwaukee is a diverse and vibrant community along the southwest shores of Lake Michigan. The name 'Milwaukee' is derived from an Algonquian word 'Millioke,' meaning 'good land,' and from a Potawatomi word 'Minwaking' meaning 'gathering place by the waters.' Today, members of 11 native Wisconsin tribes still call Milwaukee home. The city sits on traditional Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk, and Menominee homeland and the people of Wisconsin's sovereign Anishinaabe, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Oneida, and Mohican nations remain present. The city's climate is typical of the Midwest, with four distinct seasons.

Incorporated in 1846, Milwaukee is home to nearly 600,000 residents today. The larger seven-county region boasts a population of just over two million. Known as a 'big city of little neighborhoods,' German immigration in the 19th century brought a sense of community and cultural traditions that are still present in this midwestern city. Milwaukee's East Side, Historic Third Ward, and Bay View are just a few of its great locales, each with its own unique personality. Offering rich cultural diversity with mixed-use areas that are simultaneously historic and hip, the region attracts young professionals and families. The city's park system is ranked among the top 30 in the United States by the Trust for Public Land, with 90 percent of city's residents living within a 10-minute walk to a park. The population is 44 percent white, 39 percent Black or African American, 4 percent Asian, and 19 percent Hispanic with a median age of 31.3 years.

Milwaukee's robust economy ranked in the top 20 on *MarketWatch's* 50 best United States metropolitan areas for business. The city was also named one of the 25 best places for doing business by *Inc.* magazine. Seven Fortune 500 companies are headquartered in the region, including Northwestern Mutual, ManpowerGroup, Kohl's, and Harley-Davidson. Higher education institutions based in the city include the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Marquette University, and Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design. The Medical College of Wisconsin, Children's Wisconsin – Milwaukee Hospital, and Froedtert teaching hospital provide exemplary care, research, and training. Milwaukee Public Schools serve more than 75,000 students in over 150 K-12 neighborhood, specialty, and charter schools. Milwaukee also offers extensive options for public transportation, including streetcar, bus, and commuter rail networks. A sporting destination, the MLB Brewers, NFL Green Bay Packers, and 2021 NBA World Champion Bucks call the region home.

Milwaukee Ballet is part of a vibrant arts and culture community that includes Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, Milwaukee Public Museum, Marcus Performing Arts Center, Florentine Opera, Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, and Black Arts MKE. Milwaukee Youth Arts Center houses the biggest children's theater company (First Stage) and youth symphony orchestra (Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra) in the nation. Supporting this vibrant and diverse arts scene is the United Performing Arts Fund, which was established in 1967 to raise funds collectively for the performing arts sector. Milwaukee's Summerfest, recognized as the world's largest music festival, hosts more than 1,000 performances by major artists, emerging talent, and local favorites on 11 stages. SummerFest attracts more than 750,000 fans to Henry Maier Festival Park, which also hosts multiple cultural festivals throughout the year. including Milwaukee Irish Fest, Milwaukee Dragon Boat Festival, Mexican Fiesta, Hunting Moon Pow Wow, German Fest Milwaukee, Festa Italiana, and more. The city's vibrant food and drink scene features many modern craft breweries that maintain the city's historic and cultural ties to beer, including Oktoberfest in Heidelberg Park at the Bavarian Bierhaus, which has been celebrated for more than 60 years.

Sources: visitmilwaukee.com, choosemilwaukee.com, bestplaces.net, census.gov

Position Summary

Reporting to and collaborating with the board of directors in a shared leadership model with the Artistic Director, the Executive Director will provide strategic and financial expertise to Milwaukee Ballet, MBII, and MBSA. Focused on advancing its mission, vision, and values, this individual will oversee all of the company's business functions, guiding the organization into its next phase of growth. With a particular focus on raising contributed revenue and increasing earned income, the Executive Director will engage the board and senior management team to ensure equity, diversity, inclusion, and access initiatives are at the center of all decisions. As an active spokesperson for the organization within the local and national community, the Executive Director and Artistic Director will work in tandem to develop partnerships with other arts and civic institutions, as well as cultivate relationships with funders and other philanthropic supporters. The Executive Director will exemplify and facilitate a culture where everyone feels valued, respected, and supported.

