



“Art does not belong to any particular sector of the population.  
The making of art is an irresponsible force that is true to everyone.”

- Gregory Sharrow, Vermont folklorist, educator, and documentarian

## Organization

The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (Flynn) is located in downtown Burlington, Vermont, and has been at the center of Vermont's cultural landscape throughout its 90-year history. The Flynn is internationally recognized for the caliber of its presentations; significant artistic, educational, and community outreach activities; superb technical capacity; beautiful ambiance; and sound fiscal management. More than 200,000 people annually attend the Flynn, enjoying a wide variety of performances by local, national, and international artists.

The Flynn's mission is to encourage the enjoyment, understanding, and development of the performing arts in Vermont through diverse and engaging artistic experiences. It is committed to making a positive impact and providing a world-class experience. The Flynn believes in the transformative power of the performing arts to unify, strengthen, and inspire the community. Art ignites curiosity, fuels imagination, and invites discovery of new and different experiences, diverse cultures, and artistic genres. As stewards of a rich legacy, the Flynn is dedicated to preserving and protecting its beautiful, historic art deco theater while ensuring its fiscal stability and a prosperous and sustainable future. The Flynn believes passionately that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the creative energy, anticipation, excitement, and joy of live performance. It honors and celebrates artistry. From world-renowned performers to those just beginning their creative exploration—the Flynn aspires to greatness in itself and in its work.

The historic building opened in November 1930 as a state-of-the-art facility to enjoy touring vaudeville stars and “talkie” motion pictures. The building was designed in the art deco style by the Boston architectural firm Mowll & Rand and features the largest proscenium in the state, a sophisticated fly system for set changes, sloped floor seating, and excellent acoustics. Today, the Flynn is comprised of two performance spaces—the original proscenium auditorium with 1,411 seats and Flynn Space, an intimate 180-seat black box/cabaret performance space—as well as an art gallery and education and dance studios. As its signature program, the Flynn presents world-class music, Broadway, theater, dance, comedy, cirque, and family performances on the MainStage, with additional touring shows added throughout the year. The Flynn produces and provides artistic direction for the annual 10-day Burlington Discover Jazz Festival, presented through a unique partnership with Burlington City Arts. It is the proud home of many thriving arts groups, including the Lyric Theatre Company, Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Vermont Youth Orchestra, and University of Vermont Lane Series. The quality of the facilities and services attracts leading concert promoters and major events in Burlington.

Arts education is a vital part of the Flynn's mission, serving more than 45,000 students each year. Whether attending a Student Matinee performance with their classmates or finding joy in a Flynn dance, drama, or music class, the power of arts education can open minds, hearts, and doors to students' unlimited human potential. Students can engage with Flynn teaching artists in an afterschool club, extended residency, or community night—providing experiential opportunities that encourage joy, unlock creativity, and strengthen expressive skills. Students can also take center stage in a Summer Youth Theater production or jazz concert. The Flynn's model has been nationally recognized by the Kennedy Center's Changing Education through the Arts program, Association of Performing Arts Professionals, and the Dana Foundation's publication *Acts of Achievement: The Role of Performing Arts Centers in Education*. Because education is a life-long pursuit, the Flynn engages children, teens, and adults of all ages and experience levels in the artistic process, cultivates appreciation of the performing arts, and makes the performing arts a vital part of school and community life.

The Flynn is governed by a 30-member board of trustees, chaired by Staige Davis. Its FY19 budget was \$7.8 million and its FY20 budget was \$6.7 million in response to pandemic closure. The Flynn typically has 35 full-time staff members and employs more than 270 people annually, including box office, front-of-house staff, production crew, and teachers. Senior staff reporting to the Executive Director include the Artistic Director, Chief Financial Officer, Director of Education, Director of Development, Director of Human Resources, Director of Marketing, Director of Facilities, and Managing Director of the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival. Recognized as a leader in the mid-sized

performing arts center field, the Flynn is the recipient of many honors, including the League of Historic American Theatres' Outstanding Historic Theatre Award, ongoing support from the National Endowment for the Arts and Vermont Arts Council, and major support from several foundations and many generous individuals and businesses.

