



# The Laguna Playhouse

## Managing Director

*"Laguna Playhouse: Enriching Lives Through the Magic of Live Theatre for over 100 years"*

### Organization

Located in Laguna Beach, California, The Laguna Playhouse (The Playhouse) is a vibrant cultural institution committed to enriching the community through the transformative power of theater. Since its founding in 1920 as a community theater and now as a professional not-for-profit operating under the AEA-LORT agreement, The Playhouse has continuously evolved, offering a broad spectrum of performances ranging from comedies and dramas to musicals, stand-up comedy, and family-friendly entertainment. Under the leadership of Artistic Director David Ellenstein, who began his tenure in 2023, The Playhouse is committed to mounting world-class productions of both familiar and new works. They are proud to present a 2024–25 season that includes *Rapunzel and Her Holiday Wish*, *Eleanor* by Mark St. Germain, August Wilson's *Fences*, and *Peril in the Alps: A New Hercule Poirot Comic Mystery*.

The Playhouse is housed in a state-of-the-art facility designed to support the diverse range of performances and programs it offers. In addition to its performance space, the Moulton Stage, The Playhouse is home to multiple rehearsal rooms, costume and set design workshops, and classrooms that provide essential resources for both professional productions and community programs. The Playhouse serves as a hub for artistic expression and creativity, making a significant impact on both the local community and the wider cultural landscape.

The Playhouse continues to expand its educational offerings, which date back to 1948. The Youth Theatre Arts Education Programs includes conservatory classes, the TheatreReach community program, workshops, summer camps, and off-site afterschool programs. The Youth Theatre provides acting and musical theater classes for students aged nine to 18. Through both classroom instruction and hands-on experience, young performers are offered opportunities to develop their skills in fully staged productions. One of the upcoming youth theater productions, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, will showcase student talent both onstage and offstage. The Playhouse's Conservatory program further supports the next generation of theater artists by offering advanced training in essential performing arts skills, preparing students for careers in the industry.

Community engagement is at the core of The Playhouse's mission and The Playhouse's commitment to fostering community partnerships is also reflected in its collaborations with local organizations, schools, and other cultural institutions. These partnerships help to broaden the reach of its educational programs, providing access to theater arts for individuals who may not otherwise have the opportunity to participate.

The Laguna Playhouse employs a dedicated team of over 50 staff members who contribute to the theater's operations, productions, and programs. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, The Playhouse had a total revenue of \$4.9 million, with contributions of \$1.7 million, program services revenue of \$2.1 million, and investment and other revenue of \$1 million. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, The Playhouse projects total revenue of \$5.8 million, with anticipated contributions of \$1.8 million, program services revenue of \$2.8 million, and investment and other revenue of \$1.1 million. The Playhouse's financial outlook remains strong, as it continues to balance its rich history with innovative new programming and community outreach.

Led by a 14-member board of trustees, including Chair Lisa Hale, The Laguna Playhouse stands as a testament to the power of the arts to unite and uplift a community, ensuring that theater remains a vital and inclusive part of life in Laguna Beach and beyond.

Sources: [lagunaplayhouse.com](http://lagunaplayhouse.com)

### Community

Laguna Beach is a scenic coastal city in Orange County, California, located along the Pacific Ocean, about 50 miles south of Los Angeles. Known for its stunning natural beauty, artistic community, and vibrant cultural scene, Laguna Beach has become a renowned destination for visitors seeking a mix of art, nature, and luxury. The city is famous for its beautiful beaches, coves, and cliffs, making it a haven for outdoor enthusiasts and beachgoers.

Historic landmarks like the Laguna Playhouse and the Festival of Arts, which includes the renowned Pageant of the Masters, add to the city's cultural charm. Additionally, the city offers unique shopping and dining experiences, especially in the charming downtown area and along the Pacific Coast Highway.

