SMoA

POSITION PROFILE

Executive Director

Springfield Museum of Art

Springfield, Ohio



benefactor

SMoA

Introduction to the Springfield Museum of Art

The Springfield Museum of Art (SMoA) is one of Ohio's most distinctive cultural institutions: one of only two art museums in the state affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums for nearly 50 years, and a beloved community anchor for nearly 75 years. What began in 1952 as the Springfield Art Association, founded by local artists and citizens who believed their city needed a home for the visual arts, is today an accredited art museum with eight galleries, a permanent collection, and a full calendar of exhibitions, classes, and community programs. The organization is a cornerstone of Springfield's vibrant, collaborative arts community and a trusted partner to schools, social service agencies, and civic leaders.

SMoA's mission is to expand creativity and vitality by connecting art and communities. That mission comes to life every day: in a preschooler's first art class, in a student meeting a visiting artist who shares their roots, and in a neighbor seeing their own work on the gallery walls for the first time.

The Springfield Museum of Art is proud to:

- **Have been accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) since 1977**, a standard of excellence that places SMoA among the nation's most respected museums.
- **Hold an affiliation with the Smithsonian Institution**, a distinction it has held since 2012, connecting Springfield to the resources and network of the world's largest museum complex.
- **Present ambitious, world-class exhibitions**, including recent shows featuring Yayoi Kusama, *Black Lives as Subject Matter*, and the current *Resilient Spirits: 75 Years of Haitian Metalwork*, which has become a point of pride and conversation across the community.
- **Serve as a museum for all**. Come Find Art offers free admission on the second Sunday of every month, and Museums for All and free student admission keep the doors open to everyone. Partnerships reach early learners through Head Start, adults in recovery, people with developmental disabilities, and individuals reentering the community after incarceration.
- **Celebrate local creativity** through an annual juried member exhibition, where artists of every age show their work, many for the first time.
- **Welcome visitors to a beautifully renovated facility** that rivals museums in much larger cities. A successful capital campaign transformed the North Wing into flexible space for classes, school programs, and community gatherings, and upgraded critical building systems.
- **Sustain a long tradition of community support**, including the Art Ball, one of Springfield's premier social events for more than 50 years, and an endowment that provides a foundation for the future.
- **Partner across Springfield's arts, education, and civic landscape**, from student internships with Wittenberg University to collaborations with fellow cultural organizations.
- **Enjoy strong momentum**, with rising membership, increased grant support, and fresh faces at exhibitions and events.



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The Opportunity

The Springfield Museum of Art seeks a warm, visible, and mission-driven Executive Director to build on a period of real momentum and to lead the museum into its next 75 years. The new leader will be the museum's chief connector: a relationship builder who brings people through the doors, champions the art on the walls, and makes SMoA a must-see destination for Springfield and the region.

This is a moment of stability and possibility. The next Executive Director will follow a well-regarded leader of nearly seven years who completed a major capital campaign, guided the museum through the pandemic, and opened its doors wider than ever to the full range of Springfield's community. New audiences have discovered the museum, and SMoA has earned a reputation as one of Springfield's most welcoming and respected institutions. A forthcoming PBS feature will share the museum's story with audiences across the region. The new leader will inherit a state-of-the-art renovated facility; a deeply committed, cross-trained staff known for ownership, teamwork, and a shared pride in the museum; an engaged board of trustees; and a reputation for renowned exhibitions that inspire and spark conversation.

This is a pivotal time in the institution's history. In December 2027, SMoA will celebrate its 75th anniversary, a natural moment to rally the community, honor the museum's history, and invest in its future. The museum is also preparing for AAM reaccreditation and is nearing the end of its current strategic plan. The new Executive Director will carry the existing plan forward with care, then partner with the board and staff to shape the next one.