## Community

Burlington is the most populous city in the state of Vermont and has a metropolitan area of approximately 210,000 people. Located along the east shore of Lake Champlain, the city is recognized for its quality of life, garnering accolades such as the number one college town (*Huffington Post*), one of the 10 best places to live (*Men's Journal*), and one of the 15 hottest cities of the future (*Business Insider*). Cost of living in Burlington is slightly below the United States average.

The region's current economy is based primarily in education, health services, transportation, utilities, and manufacturing. Among the highly regarded brands that originated or are headquartered in Burlington are Ben & Jerry's, Burton Snowboards, and Seventh Generation. Burlington is home to the University of Vermont, Champlain College, a Community College of Vermont campus, as well as Middlebury College and others nearby.

The Flynn is a linchpin to the economic and creative vitality of Burlington's downtown district. With a robust restaurant, brewery, and music scene, the lively downtown area hosts festivals and markets through the year. The city's arts agency, Burlington City Arts, co-produces *Highlight*, a city-wide New Year's Eve celebration that showcases the community's creativity through artistic festivities. Burlington has a thriving visual arts scene, including the nation's first craft center, Frog Hollow Vermont Craft Gallery, and the Fleming Museum of Art located on the University of Vermont campus. Cultural organizations in the region include the Vermont International Film Foundation, Vermont Performing Arts League, and the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain.

Set on Lake Champlain in a valley to the west of the Green Mountains, Burlington has been called the "west coast of New England." The city's recreational features include marinas, a waterfront park, a 12-mile bike path along the shoreline, and three sand beaches. Outdoor recreation is a year-round activity, with some of New England's best hiking, skiing, snowboarding, and world-class mountain biking within driving distance of Burlington.

Nationally recognized as an early adopter of the local food movement, Vermont has a long history of environmental awareness and sustainable agriculture. Vermont consistently ranks at the top of the Locavore Index, having the strongest producers and consumers of local food in the United States. Burlington is home to a host of local farmers markets, artisanal brewers, distillers, and wineries. Nearly two-thirds of all Vermont schools participate in VT FEED, a farm to school program.

Sources: [uvm.edu](http://uvm.edu), [vermont.org](http://vermont.org), [vermontvacation.com](http://vermontvacation.com), [vermontartscouncil.org](http://vermontartscouncil.org), [vtfeed.org](http://vtfeed.org), [livability.com](http://livability.com), [strollingoftheheifers.com](http://strollingoftheheifers.com)

## Position Summary

Reporting to the board, the Executive Director will serve as the chief executive officer and organizational innovator of the Flynn. This visionary and dynamic community leader will be a bridge builder, active listener, skilled collaborator, and champion for the critical role of the arts in a vibrant, forward-thinking, and intersectional community. The Executive Director will partner with the board in ensuring governance models that engage a diversity of people and perspectives. This individual will develop, motivate, and lead an experienced team in external relations, fund development, marketing, strategic planning, artistic planning, and educational programming, as well as provide overall operational, financial, and administrative oversight.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership and Integrated Vision

- Provide visionary and transformational leadership for an innovative, forward-thinking organization at the center of the community's cultural ecosystem that inspires and engages the board, staff, and community members.
- Build, nurture, and sustain a culture of respect and inclusiveness that values the power of diversity with a firm commitment to equity and access.
- Address systemic racism with thoughtful programmatic vision, embedded governance structures, dynamic staffing, equitable vendor interactions, and intentional audience experiences.
- Lead a positive learning organization that creates a climate of respectful inquiry in which the Flynn and its partners are encouraged to take risks, diversify, and innovate for social change.

### **Revenue Enhancement and Partnerships**

- Collaborate with the board and staff to implement a robust portfolio of contributed revenue, cultivate current and future individual and foundation donors, and identify and secure gifts, grants, and sponsorships from businesses.
- Pursue public funding opportunities; establish and strengthen relationships with local, state, and federal officials; and ensure quality applications to public sources, including the National Endowment for the Arts and Vermont Arts Council.
- Bring an entrepreneurial approach to marketing and communication strategies that maximizes earned revenue through ticket sales, concessions, program fees, rentals, and other opportunities.

