



## POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

### Program Officer, Arts & Creativity Program

Location: Boston, MA

#### About the Barr Foundation

The Barr Foundation's mission is to invest in human, natural, and creative potential, serving as thoughtful stewards and catalysts. As stewards, Barr nurtures and enhances vital community assets. As catalysts, the Foundation cultivates and advances the breakthrough ideas that will shape our collective future. Barr focuses on achieving impact as a constructive partner, willing to exercise leadership.

Based in Boston, the Foundation focuses regionally, and selectively engages nationally, working in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts and creative expression, advance solutions for climate change, and expand educational opportunity. Barr is one of the largest private foundations in New England with assets of more than \$1.6 billion and a 2017 grantmaking budget of \$80 million.

A set of core values defined by the Barr Foundation's founding trustees express beliefs about what constitutes effective philanthropy and guide how the Foundation carries out its philanthropic mission. The Foundation is committed to strive for excellence, act with humility, adopt a long-term perspective, and embrace risk. Additionally, while each program is guided by distinct priorities and goals, Barr embraces a common set of approaches in all aspects of its work, namely flexibility and nimbleness, a broad range of tools, knowledge and learning, openness and transparency, and active collaboration.

For more information on the Barr Foundation, please visit: [www.barrfoundation.org](http://www.barrfoundation.org).

#### Barr's Arts & Creativity Program

Since its inception, the Barr Foundation has supported arts. Though initially a secondary focus, the Foundation elevated the arts in 2012 to be one of three principal areas of funding (together with education and climate). In spring 2016, the Arts & Creativity Program completed a strategic planning process that resulted in a focused set of priorities to guide Barr's grantmaking over the next five to seven years.

The goal of the Arts & Creativity Program is to elevate the arts and enable creative expression to engage and inspire a dynamic, thriving Massachusetts. Cognizant of the rapidly changing demographics, technological advances, and evolving art forms, the Program pursues its goal through three strategies:

(1) *Invest in organizations to be adaptive and relevant.* The priorities in this area include:

- Providing risk capital for exemplary arts organizations to: embrace artistic risk-taking and bold organizational change; expand the diversity of creative experiences and audiences; and present work that inspires with its excellence and relevance.
- Investing in organizations with demonstrated effectiveness at increasing capacity of working artists

to produce, promote, and present excellent, relevant, rigorous art.

- (2) *Join arts with other sectors to foster creative problem-solving, broaden arts participation, share new resources for the arts, and forge new cross-disciplinary alliances.*

Creative placemaking is a priority area, specifically initiatives that integrate arts and creativity into community planning and development to strengthen the social, physical, and economic fabrics of communities. The intersection of art, science, and technology is an exploratory area, in particular arts and health, the maker movement, and arts and climate change.

- (3) *Activate public support for arts and creativity.* The priorities in this area include:

- Investing in research, policy analysis, and communications to inform strong policies and long-term financing options for arts and creativity.
- Supporting the development of leaders, organizations, cross-sector networks, and coalitions that effectively communicate the value of the creative sector, and increase its visibility in electoral and legislative processes.
- Investing in traditional and new media, forums, and other ways of broadening public awareness of and engagement in arts and creativity.

Across these strategies, the Arts & Creativity Program seeks to advance bold ideas, to strengthen the capacity of organizations to take artistic and organizational risks, and to cultivate field and civic leadership. The program team, consisting of three full-time staff members, works closely with grantee partners to design support that is strategic and pivotal to an organization's development. The program works proactively and, with a broad range of partners, continually assesses the environment for opportunities. It provides seed, risk, patient and intellectual capital for promising new practice and timely game-changing initiatives. It will help initiate and invest in collaborative efforts to increase community, civic and cross-sector engagement in the arts, such as the City of Boston's ten-year cultural plan, and "Creating Connection," a national initiative to build public will for arts and creative expression. The Program also works with intermediary partners – such as New England Foundation for the Arts' Creative City Initiative and The Boston Foundation's Live Arts Boston – to provide grants, technical assistance and training, and network development to strengthen the quality and quantity of arts, creative expression, and engagement across Massachusetts.