Role and Responsibilities

Strategic and Operational Leadership

- Actively partner with the Artistic Director to ensure that executive and financial decisions are made in alignment with the organization's mission and artistic vision and are embedded in the ongoing viability of the organization.
- Spearhead conversations and lead measurable action plans with the senior management team to inspire a thoughtful, realistic, and mission-aligned strategic plan and organizational direction.
- Build and implement annual balanced budgets that accurately display and align with the organization's mission, available and projected funds, and strategic vision to ensure financial stability and growth.
- Monitor and ensure timely, accurate, and compliant filings of mandated finance and human resources audits and reports.
- Collaborate with department leaders from all parts of the organization to responsibly manage costing, financial accountability, and reporting.
- Support the marketing department to elevate branding, sales, and communication strategies to enhance earned ticket sales, school enrollment, and other forms of earned income while raising the organization's profile.
- Oversee the human resources function to include the full employee life cycle and employee benefits.
- Embrace other strategic and operational leadership roles as needed.

Community Engagement and Revenue Enhancement

- Foster and build relationships with arts alliance groups, including the organization's major funders, as well as the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, Wisconsin Arts Board, and other organizations.
- Act as a visible spokesperson and advocate for Milwaukee Ballet, engaging with donors, audience members, members of the community, and other stakeholders.
- Partner with the Development Director to serve as the driving force for targeted contributed revenue goals, including the annual fund, major gift solicitation, corporate sponsorships, and other development efforts that result in increased financial stability and sustainability.
- Identify and develop untapped relationships that amplify the organizational profile, provide funding for the organization to include scholarships for MBSA, and support initiatives for improving facilities.
- Embrace other community engagement and revenue enhancement roles as needed.

Board Governance and Organizational Effectiveness

- Form a deep working relationship with the board of directors to support existing members, recruit new members, and advance targeted fundraising efforts that also meet equity, diversity, inclusion, and access goals.
- Collaborate with board committees to encourage and support active board participation and impactful committee results.
- Foster a positive culture of inclusivity, diversity, equity, access, and belonging that purposefully welcomes underheard voices, creates safe new spaces for conversation, and enhances cooperation in unified decision making.
- Lead, organize, mentor, and develop administrative staff by facilitating professional development opportunities and demonstrating a sense of transparency, trust, purpose, and direction
- Create an actionable and measurable plan to digitize processes and augment effectiveness of human, financial, and technological resources.
- Embrace other board governance and organizational effectiveness roles as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be a focused and decisive leader with the ability to work collaboratively with people from all parts of the organization and community. Guided by an open-minded and empathetic approach, the Executive Director will exhibit transparent communication and possess a welcoming demeanor. Valuing different perspectives and approaches to problem solving, the Executive Director will have the ability to relate to people from all backgrounds. As a champion for equity, diversity, inclusion, and access, the Executive Director will have a passion for the performing arts and be eager to ensure that performances and training programs are accessible to all.

Other key competencies include:

- **Diplomacy and Leadership** – The ability to tactfully handle difficult issues, be sensitive to the needs of others, inspire people with a compelling vision, delegate responsibility appropriately, and create a sense of purpose and direction.
- **Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills** – The dexterity to respect team members and their perspectives, share responsibility for successes and failures, effectively communicate, build rapport, and relate well to diverse people and perspectives.
- **Planning and Organizing** – The acuity to work effectively within established systems, utilizing logical, practical, and efficient approaches while monitoring plans, demonstrating flexibility, and making adjustments as needed.
- **Professional and Personal Accountability** – The capacity to take responsibility for professional and personal actions, recognizing that mistakes create opportunities for learning and growth.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will have at least five to seven years of progressive senior management experience that includes solid financial management and expertise in building and strengthening strategic partnerships. A bachelor's degree or equivalent experience is required and a master's degree in arts administration, nonprofit management, business, or a related field is preferred. Active participation in the arts community, a track record of nonprofit fundraising success, and experience guiding strategic plan development and implementation are ideal. Exceptional verbal and written communication skills, as well as public speaking experience, are expected.

Compensation and Benefits

Milwaukee Ballet provides a competitive and equitable compensation package with an estimated salary range between \$135,000 and \$175,000, as well as benefits that include paid vacation and holidays; medical, dental, long-term disability insurances; and a voluntary 403(b) retirement plan. Reserved parking at the BCD is also provided.

Applications and Inquiries

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

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Milwaukee Ballet is committed to creating an inclusive and diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.