### **Program Oversight and Community Engagement**

- Inspire and implement an exciting programmatic and educational vision in partnership with the staff and board.
- Oversee the short- and long-range planning and evaluation of artistic and educational programs that strive to deepen equity, inclusion, and social action for increased audience participation, appreciation, and community engagement.
- Actively engage existing and potential artistic and community partners in wholistic approaches to community initiatives and programs.
- Develop creative partnerships with Burlington social action agencies, resident companies, regional arts and cultural organizations, and others that produce and present programs at the Flynn.
- Communicate the Flynn's mission to multiple audiences and develop and guide the implementation of effective strategies to expand participation.
- Advocate for artists, arts education, and arts access throughout the community and Vermont.

### **Organizational Stability and Fiscal Resiliency**

- Partner with the board in its policy-making role and ensure its members have timely access to accurate and updated information on finances, policies, key performance indicators, cultural trends, and relevant issues to help them reach decisions that advance the organization's mission.
- Develop, motivate, mentor, and lead an experienced staff while recognizing the incredible efforts of the entire team that delivers on the Flynn's mission, vision, and values.
- Embrace innovation and change management activities with an inclusive decision-making process.
- Foster collaboration, amplify teamwork, and exhibit creativity in strategic visioning and practical implementation.
- Anticipate the possible financial and organizational effects of change management, effectively assess crises and conflicts, and honor multiple opinions, values, and points of view.
- Manage financial resources with integrity and transparency, establish and monitor financial controls, and oversee audit standards and money management policies.

### **Traits and Characteristics**

The Executive Director will be an innovative and strategic leader who can bring together multiple constituencies to achieve a common vision. This individual will exhibit trust, integrity, and transparency and will lead by example with passion and a vision that inspires others. The Executive Director will value frequent interaction and collaboration with the internal team and external community and will have an innate ability to build rapport with a wide range of stakeholders. They will demonstrate versatility and adaptability to various situations and be comfortable with change. A decisive leader, the Executive Director will be receptive to new ideas, opportunities, and innovation while effectively leveraging organizational human, financial, and technological resources. This individual will have the capacity to discern competing priorities, embracing opportunities in a timely manner while quickly adapting during periods of uncertainty.

Other key competencies of the role include:

- **Leadership and Resiliency** – The aptitude to organize, inspire, and influence people to believe in a vision, creating a sense of common purpose centered on creativity, artistry, and diversity.
- **Diplomacy and Teamwork** – The capacity to deeply respect others, effectively and tactfully handle difficult or sensitive issues, build consensus, and guide the team in support of their values and those of the organization.

- **Customer, Donor, and Community Focus** – The drive to instill a customer-centric approach throughout the organization, anticipating and understanding existing and future audience interests, and addressing broader social, artistic, and community concerns.
- **Personal and Professional Accountability** – The ability to self-evaluate and take responsibility for personal actions and decisions, accept setbacks, look for ways to progress, and understand how obstacles impact results.
- **Time and Priority Management** – The dexterity to balance timelines and desired outcomes, effectively manage difficulties and delays, and prioritize organizational activities to stay on schedule.

## Qualifications

Leadership experience in a dynamic arts, cultural, educational, or similar community-focused or socially-oriented organization is necessary. A demonstrated commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and access are required, as well as experience navigating change and inspiring a seasoned team. Qualified candidates will have or develop a deep knowledge of the performing arts field, trends, and best practices and possess a history of personal involvement in the performing arts. Experience leading and inspiring positive change in a multifaceted, complex organization is needed. Proven results in fundraising and comprehensive contributed and earned revenue skills are highly desirable. Relevant degree(s) in the arts, business, nonprofit management (or equivalent experience) is preferred. A broad range of life experience is welcomed.

## Compensation and Benefits

The Flynn offers a competitive salary commensurate with results-oriented experience. The benefits package includes paid time off, as well as an array of opportunities for medical, dental, vision, life, and short- and long-term disability insurances. A flexible spending account cafeteria plan, employee assistance program, and 401k retirement are also available.

## Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments, please click [here](#) or visit [artsconsulting.com/employment](https://artsconsulting.com/employment). For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

Dr. Bruce D. Thibodeau, President



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**The Flynn seeks to make the performing arts accessible to all through a commitment to equity and inclusion. It acknowledges the many systemic barriers in place and commits to pursuing anti-racist and anti-oppressive policies and practices in its work to connect and unify communities, broaden and challenge beliefs, and influence future choices.**

**The Flynn recognizes the rich indigenous culture and heritage that existed long before its arrival. It acknowledges this Abénaki land and commits to policies and practices of cultural equity for today and future generations.**