Community connection will be at the heart of this role. The Executive Director will be a familiar face in Springfield: at civic tables, in boardrooms and classrooms, and at the museum's own front door. They will deepen relationships with donors, business and government leaders, educators, and fellow arts organizations, and represent the museum in citywide efforts such as Springfield 2051. They will extend SMoA's reach into surrounding communities and strengthen its bonds with the region's artists, restoring adult classes and creating new ways for local and regional artists to gather, learn, and exhibit.

The new leader will also bring genuine passion for the visual arts and set the tone for the museum's artistic identity. Working closely with a strong curatorial team, they will sharpen and champion SMoA's distinct voice, including its roots in Ohio art. They will also bring fresh energy to the museum's Smithsonian affiliation, a key institutional asset with significant potential for furthering exhibition partnerships, curatorial collaboration, and national visibility.

As the museum's chief fundraiser, the Executive Director will lead the effort to diversify and strengthen revenue so that SMoA's operations are fully sustainable for years to come. This work will include building lasting relationships with major donors, launching a planned giving program, expanding memberships and sponsorships, cultivating public and institutional partners, and building a permanent development function that supports the museum's ambitions.

The right person for this moment will be a humble, resourceful leader who is comfortable rolling up their sleeves in a small, lean institution. They will be a skilled communicator who listens first, builds trust quickly, and honors the museum's traditions while welcoming new audiences. Above all, they will see this role as a long-term commitment and make Springfield their home, investing in the community as fully as they invest in the museum. The museum welcomes candidates from a range of backgrounds, including leaders from commercial galleries and other arts-adjacent fields who bring transferable experience and a deep love of the visual arts.

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Key Position Functions

The Executive Director provides strategic leadership and day-to-day management of the Springfield Museum of Art and reports to the board of trustees.

Community Leadership and External Relations

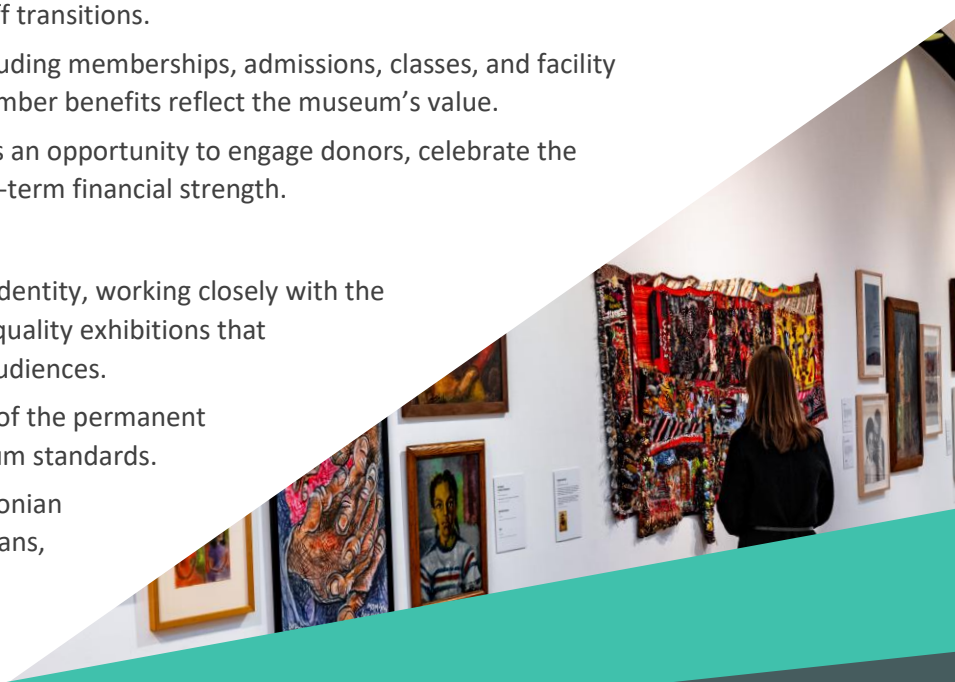
- Serve as the museum's lead ambassador and spokesperson, building visibility and goodwill with residents, visitors, media, and civic, business, and philanthropic leaders.
- Build trusted relationships with local and county officials, business leaders, educators, and fellow arts and cultural organizations, and represent SMoA in community planning efforts such as Springfield 2051.
- Deepen partnerships with Wittenberg University, Clark State College, and other institutions, schools, and community organizations, and extend the museum's reach into surrounding communities.
- Strengthen SMoA's connection to local and regional artists, creating opportunities for them to gather, learn, and exhibit.
- Lead marketing and communications strategies that raise awareness, build attendance, and make SMoA a must-see destination in Springfield.