A popular residential community with a population of about 23,000 people, according to recent estimates, the city enjoys a relatively affluent demographic, with a median household income significantly higher than the state average. Residents are predominantly Caucasian (around 84%), with a smaller percentage of Hispanic, Asian, and African American residents. Laguna Beach also has a significant number of seasonal residents and visitors, who are drawn to the city for its art galleries, festivals, and scenic views, and draws an audience from Orange County's over three million residents. Laguna Beach's real estate market is highly sought-after, with many homes perched on the hills overlooking the ocean.

Laguna Beach is also a renowned center for the arts. The city is home to a thriving artist community, and it hosts numerous art festivals and events throughout the year. The Laguna Art Museum and numerous galleries showcase the work of both local and international artists. The city is also famous for its outdoor art events, including the Laguna Beach Art Walk, which allows visitors to tour galleries and studios, and the aforementioned Festival of Arts, which includes the spectacular Pageant of the Masters, where famous works of art are recreated live on stage.

With its Mediterranean climate, Laguna Beach offers year-round outdoor activities, including hiking, surfing, and tidepooling. The city is surrounded by natural parks like Crystal Cove State Park and Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park, making it a prime location for nature lovers. Its coastline provides opportunities for beachgoers to enjoy sunbathing, swimming, and surfing, while its coastal bluffs and hiking trails offer breathtaking panoramic views.

In addition to its natural beauty, Laguna Beach's proximity to larger Southern California cities like Los Angeles, Costa Mesa, and Irvine offers convenient access to additional cultural and recreational activities. The city's community is welcoming and enjoys a laid-back, artistic atmosphere that draws both residents and visitors to appreciate the lifestyle of this coastal gem.

Sources: [censusreporter.org](https://censusreporter.org); [worldpopulationreview.com](https://worldpopulationreview.com); [lagunabeach.chamber.org](https://lagunabeach.chamber.org); [lagunabeachcity.net](https://lagunabeachcity.net)

## Position Summary

The Managing Director of Laguna Playhouse will serve as the organization's strategic, financial, and operational leader, co-leading with the Artistic Director to fulfill The Playhouse's artistic vision and mission. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Managing Director will oversee all operational and administrative functions, including fundraising, marketing, human resources, community engagement, technology, and financial sustainability. The Managing Director and the Artistic Director will collaborate on season planning and the development of budgets and educational initiatives. The Managing Director will lead efforts to strengthen partnerships with donors, artists, and community stakeholders and will ensure the fiscal health of The Playhouse through a progressive approach to revenue generation. The Managing Director will champion diversity, equity, and inclusion across all areas of the organization. By cultivating a positive, inclusive organizational culture, the Managing Director will work collaboratively with the Board and Artistic Director to shape long-term strategic goals and enhance The Playhouse's impact and visibility within the cultural landscape.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Financial Leadership and Administrative and Operations Oversight

- Manage and oversee the organization's financial operations in collaboration with the Artistic Director and Board, focusing on budgeting, financial stability strategies, audit oversight, and reporting and analysis.
- Direct administrative operations, including departmental policies, hiring, supervision, and management of administrative department heads, as well as general oversight of all administrative staff.
- Refine internal communication and reporting structures to ensure clarity in decision-making and empower staff at all levels.
- Develop and implement a system for ongoing review and improvement of organizational policies, ensuring alignment with inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA) principles.
- Monitor and evaluate financial performance against established benchmarks, identifying areas for growth and cost-saving opportunities.

- Ensure compliance with all relevant legal, tax, and regulatory requirements, working closely with legal and financial advisors.
- Supervise ticketing strategies and operations, in collaboration with and in support of the ticketing services staff.
- Embrace other financial leadership and administrative and operations oversight responsibilities, as needed.

### **Board Relations and Board Development**

- Collaborate with the Artistic Director and Board to define and execute strategic priorities.
- Ensure regular, transparent, and timely reporting of all relevant information to the Board.
- Develop and implement systems for recruiting new Board members, in partnership with the Governance Committee.
- Provide the Board with regular strategic guidance, helping them understand key organizational challenges and opportunities.
- Facilitate Board training and development initiatives to ensure effective governance and engagement.
- Foster a strong and collaborative relationship with the board while ensuring governance decisions align with The Playhouse's long-term sustainability and mission.
- Embrace other Board relations and Board development responsibilities, as needed.

