



New England Foundation for the Arts

Executive Director

Organization

The New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) invests in artists and communities fostering equitable access to the arts, enriching the cultural landscape in New England and the nation. NEFA is a grantmaker, program initiator, aggregator of resources, and builder of creative partnerships among artists, arts organizations, businesses, and funders. Founded in 1976, NEFA is one of six regional arts organizations established with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and regional state arts agencies to strengthen the national arts infrastructure by cultivating the arts on a regional level. Today NEFA's programs are regional, national, and international in scope, and support artists and communities through grants and other opportunities in the performing arts, public art, and the creative economy. This work is generously supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England state arts agencies, foundations, corporations, and individual donors. Convenings, network building, online tools, and a 45+ year history of data-driven research on the economic impact of the arts are essential complements to NEFA's role as a dynamic organization.

In 2017, NEFA completed a new strategic plan for 2018 to 2021, outlining six organizational values: artists and the creative process; equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA); knowledge building and sharing; leadership; partnership; and public funding for the arts. These values live at the core of NEFA's strategic priorities and have continued to guide the organization's efforts during the pandemic and will be the basis for the next strategic planning process, which will be a priority of the new Executive Director.

NEFA's programs support organizations and artists across diverse forms of expression, cultural roots, and many geographies, connecting them with collaborators and communities that fuel creative exchange and public discourse, and strengthen the creative economy. NEFA staff are nationally recognized leaders in the fields of presenting and touring, international cultural exchange, creative economy, public art, dance, and theater. NEFA is working at the forefront of advancing equitable grant making practices and supporting diverse artists, organizations, and communities. NEFA programs are deeply rooted in relationships with artists, organizations, and communities. All NEFA staff work collaboratively to support these connections to ensure the organization remains informed and responsive to the evolving field. Relationships that reach much deeper than grant transactions guide NEFA's commitment to move the fields of the arts and philanthropy in new and more equitable directions. Over the course of the pandemic, teamwork across NEFA's departments has enabled the organization to develop new skills and accessible tools, to continue its work, and to maintain and strengthen its relationships in the virtual realm.

NEFA has a 21-member board of directors led by Chair John Henry which includes the Directors of New England's six state arts agencies and a talented, nationally and locally recognized staff of 27. For the fiscal year ending May 31, 2023, NEFA's board has approved a budget with a total revenue of \$11.3 million and total expenses of \$11.2 million. NEFA is a multi-state organization and an evolving and dynamic workplace. NEFA staff work in a variety of contexts, including in-person in Boston and remotely across New England and New York.

Sources: edited from nefa.org; usregionalarts.org; guidestar.org

Location

With its primary office in Boston, on the lands of the Massachuset and the Wampanoag Peoples, NEFA serves and is in the six-state region in the northeast corner of the United States, including Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. New England is a region of tall mountains, rich farmland, salty seacoasts, and everything in between. Steeped in history and full of spirit, New England is home to some of the nation's most popular cultural attractions and arts organizations, parks, universities, and sports teams. Four distinct seasons and the perfect assortment of big cities and small towns make New England a favorite travel destination, as well as place to live.

As New England's largest city, Boston has long been the region's economic and cultural hub, offering a variety of performing and visual arts organizations. With an estimated population of 667,000, Boston is one of the 25 largest cities in the country. Greater Boston is home to nearly 4.6 million residents. With strong professional sectors in education, technology, and healthcare, Greater Boston is culturally diverse and socially active.

Sources: newengland.com; boston.gov; bostonusa.com

New England Foundation for the Arts – Executive Director

Position Summary

NEFA values an equitable, diverse, and inclusive world and is committed to hiring individuals who share, value, and support these goals. The Executive Director (ED) will advance NEFA's EDIA values internally and externally. They will be a creative and forward-thinking leader, fluent with issues in the greater national arts landscape, and understand the dynamics of cultural ecosystems across the United States. They will be committed to leading an organization with staff and board dedicated to anti-racist and equitable grantmaking and operational practices working toward new futures for artists, arts programming, artists relationships and support. As the lead spokesperson and public face of NEFA, the ED will have a passion for and comprehensive understanding of NEFA's mission, role, and potential as a regional arts organization. They will develop a thorough knowledge of all NEFA programs and how to leverage and amplify NEFA's programs, funding, partnerships, stakeholders, organizational operations, and opportunities to advance the field. The ED will continue to elevate NEFA's position as a driver of both regional and national initiatives, seeking opportunities to innovate and lead at both levels.

The ED will strengthen and support a dedicated creative team, facilitating and aligning the work of staff and board around continued positive transformation and evolution. They will establish strong authentic relationships with diverse constituents and communities. They are expected to assess current programs and services and guide a collaborative strategic planning process that centers intersectional equity. The ED will champion participatory and inclusive planning, decision making, and human centered leadership.

Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic Vision and Leadership

- Gather and align both internal and external stakeholders toward the organization's vision and core values to galvanize all around unified priorities and goals.
- Lead both acute and regular strategic planning that provide NEFA with clear and measurable goals and objectives for continued development.
- Guide the development of a sustainable long-term strategy with program initiatives that leverage the strengths of NEFA's program design strategy to both respond to and create opportunities in the field of arts and culture.
- Leverage NEFA's unique model of both regional and national programming to enhance regional initiatives and elevate regional success to national and international visibility.
- Regularly investigate opportunities to expand NEFA's work across sectors.

