

Organization

The Stratford Festival (the Festival) is North America's leading classical repertory theatre company, renowned for its bold, innovative productions and dedication to storytelling rooted in Shakespearean and classical tradition. Located in Stratford, Ontario, the Festival brings together some of the finest theatrical talent in Canada and beyond, while also fostering new work and nurturing emerging voices. Its mission is to create exhilarating, thought-provoking theatre that connects audiences to enduring stories, while its vision is to be a leading force in the development and celebration of theatre arts in Canada and internationally. With a focus on excellence, inclusivity, and accessibility, the Festival is committed to making live theatre an essential part of a vibrant cultural life.

Founded in 1953 by journalist Tom Patterson, the Festival was initially conceived as a way to revitalize the local economy of Stratford through arts and tourism. With legendary director Tyrone Guthrie at the helm and actor Alec Guinness playing *Richard III* in the inaugural season, the Festival quickly gained national and international attention. What began as a four-week season in a canvas tent has evolved into one of the world's most prestigious theatre institutions, attracting over 450,000 visitors each year and employing more than 1,000 artists and staff.



The Festival is anchored by four distinctive venues, each offering a unique theatrical experience. The Festival Theatre, the largest of the four, is a state-of-the-art 1,800-seat thrust stage; the Avon Theatre, a beautifully restored proscenium stage with 1,100 seats; and the intimate 260-seat Studio Theatre. The Tom Patterson Theatre—completely rebuilt and reopened in 2022—features a 600-seat hall wrapped in breathtaking architecture, which has garnered international accolades for its design and acoustics. These venues support a rich, varied season of programming that includes Shakespeare and other classical works, contemporary plays, large-scale musicals, and new Canadian works. Each season is a feast of theatrical offerings. In 2025, the Festival is mounting 11 productions on four stages encompassing fresh interpretations of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, *Macbeth*, and *The Winter's Tale*; the musicals *Annie* and *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*; a new adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables*; world premieres of two plays—*Ransacking Troy* and *The Art of War* alongside *Dangerous Liaisons* and *Sense and Sensibility*.



Photo by David Hou

of artists is exemplified by its Birmingham Conservatory for Classical Theatre, a prestigious, year-long residency that trains early-career actors through intensive study and mentorship. Many of Canada's most celebrated performers have come through the Conservatory, which remains a pillar of the Festival's dedication to artistic excellence and renewal.

In addition to its world-class productions, the Festival is deeply committed to education, artist development, and community engagement. Its renowned Education Department offers a suite of programs designed for students, educators, and lifelong learners. These include in-person and virtual workshops, artist talks, pre- and post-show discussions, and curriculum-linked materials, all aimed at fostering critical thinking and appreciation for the theatrical arts. Each season, the Festival also welcomes thousands of students from across Ontario and Canada, many attending their first professional theatre performance as part of a school visit. The Stratford Festival Theatre Arts Camp offers a summer experience for young people between the ages of 13 to 18 and attracts participants from across Canada and the United States. Stratford's commitment to fostering the next generation

The Festival's programming also extends beyond the stage with the Meighen Forum—a dynamic series of talks, panels, concerts, and other interactive events that provide context and deepen audience engagement. Themes from the season's productions are explored through conversations with scholars, directors, designers, and cultural

leaders, reflecting the Festival's belief in theatre as a catalyst for broader societal dialogue. Onsite there are seven lounges and halls varying in size from capacity of 260 to 1800 available for rental for special events, deepening the organization's ties to its community.

