



# RiverRun International Film Festival

## Executive Director

### Organization

RiverRun International Film Festival, Inc. (RiverRun) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to the role of cinema as a conduit of powerful ideas and diverse viewpoints. RiverRun's mission is to foster a greater appreciation of cinema and a deeper understanding of the many people, cultures, and perspectives of the world through regular interaction with great films and filmmakers. RiverRun, located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, is one of the premier film festivals in the southeastern United States. Founded in 1998, RiverRun moved to Winston-Salem from Brevard, North Carolina, in 2003. In the past 27 years, the festival has flourished and expanded, with more than 10,000 filmgoers, including both virtual and in person, in attendance in 2025 for the more than 175 films screened, including 55 features and 110 shorts representing more than 33 countries. RiverRun is an Academy Award-qualifying event in the Documentary and Animated Short Subject categories. This year's festival ran from April 11 to 19, 2025. The 2026 festival will run from April 17 to 25, 2026.

In addition to RiverRun's annual lineup of films, it also presents a broad range of special events, celebrity tributes, family programs, panel discussions, and parties. Several highly regarded year-round screening programs include its classic film series RiverRun Retro, RiverRun Arts, highlighting the performing & visual arts, the free ITVS Indie Lens Pop-Up Series in partnership with PBS North Carolina, and their free education initiative Films With Class that presents screenings in the classroom and at the festival to over 2,000 students annually. RiverRun plays a vital role in the city's diverse arts and education community. Engaging 39,000 students (K–12) in 47 schools, RiverRun collaborates actively with students and educators to incorporate film, the themes found therein, and alternative learning methodologies into the classroom, allowing teachers to develop meaningful conversations with students addressing cultural, ethical, and moral concerns.

RiverRun is governed by a passionate, informed, and influential 18-member Board of Directors led by Board Chair Denise Gunter. RiverRun also garners support from a 21-member advisory board comprised of significant members of the film industry. RiverRun employs three full-time and approximately seven seasonal staff members, approximately 30 seasonal employees, and more than 250 volunteers. The operating budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, was \$588,045, with approximately 72% of the revenue derived from contributions, grants, and other fundraising.

### Community

Known as the City of Arts and Innovation, Winston-Salem has nurtured a truly symbiotic collaboration amongst its hi-tech, higher education, research, arts, and culture sectors. There are five major colleges and universities in Winston-Salem: Wake Forest University, the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA), Winston-Salem State University, Forsyth Technical Community College, and Salem College. The public and private sectors have come together to develop one of the most vibrant downtowns of any midsize city in the southeast, including Wake Forest University's Innovation Quarter and BioTech Place, the Kimpton Cardinal Hotel, several warehouse-to-loft conversions, and the convention center. It is also home to numerous cultural organizations, including a/perture Cinema, an independent, locally owned art theater with three 80-seat auditoriums screening a mix of local, documentary, independent, foreign, and festival films.

The city's commitment to the arts is apparent when visiting the campus of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, which offers one of the country's top filmmaking programs as well as conservatory programs for dance, drama, music, and theatrical design and production. Winston-Salem is also home to the International Black Theatre Festival, which draws more than 65,000 attendees to see more than 30 productions. For visual art lovers, the city offers the Reynolda House Museum of American Art, the North Carolina Museum of Art, Winston-Salem (formerly the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art), Delta Arts Center, and the Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University. Downtown Winston-Salem is dotted with numerous restaurants and bars for an energetic nightlife scene.

Winston-Salem offers a mild, four-season climate and many architecturally and topographically distinct neighborhoods. A short drive to the mountains or coast, and boasting numerous parks and greenways, Winston-Salem appeals to city dwellers and outdoor enthusiasts alike. With a population of over 250,000, the city's median home price is approximately \$259,393.

## Position Summary

The Executive Director will provide the strategic direction and leadership for RiverRun and will serve as a spokesperson, team leader, and mentor to the staff. The Executive Director will set the tone for the organization and provide leadership by creating a harmonious and effective workplace culture in which the contributions of staff and volunteers are recognized and valued while reaching organizational objectives. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will ensure high-quality and diverse film offerings in appropriate venues for the annual festival and year-round events. The Executive Director will provide fiscal oversight, ensuring that the organization operates within budget and pursues all available resources to enhance the organization's long-term viability. The Executive Director will negotiate contracts while also supervising RiverRun's marketing and media plans and production of all publications. The Executive Director will actively engage and play a critical role in raising sustainable contributions for the organization.

## Role and Responsibilities

### Strategic and Operational Leadership

- Partner with the Board of Directors and its committees to create, refine, and implement a strategic plan for the organization, as well as help leverage their connections to additional fundraising opportunities.
- Provide consistent and transparent leadership across the organization and establish a sustainable strategy that encourages artistic innovation, fiscal responsibility, and organizational longevity.
- Institute and implement decisive action plans with the senior management team that include a clearly defined internal organizational structure designed to achieve strategic, operational, and tactical priorities, along with measurable goals.
- Serve as the principal spokesperson, ambassador, and advocate for the organization, fostering strong relationships and cooperative arrangements with elected officials, community and education leaders, and industry groups in support of RiverRun and its programming.
- Embrace other strategic and operational leadership responsibilities as needed.