Communications, Fundraising and Stakeholder Engagement

- Serve as a highly visible thought-leader in the philanthropic and arts fields, in general, and for NEFA in particular.
- Continue to position NEFA as a thoughtful convener, both regionally and nationally.
- Increase knowledge of NEFA, clearly conveying NEFA's commitment to equity in serving a diverse body of artists and arts organizations and ensuring NEFA's work is relevant to the needs of the field.
- Create a broad communications framework for NEFA, increasing the organization's communications visibility and impact, including the strategic use of publications, media relations, and the proactive integration of technological strategies (social media, webinars, and other online learning tools), in partnership with staff.
- Provide leadership to NEFA's fundraising, serving as a key advocate working with the Board and development staff to create, execute, and regularly monitor plans to actively grow the base of funding to provide more opportunities for investing in constituents.
- Establish personal relationships with key funders and donors to encourage increased ongoing support. Cultivate prospects to ensure NEFA's funding base is robust and diverse.

Organizational Excellence

- Guide NEFA's operations with a human-centered approach in decision making, centering transparent communication.
- Lead and support NEFA's executive team, working with them to facilitate their professional development and the management of all staff, ensuring staff success and wellness.

- Continually assess NEFA's infrastructure—its human resources, operations, facility management, financial systems, information technology systems, processes, and procedures to ensure balance in capacity and organizational activities.
- Provide oversight of all financial operations including budgetary processes, audits, cash flow management, and financial analysis with the support of NEFA's financial staff and Board Treasurer.
- Ensure appropriate financial transparency, that sound financial structures are in place, and that reporting systems are accurate.

Governance and Board Relations

- Establish a strong working relationship with the Board of Directors, encouraging all board members to participate actively and facilitating their involvement beyond board meetings.
- Develop collaborative relationships with State Arts Agency Directors
- Advance the work of the Advisory Council as strategic advisors and community advisors, cultivating new members and partnerships across the cultural landscape.
- Help to identify new board members whose talents, interests and commitment will further NEFA's mission and secure financial resources, in partnership with the Board's Chair and Trustees Committee.
- Structure meetings, committee meetings and retreats of the Board in accordance with the bylaws of the organization working with the Chair and Executive Committee.
- Serve as a liaison between the staff and board; practice active and transparent communication with the Board and staff ensuring they are advised; provide the Board sufficient and high-quality information for making sound policy decisions.

Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be a collaborative and visionary leader who is confident, decisive, and able to collaborate with staff, stakeholders, and constituents. Committed to and enthusiastic about the mission and work of NEFA, the ED will be motivated by spending time with individuals inside and outside the organization, identifying practical ways to build partnerships and secure resources to drive transformational impact across the arts ecosystems regionally and nationally. A thoughtful, persuasive negotiator who is open and responsive to the ideas of others and able to navigate at local, state, and national levels. This individual will regularly support and empower the staff and collaborate actively on a peer basis with the board of directors. This individual will be an exemplary spokesperson for the value of the arts and its crucial role in the vibrancy of communities and lives of the people of New England.

Other key competencies of the role include:

- **Leadership and Diplomacy** – The emotional and relational capabilities to engage a variety of stakeholders who have differing opinions and bring them together in an overarching common purpose and coordinated efforts.
- **Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills** – The ability to effectively communicate, build rapport, and relate well to all kinds of people to come together, cooperate, and meet objectives.
- **Creativity and Resiliency** – The ingenuity to create new approaches, designs, processes, technologies and/or systems to overcome adversity and achieve desired results.
- **Accountability and Priority Management** – The accountability to be answerable for personal actions and decisions while prioritizing and completing tasks in order to deliver desired outcomes.

Qualifications and Requirements

An understanding of and demonstrated commitment to NEFA's mission, programs, and grantmaking activities is required, with a passion for advancing more equitable futures and breaking down systemic barriers to access in the cultural industry. Familiarity with, or a deep desire to learn about, the dynamics and nuances of New England's creative communities and economy. A proven ability to strategically lead and manage an entity of a scale, function, and complexity similar to that of NEFA is essential, with expertise in planning, organizational development, and team building. The successful candidate will have recognition as a thought leader in the arts and culture or a related field, known for creativity and innovation and possessing a broad knowledge of the performing, public art, presenting, and/or touring arenas. This individual will demonstrate successfully raising funds from a variety of sources, including cultivating and soliciting gifts from individuals, government entities, foundations and corporations. They will demonstrate experience as a thoughtful risk taker with a record of converting vision into working programs

and the ability to communicate effectively and openly, both verbally and in writing, with a broad range of individuals and organizations. The ED will have the ability to generate awareness, excitement and appreciation that leads to buy in from diverse stakeholders.

Compensation and Benefits

NEFA offers a competitive salary commensurate with experience, with a starting salary in the range of \$200,000 to \$250,000. The benefits package includes paid time off as well as medical and dental insurance programs.

Application and Inquires

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments, please click [here](#) or visit artsconsulting.com/employment. If you have questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, or if you need assistance to fully participate in the application or hiring process, please contacting us at:

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As an organization, NEFA values an equitable, diverse, and inclusive world, which we interpret as all people having fair access to the tools and resources they need to realize creative and community endeavors. We acknowledge structural inequities that have excluded individuals and communities from opportunities based on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, class, age, and geography and strive to counter those inequities in our work.

NEFA is proud to be an equal opportunity employer and is invested in creating an equitable and inclusive working environment and organizational culture. We are committed to hiring individuals who share, value, and support these goals, and who reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. NEFA does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

NEFA acknowledges that the ground on which we work is the land of the Massachuset and Wampanoag people; we honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society. NEFA also acknowledges that all the places that our distributed staff live and work, and where we provide support and hold events, are Indigenous lands. We offer our respect to the Elders of those places – past, present, and future.