With a legacy of artistic excellence, roots in its community, and a beautiful riverside location, the Festival remains one of Canada's most compelling cultural institutions. It is a beacon for artists, audiences, and educators alike, dedicated to the transformative power of live performance and the enduring relevance of theatre in modern society. The Festival is governed by a 28-member board of governors led by Chair David L. Adams, with Anita Gaffney serving as Executive Director, and Artistic Director Antoni Cimolino who will be transitioning from that role at the end of 2026. The Senior Director, Marketing currently has eight direct reports and oversees a team of 26 full-time staff alongside more than 150 seasonal front line staff. The direct reports include Marketing Director: Creative Strategy, Associate Directors of Analytics and Corporate Sponsorship & Advertising, Digital Marketing Manager, Director of Film Production and Distribution, Audience Engagement Director, and a joint report to the Publicity Director. For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024, the Festival reported \$75.3 million of total revenue with \$39.3 million from earned sources and \$36 million from contributed sources. For the current 2025 fiscal year, the Festival anticipates revenues of \$80.8 million with \$42.5 million from earned revenue and \$38.3 million in contributed revenues.

Community

Stratford, Ontario, is a picturesque and culturally rich city located in southwestern Ontario, Canada, best known as the home of the world-renowned Stratford Festival. With a population of approximately 33,232 as of the 2021 Canadian Census, Stratford combines small-town charm with a vibrant cultural scene and an impressive array of amenities that make it an attractive location for artists, professionals, families, and retirees alike.

Beyond the Festival, Stratford boasts a rich arts and cultural life. It was recently recognized among the top 10 tourism destinations in Canada by CBC Radio's The Current. The city is home to the Stratford Summer Music, which presents a wide range of musical performances from classical to contemporary and Here for Now, billed as Stratford's Off-Broadway theatre that is dedicated to presenting new works. Local galleries, such as Gallery Stratford, showcase regional and national visual art exhibitions. The Stratford Perth Museum offers engaging exhibits about local and regional history. Stratford's culinary scene is widely respected, with many restaurants sourcing ingredients from the surrounding agricultural region. The city also hosts events such as the Stratford Garlic Festival and the Stratford Live Music & Food, adding to its year-round cultural appeal.

Education is a cornerstone of Stratford's community infrastructure. The city is home to a satellite campus of the University of Waterloo, known as the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business. This innovative academic institution focuses on digital media, user experience, and business innovation, attracting students from across Canada and abroad. The presence of the university has added a dynamic and youthful energy to Stratford, enhancing its profile as a forward-thinking city that blends tradition with innovation. In terms of post-secondary opportunities nearby, the city is within easy commuting distance to other major institutions including Western University in London, Wilfrid Laurier University, and the University of Waterloo's main campus in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. This proximity to world-class education institutions makes Stratford an ideal base for those engaged in academia, research, or continuing professional development. Stratford also benefits from strong public infrastructure and community amenities. The city has excellent schools, both public and private, including the Avon Maitland District School Board and Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board.

Health care is supported by the Stratford General Hospital, a fully accredited teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Western Ontario's Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. There is a well-established public transportation system and easy access to regional transit, with VIA Rail and Onex bus service connecting Stratford to Toronto, London, and points beyond.

The downtown core is bustling with boutiques, cafes, bookstores, and award-winning restaurants. Stratford is particularly known for its culinary scene, supported by local agriculture and a strong farm-to-table ethos. Culinary tourism is a growing sector, thanks in part to the Stratford Chefs School, one of Canada's most respected institutions for chef training. The city is also a certified slow food community and offers a year-round farmers' market, craft breweries, and artisanal food shops. Outdoor enthusiasts will find plenty to enjoy as well. The city has an extensive network of trails and green spaces, including the picturesque Tom Patterson Island, Upper and Lower Queen's Park, and the Shakespearean Gardens.

In the warmer months, the Avon River becomes a haven for kayakers and paddleboaters. Stratford's seasons bring varied recreational activities, from cycling and golf to winter skating and holiday festivals.