Fundraising and Revenue

- Serve as the museum's primary fundraiser, working in partnership with the development officer to help personally cultivate, solicit, and steward major donors, corporate partners, and foundations.
- Build a sustainable fundraising program that spans annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, sponsorships, grants, events, and public funding.
- Lead and retain a permanent development professional and build systems that keep donor relationships strong through staff transitions.
- Strengthen earned revenue, including memberships, admissions, classes, and facility rentals, ensuring pricing and member benefits reflect the museum's value.
- Leverage the 75th anniversary as an opportunity to engage donors, celebrate the museum's legacy, and build long-term financial strength.

Artistic Vision and Programs

- Set the tone for SMoA's artistic identity, working closely with the curatorial team to present high-quality exhibitions that engage, challenge, and delight audiences.
- Ensure responsible stewardship of the permanent collection in keeping with museum standards.
- Champion the museum's Smithsonian affiliation, pursuing exhibition loans, curatorial collaboration, professional development, and national visibility.



- Support a full range of educational programs for learners of every age, including restoring adult classes and workshops.
- Keep programs closely aligned with the museum's mission and responsive to the full range of Springfield's community.

Strategy and Board Partnership

- Carry the current strategic plan through to completion, then partner with the board and staff to develop the next one.
- Serve as a trusted partner to the board of trustees, keeping trustees informed, involving them early in major decisions, and providing clear, decision-ready reporting.
- Work with board leadership to strengthen governance, recruit new trustees, set clear expectations, and engage every trustee in fundraising and advocacy.
- Lead the museum through AAM reaccreditation and maintain compliance with professional museum standards.

Finance and Operations

- Oversee financial planning, budgeting, and reporting, partnering with the board's finance committee and the museum's financial advisor.
- Maintain a clear command of the museum's financial position and endowment, ensuring resources align with strategic priorities.
- Oversee facilities, operations, technology, and human resources, planning for the long-term care of the building, its collection, and its systems.

Staff Leadership

- Lead, support, and empower an experienced, talented, and self-directed staff, building on a collaborative culture of ownership, cross-training, and mutual respect.
- Invest in staff professional development and adjust roles and structure over time as the museum's needs evolve.
- Model the humility, hands-on spirit, and curiosity that define a small institution with big ambitions.

Qualifications

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree
- Five to eight years of leadership experience at a museum, arts organization, or comparable nonprofit, or transferable leadership experience in an adjacent field such as a commercial gallery, arts business, or creative enterprise
- Genuine passion for the visual arts and the ability to articulate and champion an artistic vision, along with an eagerness to keep learning
- Proven success building and stewarding high-value relationships through major gift fundraising or transferable experience such as collector, client, sponsorship, or business development, and a genuine enthusiasm for fundraising
- Proven financial management and budgeting experience, with the ability to read financial statements, make sound decisions, and direct staff accordingly

- Exceptional relationship-building, communication, and public speaking skills, with the ability to connect with people of every background, from donors and civic leaders to artists, families, and students
- Emotional intelligence to handle difficult conversations and lead with trust, autonomy, transparency, and decisiveness
- Strong storytelling skills, with the ability to build upon the museum's recent success in communicating its impact
- Proven experience working with or serving on a board or similar governing body, along with a commitment to building a strong partnership with the board of trustees
- A hands-on, resourceful leadership style suited to a small institution with a lean staff and limited administrative support
- Commitment to live in Springfield and become an active, visible member of the community; relocation is expected