### **Contributed and Earned Revenue**

- Guide staff and Board fundraising efforts to develop strategies for increasing contributed revenue, strengthening donor trust, and fostering long-term philanthropic relationships, with a focus on solicitation, stewardship, and cultivation of both existing and new funders.
- Support and collaborate with the development team to ensure success in annual and capital fundraising goals.
- Partner with marketing staff to ensure effective messaging and promotion of all revenue streams, establishing a system of ongoing pricing evaluation.
- Create and implement donor recognition and stewardship programs in collaboration with development staff to ensure long-term relationships with key funders.
- Identify and secure new earned income opportunities, such as sponsorships, grants, and partnerships.
- Embrace other contributed and earned revenue responsibilities, as needed.

### **External Relations and Community Engagement**

- Serve as a key ambassador for the organization, working alongside the Artistic Director to represent it both locally and in the broader Southern California community.
- Build and maintain relationships with local arts organizations, fostering mutual support and collaboration.
- Strengthen The Playhouse's community connections, including with community leaders and local businesses.
- Represent the organization at key community events, forums, and networking opportunities.
- Cultivate strategic partnerships with media outlets, local influencers, and cultural leaders to enhance the organization's visibility.
- Embrace other external relations and community engagement responsibilities, as needed.

### **Traits and Characteristics**

The Managing Director will be a dynamic and visionary leader who combines creativity with a strong sense of pragmatism, guiding the organization with both strategic insight and operational expertise. This individual will prioritize building a collaborative and engaged workplace culture, ensuring staff morale and cross-departmental communication are strengthened. Adept at balancing input from staff and stakeholders while maintaining the responsibility for clear, timely decision-making, they will be a decisive and collaborative executive. With a commitment to transparency, the Managing Director will foster open communication and lead with warmth, professionalism, and respect, cultivating a culture of trust and collaboration throughout The Playhouse.

Other key competencies include the following:

- **Leadership and Personal Accountability** – The facility to inspire others with a clear vision while taking responsibility for personal actions and outcomes.
- **Customer Focus** – The commitment to anticipate and exceed customer needs with urgency, responsiveness, and strong relationships.

- **Conflict Management** – The capacity to address and resolve conflicts constructively while maintaining positive relationships.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The ability to effectively prioritize tasks to meet deadlines and achieve key objectives.
- **Interpersonal Skills and Diplomacy** – The capability to communicate effectively, build rapport, and handle sensitive issues tactfully.

## Qualifications

Demonstrable progressive professional experience in leadership roles and in managing and supervising teams is required. A successful track record working within complex and dynamic organizations, as well as skills in financial management, fundraising, and relationship building, are needed. Strong business acumen and communication skills are needed. Prior experience in the performing arts sector is appreciated, and a strong passion for theater and knowledge of the field are expected. The Managing Director will have a proven track record in community engagement, local arts leadership, fundraising, and guiding and establishing organizational policies, and a record of commitment to the principles of inclusion, equity, diversity, and access is essential.

If you do not meet all the qualifications but possess transferable or equivalent skills, we encourage you to apply and highlight them in your cover letter and resume.

## Compensation and Benefits

The Laguna Playhouse provides a competitive and equitable compensation package in the range of \$175,000 to \$200,000, with benefits that include paid vacation and sick leave, paid holidays, medical and dental insurance, long term disability, 401(k) retirement, and Safe Harbor plans.

## 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/opensearches](https://artsconsulting.com/opensearches). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, including the anticipated salary range, please contact:

Flora Stamatiades, Vice President



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**The Laguna Playhouse is dedicated to building an equitable environment that is mixed across lines of difference and strongly encourages applications from Black, Indigenous, People of Color, women, transgender, and non-binary candidates.**