Sources: census.gc.ca; stratford.ca; visitstratford.ca; fwtmagazine.com; destinationontario.com

Position Summary

The Senior Director, Marketing (Senior Director) will lead the Festival's audience development strategies, deepening relationships with its patrons, attracting new audiences and supporting each step of the visitor experience. The Senior Director will guide the work of a team of leaders dedicated to meeting revenue expectations and relationship building metrics working closely with advancement and education. Deeply versed in digital and experiential marketing, the Senior Director will play a key role in achieving the Festival's ambitious earned and contributed revenue targets. This role will lead the implementation of the Festival's brand strategy, which is comprised of three layers: the overarching brand, the annual season, and the individual productions and events, including the Forum, the Lab, education offerings, STRATFEST@HOME and the touring and outreach activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Marketing

- Develop and oversee the implementation of integrated marketing plans designed to meet ambitious revenue targets in collaboration with the position's key direct reports.
- Formulate the profile of the Festival's target markets, tracking the effectiveness of the marketing tactics against the audience segments, improving bottom-line results.
- Articulate a clear value proposition associated with the brand and ensure the proposition is integrated into compelling copy and the work of the marketing, audience engagement, publicity, sponsorship, and communications teams.
- Establish, implement, and evaluate short- and long-range departmental objectives, policies, and operating procedures to ensure goals are met or exceeded.
- Regularly analyze sales data and competitive activity and share with the Festival senior team, together with observations and recommendations.
- Recruit, manage, and provide direction and support to employees, fostering professional development, effectively managing performance and maintaining a caring and inclusive work environment.
- Guide the work of the Marketing, Publicity, Audience and Community Engagement, Film Production & Distribution, Corporate Sponsorship, and Analytic teams setting the overall plan and supporting the leaders regularly in the execution of those plans.
- Advise colleagues on programming choices based on knowledge of target markets, competitive offerings, emerging social issues, and internal competencies.
- Identify and develop new customers, build loyalty among existing customers, and win back lapsed customers.
- Generate the evolution of a brand strategy that supports the Festival's strategic goals and objectives.
- Oversee and direct the evolution of the Festival's web and digital presence with the goal of optimizing revenue.
- Nurture positive relations with the Board of Directors, delivering information in a consistent and effective manner, which includes as staff support to the Marketing Committee and serving on ad-hoc committees as they arise.
- Embrace other strategic leadership and marketing duties as needed.

Audience Engagement and Partnerships

- Govern the functions of the Audience Engagement department to meet annual net ancillary revenue targets from commercial business units (cafes and catering, retail, parking, non-Forum tours, Front of House).
- Maintain regular contact with internal and external stakeholders, working to ensure consistent communication towards developing a common brand and reputation.
- Forge and nurture connections with local, provincial, and national tourism agencies, and with other cultural organizations within Canada and beyond.
- Steer a 'Sense of Occasion' strategy, which encompasses all aspects of the patron experience with the twin aims of enhancing those experiences and encouraging loyalty.
- Promote, develop, and maintain positive relations with partners, vendors, and distributors.

- Embrace other audience engagement and partnerships duties as needed.

Revenue Generation and Public Visibility

- Orchestrate the functions and team supports designed to meet annual corporate sponsorship, corporate membership, and advertising revenue targets.
- Guide the development of the Festival's website and the selection and implementation of the customer relationship management system in collaboration with the IT Director.
- Lead the functions designed to expand the Festival's brand beyond the stage, specifically the film and digital content. Support the team in identifying plays to be filmed and exploiting the use of these films on the streaming platforms and other channels including the Festival's own streaming service Stratfest@Home.
- Inspire the development of the key art to promote each season and the individual productions, events, and experiences in consultation with the Artistic Director.
- Oversee the budgets for the Marketing, Publicity, Audience and Community Engagement, Film Production and Distribution, Corporate Sponsorship, and Analytic departments, setting the revenue and expense targets and submitted quarterly forecasts.
- Lead the Festival's demand pricing strategy in collaboration with the Executive Director.
- Generate and administer marketing plans in relation to government funding opportunities.
- Develop and deliver strategies on Festival earned revenue opportunities around gift shop sales, merchandise, and food and beverage.
- Report on marketing campaign and sales/revenue achievement at Board and Finance Committee meetings.
- Serve as staff lead to the Marketing Committee by both reporting to the Committee and soliciting its feedback and advice.
- Liaise with the advancement department on the development of the annual communication/solicitation plan and review materials to ensure they are consistent with brand standards.
- Embrace other revenue generation and public visibility duties as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The Senior Director will be an exceptional team builder who is capable of working individually and collaborating across complex teams, contributing with little need for individual recognition. They will serve with a high level of integrity, discipline, and an ability to function well under pressure. The Senior Director will ensure high professional standards for themselves and the team. With a drive to achieve goals and be resourceful, they will focus on how new ideas, methods, and opportunities can deliver practical and extraordinary results.