### Fiscal Oversight and Revenue Enhancement

- Create and manage the annual operating budget, ensuring the highest levels of financial accountability with proactive transparency in financial reporting with staff, Board members, and other stakeholders.
- Manage financial reporting systems, provide financial analysis, develop earned and contributed revenue forecasting models and scenario plans, and alternative revenue streams to supplement fundraising and ticket sales, and make recommendations to support decision-making.
- Oversee and guide all marketing and communication efforts to develop strategic marketing initiatives designed to create long-term engagement and increase attendance.
- Collaborate with the development team to strengthen long-term donor engagement strategies, increase individual donor, large gifts, government, foundation, and local and regional corporate support.
- Embrace other fiscal oversight and revenue enhancement responsibilities as needed.

### Programming and Community Engagement

- Enhance the programming of RiverRun International Film Festival in partnership with the Program Director to uplift the vision and mission of fostering a greater appreciation of cinema, increasing diverse audiences, and a deeper understanding of the many people, cultures, and perspectives of the world.
- Implement key strategies to make the festival a destination event through innovative thinking, new opportunities, fresh ideas, and new technologies to increase the profile of RiverRun, bringing it to the next level of creativity and artistic expression.
- Expand RiverRun's presence in the broader field by representing the organization at national convenings, participating in collective lobbying efforts, and fostering relationships with local or national peer organizations that may result in producing partnerships and resource-sharing.
- Maintain a consistent presence with and engage the community by expanding the festival's year-round activities and events, focusing on increasing visibility and reputation in the arts, education, culture, public, corporate, government, and philanthropic communities.
- Embrace other programming and community engagement responsibilities as needed.

## Staff Leadership and Supervision

- Provide consistent, transparent, and inspiring leadership across the organization to build and maintain a culture of collaboration and establish a sustainable strategy that encourages artistic innovation and fiscal responsibility, establishing a reputation in the community as a desirable workplace.
- Ensure a unified sense of direction and strong support to the various internal divisions of the organization through calculated and thoughtful guidance of the senior team members to ensure programming aligns with business, mission, vision, programming, and human resources goals and activities.
- Schedule and convene regular meetings amongst staff, facilitating timely communication and information exchange, in collaboration between various stakeholders, to foster a work environment with a focus on two-way communication between administration and staff
- Expand and diversify staff members by monitoring their productivity, setting clear professional expectations, providing job specifications, constructive feedback, and encouraging accountability through proactive approaches, including coaching, mentoring, and advancing successful employees.
- Embrace other staff leadership and supervision responsibilities as needed.

## Traits and Characteristics

The Executive Director will be comfortable working as part of a team and will be a leader who focuses externally on the needs of others, values their strengths, and actively coaches the staff. They will be an inspiring, collaborative, and forward-thinking leader who empowers and celebrates colleagues and brings out the best in others. The Executive Director will have the ability to listen to and absorb feedback, as well as be a practitioner of transparency who is receptive to new ideas, opportunities, and innovation, while effectively leveraging organizational, human, financial, and technological resources. A visible and vocal advocate, both internally and in the community at large, the Executive Director will demonstrate the ability to organize and motivate other people to accomplish goals, create a sense of order and direction, and gain active participation from a variety of stakeholders. While maintaining a regional and national presence, the Executive Director will enjoy continual learning and embrace a service-minded approach to building meaningful partnerships with diverse and dynamic communities.

Other key competencies include:

- **Personal Accountability and Teamwork** – The integrity to be answerable for personal actions while also committing to cooperating with others to meet objectives.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The dexterity to prioritize and complete tasks in order to deliver desired outcomes within allotted time frames.
- **Leadership and Goal Orientation** – The fortitude to organize and influence people to believe in a vision, creating a sense of purpose and direction, while also setting, pursuing, and attaining goals, regardless of obstacles or circumstances.
- **Resiliency and Continuous Learning** – The ability to quickly recover from adversity while still demonstrating a commitment to taking the initiative to regularly learn new concepts, technologies, and/or methods.

## Qualifications

Demonstrated success in financial and organizational management, fundraising, and public advocacy is necessary. Strong verbal and written communication skills are required, as is a proven commitment to enhancing diversity at all levels of board, staff, volunteers, and audiences. Knowledge of, passion for, and management experience in the arts and culture industries, or equivalent experience in a for-profit or nonprofit sector that is arts-related, is strongly preferred. Familiarity with film festivals and/or the film, television, or other creative industries is deeply appreciated. Artist and/or distributor relationships are a significant advantage, as is a deep knowledge of and experience in marketing and branding. A bachelor's degree or equivalent professional industry experience is preferred, and the selected candidate will need to reside in the Winston-Salem area.

## Compensation and Benefits

RiverRun offers a competitive compensation package with an estimated salary range between \$85,000 and \$95,000 and benefits that include a comprehensive group insurance benefit program, health insurance, flexible spending account, health savings account, short-term disability, workers' compensation, life insurance, and accidental death and dismemberment insurance. Retirement benefits are provided through a voluntary 403(b) plan with a matching contribution after one year of service. Vacation, sick, and holiday time are 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/OpenSearches](https://ArtsConsulting.com/OpenSearches). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

Josyanne Roche, Vice President  
Dat Ngo, Vice President



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**RiverRun International Film Festival is an equal opportunity employer. Candidates for employment are considered without regard to race, color, sex, creed, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, non-job-related disability, or marital status.**