

## Organization

Founded in 2001, Hardly Strictly Bluegrass (HSB) has grown from a one-day local concert to a world-renowned three-day festival that attracts a half million people. Its mission is to offer the people of San Francisco and the world a free annual outdoor music festival that features and celebrates American "roots" music and its many outgrowths, and in so doing, fosters joy, creativity, freedom, peace, inclusivity, collaboration, love of music, mutual respect, and spiritual community. HSB is an annual free and non-commercial music festival held the first weekend of October each year in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, California. For many performers and fans, the unique fact that HSB is free & unsponsored is what draws them to the event and is essential to its character, maintaining focus on music and community.

Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, originally Strictly Bluegrass, was founded in 2001 by the legendary private equity and investment entrepreneur and philanthropist, Warren Hellman. Hellman worked with creative partners Dawn Holliday, Sheri Sternberg, and Jonathan Nelson to produce the festival, and the event has grown to incorporate artists outside the bluegrass genre. The festival takes pride in being able to delight concertgoers with new and unexpected acts every year, and in 2004, the word "Hardly" was added to reflect its expanded scope. Under the "Hardly Strictly Bluegrass" banner, the festival has hosted such artists as: Sharon Jones & the Dap Kings, Blind Boys of Alabama, T-Bone Burnett, Carolina Chocolate Drops, Hazel Dickens, Lukas Nelson & the Promise of the Real, Steve Earle & The Dukes, Fantastic Negrito, Emmylou Harris, Allison Russell, Earl Scruggs, Gogol Bordello, Robert Plant, and Mavis Staples, among many others.

Due to the pandemic, in 2020, for the first time in 20 years, HSB was unable to have the annual gathering in the park, so they took the show on the road. The Hardly Strictly crew made an epic and extremely cautious road trip to their favorite artist's communities and filmed them performing on their home turf. Multiple film shoots in Austin, Los Angeles, Nashville, the Bay Area, and even Ireland, were met with artistry and high-end production values resulting in a 3-hour broadcast, "Let The Music Play On" which debuted to unanimous rave reviews and raised over \$500,000 towards Artist Relief.

Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, LLC (HSB) Managing Board directs the festival, and in addition to the Executive Director and Executive Producer, HSB has six department leaders and employs over 300 seasonal staff for a period of two to four weeks to produce the annual festival. HSB is part of the Hellman Foundation, which works to build equity and opportunity, to advance knowledge, and to foster health, science, the arts, innovation, and creativity with a primary focus in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Planning for the 2022 Festival, scheduled for September 30th to October 2nd, is underway.

Sources: edited from [hardlystrictlybluegrass.com](http://hardlystrictlybluegrass.com); [hellmanfoundation.org](http://hellmanfoundation.org).

## Community

Situated on the ancestral lands of the Ramaytush people, San Francisco is home to 875,000 residents and one of the world's most distinctive and innovative metropolitan cities. The San Francisco Bay Area is a popular destination for those seeking gorgeous landscapes, some of the world's finest wines, waterfront towns, nightlife, and diverse cuisines, coupled with top-tiered educational institutions, reputable arts and culture organizations, and innovative workforce options. In one weekend, one could enjoy various Michelin-star restaurants, a Napa Valley wine tour, a curated exhibit at the Museum of the African Diaspora, and a performance at the internationally acclaimed San Francisco Ballet or SFJazz. The 9-County Bay Area is home to approximately 7.8 million ethnically diverse residents; approximately three-fifths of the region's residents are Latinx/Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and African American.

The Bay Area is a global hub for cutting-edge technology, and is deeply involved in Cleantech, with over 200 firms working on environmentally friendly and sustainable products and services. The area has the largest aggregation of research universities and federal research institutions in the nation. The University of California, San Francisco and Berkeley, and Stanford University, among others, are key drivers of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Golden Gate Park, the site of Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, is also home to various attractions including the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park Playground, Strawberry Hill, and the Japanese Tea Garden.

The San Francisco Bay Area is also home to a variety of artists and is the site of many historic moments in American musical history. Both free and commercial music festivals are staged regularly in the region, including Outside Lands and the San Francisco Jazz Festival. The Bay Area also has an extensive network of regional arts and culture organizations, among them the San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Symphony, and fine music training institutions, including the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. The San Francisco Unified School District supports a robust arts and music program for K-12 students and there is an active adult amateur music making community in the Bay Area.

Sources: bayareaequityatlas.org; visitcalifornia.com; goldengatepark.com; census.gov

## Position Summary

Reporting directly to the HSB, LLC, Managing Board, the Executive Director will be responsible for executing HSB's mission while establishing and implementing the organization's strategic vision. The Executive Director will serve as the most senior administrative officer for the organization, working in partnership with the Executive Producer, Board, and senior leadership team. The Executive Director will lead the strategic planning, goal setting and governance for the organization, with accountability for the artistic, educational, financial, community and human resource functions of the year-round operations. The Executive Director will work with the Board and staff on the development of new programs aligned with the strategic plan, mentor and guide the next generation of leadership, and represent HSB in the community and music field. The Executive Director will advance and build on HSB's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion for both the HSB Festival activities and the year-round work of HSB and its team.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Vision and Leadership