Other key competencies include:

- **Leadership and Teamwork** – The capability to communicate convincingly in public presentations, small group discussions, and written and verbal communications while motivating others with knowledge, enthusiasm, and direction.
- **Problem Solving and Self Starting** – The capacity for a strong work ethic and overcoming problems through the consideration of many vantage points.
- **Professional and Personal Accountability** – The integrity to be answerable to supervisors, colleagues, and the public, for personal and professional actions and decisions.
- **Goal Orientation and Time and Priority Management** – The dexterity to manage, prioritize, and complete multiple complex tasks based on setting clear objectives and actionable plans.

Qualifications

A minimum of 10 years of senior experience in marketing is required from work in the creative industries, tourism, consumer marketing, or other fields, but preferably in a nonprofit and arts-based environment. A proven track record of leadership in marketing, branding, budgeting, forecasting, technology, the use of Customer Relationship Management software, and advancing the mission of a similar complex organization, is a must. A master's degree in marketing, communications, or business administration or equivalent experience is an asset, as is demonstrable passion and enthusiasm for theatre. Outstanding interpersonal, written, and verbal skills in English are required. Residency in proximity to the Festival's main offices in Stratford is required to facilitate working on-site. Those currently eligible to work in Canada, as well as international applicants who would need immigration support, are more than welcome to pursue this unique opportunity.

Compensation and Benefits

The Stratford Festival provides a competitive and equitable compensation package. There is a comprehensive group benefits package includes health, dental, vision, an RRSP matching program, Manager lieu days on top of vacation time, and complimentary opening night tickets. The Festival is committed to providing meaningful rewards that reflect the value of the team members, while promoting wellbeing, engagement, and work life balance.

Applications and Inquiries

As part of an inclusive process, interested applicants are invited to inquire and/or submit a cover letter that uplifts their qualifications for the outlined position, and a resume that highlights a chronological career progression, education, and associated accomplishments.

If you don't meet all the criteria outlined in the position but are interested in the position, please reach out to Arts Consulting Group for a conversation. The Stratford Festival is committed to accommodating applicants with disabilities throughout the hiring process, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Arts Consulting Group will work with applicants requesting accommodations at any stage of the hiring process. To submit materials (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit ArtsConsulting.com/OpenSearches.

For questions or general inquiries about this unique opportunity, please contact:

Jeff Erbach, Associate Vice President
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It is a great privilege to gather and share stories on this beautiful territory, which has been the site of human activity—and therefore storytelling—for many thousands of years.

This territory is governed by two treaties. The first is the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant of 1701, made between the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an agreement to set violence aside and peacefully share and care for the land in the Great Lakes Basin. The second is the Huron Tract Treaty of 1827, an agreement made by eighteen Anishinaabek Chiefs and the Canada Company, an agency of the British Crown. As an organization and as individuals, we at the Stratford Festival are in a process of learning how we can be better treaty partners.

Stratford Festival wish to honour the ancestral guardians of this land and its waterways: the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat and the Attiwonderonk. Today many Indigenous peoples continue to call this land home and act as its stewards; this responsibility extends to all peoples, to share and care for this land for generations to come.