Desired Qualifications

- Leadership experience at an art museum, as Executive Director or second-in-command, or leadership of an art education program at the secondary or higher education level
- Advanced degree or formal training in art, art history, museum studies, arts administration, or a related field
- Nonprofit fundraising experience, including personally soliciting major gifts
- Experience building planned giving programs, leading campaigns, or strengthening an endowment
- Knowledge of collections stewardship and experience with AAM accreditation or comparable museum standards
- Nonprofit leadership experience and an understanding of nonprofit governance
- Experience building partnerships with universities, national institutions, or networks such as the Smithsonian Affiliations program
- Experience developing adult programming and engaging local and regional artists
- Familiarity with the Midwest and with leading in a small or midsize community
- A track record of civic involvement, such as service clubs, community boards, or local planning efforts
- Experience with earned revenue strategy, including membership, admissions pricing, and facility rentals

Compensation

The Springfield Museum of Art is pleased to offer a competitive compensation and benefits package for this role. The target salary range is $100,000–$115,000, commensurate with experience.

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Application Process

Benefactor Group is pleased to be assisting the Springfield Museum of Art with this executive search. Applications will be reviewed as they are received. All applications are considered highly confidential. To be considered for this position, please submit a resume at the link below. In the application, you will also be asked to provide a brief answer to a question describing your interest in the role.

To apply, please visit https://bit.ly/SMoA-EDapp

To learn more about the Springfield Museum of Art, please visit https://www.springfieldart.net/

Please do not contact the Springfield Museum of Art staff or board with questions or interest in the role. All inquiries about the position should be directed to Benefactor Group.

Benefactor Group Recruitment Team
HR@benefactorgroup.com
http://www.benefactorgroup.com



SMoA

About Springfield, Ohio

As the seat of Clark County, Springfield offers an exceptional quality of life at an affordable cost. This historic industrial city is rich in culture, recreation, and economic opportunity, making it a vibrant place to live and work.

- **A legacy of arts and culture,** including its own symphony orchestra (Springfield Symphony Orchestra), a Frank Lloyd Wright museum (Westcott House Museum), a 1,500-seat performing arts center (Clark State Performing Arts Center), and the longest-running free arts festival in the country (Springfield Summer Arts Festival).
- **Countless outdoor recreation opportunities,** such as the Little Miami Scenic Trail, the Ohio Caverns, the Mad River, Buck Creek State Park, and Clifton Gorge. Springfield sits at the hub of a 330-mile paved trail network, boasts a 2,100-acre recreational lake, features whitewater kayaking runs in the downtown area, and offers dozens of community parks and green spaces.
- **Excellent educational opportunities across Springfield and Clark County.** The Springfield City School District includes 10 recently constructed elementary schools, three recently constructed middle schools, the Keifer Alternative School, and Springfield High School. The DOME, a local high school, houses a renowned STEM school and a state-of-the-art tech and creative learning center. Springfield is also proudly home to Clark State College and Wittenberg University, a leading liberal arts institution.
- **A thriving (and growing) hub of business and industry.** The community has attracted 7,000 new jobs to the area in the past several years. Springfield is a center for agribusiness and food processing and home to companies known nationwide, including Dole, Gordon Food Service, Woeber's Mustard, and Reiter Dairy.
- **A wide range of dining options,** from bakeries to upscale restaurants, and from family-owned restaurants to local breweries and quaint wineries.

Springfield isn't just a great place to visit—it's a place to build a life, grow a career, and become part of a dynamic and welcoming community. Whether you're drawn to its affordable cost of living, thriving economy, or deep-rooted sense of culture and history, Springfield offers the perfect balance of opportunity and quality of life.

Here, you can make an impact in a city where innovation meets tradition. You can enjoy big-city amenities without big-city hassles, surrounded by stunning outdoor spaces, top-tier schools, and a community that truly cares.

With easy access to Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati, you'll be a short drive away from world-class sports, entertainment, and major business hubs.

Springfield is more than a place to live—it's a place to belong, to lead, and to make a difference.

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Serving those who serve the common good®

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