- Build a deep partnership with the HSB Managing Board and Executive Producer to support the advancement of the Festival, while honoring its legacy, and charting a course for a dynamic future.
- Facilitate refinement and articulation of the shared mission, vision, and values, and develop a comprehensive strategic plan for three to five years of positive growth, inclusive of the festival, media activities, and commitments to the artistic and local community.
- Assess and regularly report to stakeholders on strategic priorities, resources, and direction, with periodic analysis of program success, performance, financial position, ongoing relevance, and mission achievement.
- Work to develop a point of view on the opportunity to build online audiences.
- Refine and adjust goals and objectives regularly, in partnership with the Managing Board and consistent with the mission and values of HSB.
- Build organizational resilience through the development of succession plans and growth pathways that foster the mentorship and development of the next generation of leadership for Board and staff.
- Lead the organization in the pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion across and throughout the organization, including the encouragement of interpersonal behaviors that exemplify respect; the interruption of micro-aggressions and other race- and gender-based discrimination; and the development of policies and structures that are actively anti-racist. Create a culture of welcome and belonging for all.
- Collaborate with the Executive Producer on communications strategy to coordinate and guide festival outreach and community relations while developing and sustaining a consistent and authentic brand and messaging framework.
- Cultivate a collaborative organizational culture with cohesive, creative, and productive partnerships for internal and external stakeholders.

## Management and Operations

- Oversee the effective development and use of operational systems needed to achieve strategic goals and objectives, with a focus on human resources, financial resources, safety and risk management, governance, communications, community relations and technology.
- Assess legacy operating practices and introduce expertise and relevant contemporary systems and practices to support more efficient and transparent workflows.
- Ensure that operational policies and procedures are adequately articulated, accurate, and aligned with the overall values and strategic direction.
- Work alongside the finance director to maintain a budget and financial position that supports and advances vision and strategy, with clear and consistent reporting to the HSB Managing Board. Advance and refine systems for monitoring and auditing operations, including contract review and insurance.
- Provide mentorship, encourage professional development, and lead staff performance management for the HSB team.
- Continuously maintain and develop the technological infrastructure needed to support internal and external constituents in the pursuit of the HSB mission.

## Board Development and Governance

- Inspire effective working relationships with and among the HSB managing board, engaging with board to encourage active participation and ambassadorship in the community.
- Build connection and trust with likely successors to the current generation of Board members.
- Engage with managing board members to consider and develop practices, structures, and systems that are equitable, sustainable, and dynamic, aligning with plans for future change and growth.
- Work with board partners and support teams on the financial and legal obligations of the managing board, ensuring that relevant non-profit practices are incorporated into operating model.
- Partner with the managing board to ensure strong fiscal health, thoughtful succession planning and good governance.

## Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be a warm, engaging, enthusiastic, and an accomplished relationship builder with the ability to anticipate and solve complex problems and deliver results. The Executive Director will possess effective people skills to work collaboratively with Board members, staff, artists, city officials, community stakeholders and partners, and will be a diplomatic, collaborative, resourceful communicator, and an active listener. The Executive Director will be able to build consensus among a broad group of stakeholders while working in a deadline driven environment. The selected individual will foster cross cultural respect and collaboration and have the capacity to resolve conflict, aligning board and staff efforts toward the shared vision and values of HSB. The Executive Director will have a deep appreciation for the impact and development of HSB—and a commitment to the future of the organization and its activities in the community.

Other key competencies include:

- **Interpersonal Skills and Diplomacy** – The acumen to effectively and tactfully communicate, building rapport and relating well to all kinds of people, while also being able to handle difficult or sensitive issues.
- **Leadership and Teamwork** – The aptitude to organize and influence people to support a vision, create a sense of purpose and direction, and the willingness to cooperate with others to meet objectives.
- **Project Management, Planning and Organizing** – The competence to identify and oversee all resources, tasks, systems, and people to establish courses of action to ensure that work is completed effectively.
- **Resiliency and Conflict Resolution** – Understanding, addressing, and resolving conflict constructively and quickly recovering from adversity.
- **Interpersonal Skills and Appreciating Others** - Effectively communicating, building rapport, and relating well to all kinds of people, with an aptitude for acknowledging the contributions of team members.

## Qualifications

The qualified candidate will have a bachelor's degree in the arts, arts administration, business, or significant relevant professional experience. Seven years of leadership experience required in fields directly related to arts administration, music enterprises, festival or performing arts management or related fields. Direct leadership in event planning, production and support functions, community engagement, financial and human relations management, and board governance. Knowledge of nonprofit governance practices preferred. Must have excellent verbal and written communication skills and the ability to make public presentations. Must be skilled in building community-based programs and delivering mission-based objectives through both live and digital experiences. Must have excellent skills in decision-making, planning, and organization, working with a broad range of volunteers, team members, artists, and community partners.

## Compensation and Benefits

HSB offers competitive compensation, anticipated in the range of \$250,000 to \$275,000, plus a comprehensive and excellent benefits package will be designed to attract an outstanding individual.

## 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](https://artsconsulting.com/employment). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

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**Hardly Strictly Bluegrass is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law.**