### Program Officer Position

The Program Officer will play a significant role at an exciting time of growth for the Arts & Creativity Program. In 2016, the program launched its new strategies and expanded its geographic footprint from a focus on Boston alone to all of Massachusetts, with additional, targeted investments in New England and nationally; we have thus far invested \$16 million toward these new priorities.

Arts & Creativity staff work closely as a team. The Program Officer will focus on supporting the implementation of two strategies in particular: advancing the field's capacity to adapt, take risks, and engage changing audiences in new ways; and fostering opportunities to connect the arts to other disciplines and sectors. S/he will play an important role in identifying, developing, supporting, and evaluating grant concepts, potential grantees, and other potential partners and collaborators —through conversation and network building with current and prospective grantees and leaders in our fields—and work with the Program Lead to effectively communicate potential grants and their impact and lessons to our trustees. The Program Officer will report to the Program Lead, currently the Arts & Creativity Senior Program Officer who oversees this program area for the Foundation.

## Key Responsibilities

### Planning and Strategy

- Collaborate with the Program Lead to deepen the existing strategies and develop funding and learning priorities to yield strong impact in areas important to the foundation.
- Work with the Program Lead to assess progress towards programmatic objectives.
- Serve as a thought partner on the team and bring new knowledge that will inform course adjustments of the strategy by continually assessing the environment.
- Maintain a wide breadth and depth of knowledge about artistic practice, effective organizational development and change, current trends, professional practices, and policy pertinent to the program.

### Grantmaking

- Identify potential grantees and field-building opportunities, and conduct preliminary due diligence to ascertain fit and potential risks.
- Work with potential grantees to help design requests that are strategic and pivotal to an organization's development; improve the quality of proposals; and evaluate and provide feedback on the feasibility and clarity of proposal budgets, staffing, workplans, and anticipated project outcomes as related to proposal goals and institutional capability.
- Evaluate proposals, conduct site visits, monitor and manage active grants, support and assess their progress (including financial and programmatic reports), and communicate actively with grantees. Work with Foundation's grants management team to administer grants from start to finish.
- Develop and present quality grant write-ups, written analyses, and reports for Foundation leadership, reflective of rigorous evaluations of grant recommendations, including context for proposed projects, organizational assessments, strategy alignment, how recommendations advance the program's agenda, risk assessments, and as appropriate, external expert commentary.
- Assist with the evaluation of grants or grant clusters, in collaboration with the Foundation staff who are leading the learning and evaluation activities.

### Field Leadership and Foundation Support

- Cultivate strong working relationships with grantees, outside advisors, experts in the field, public sector partners, and colleagues in philanthropy.
- Lead or support convenings, workshops, or other opportunities for learning and collaborative work among grantees and other thought leaders to share best practices, encourage collaboration, and explore opportunities for partnership.
- Provide leadership in the Program Officer's professional field through public speaking engagements, writing, panel discussions, and use of social media, etc.
- Under the guidance of the Program Lead, commission papers and program-related reports that broadly contribute to the Foundation's understanding of new approaches, best practices, and issues in Arts & Creativity relevant to the program's interests.
- Collaborate with the communications team to disseminate information with the goal of advancing field knowledge.

## Qualifications

- Strong record of achievement with minimum of 5 years of relevant experience working in the nonprofit, public, or private sector in fields related to the Barr Foundation's Arts & Creativity strategies.
- Strong content knowledge in subject matters related to the Arts & Creativity strategy areas, most importantly: organizational change and development; trends across the arts and culture sector; and excellence in and relevance of diverse artistic forms and practices.
- Demonstrated ability to analyze complex organizational conditions and community dynamics, and assist in the creation of comprehensive approaches.
- Demonstrated ability to think strategically, take initiative, and execute strategies, including the ability to define program objectives, evaluate progress, and independently manage projects through a complete lifecycle.
- Exceptional quantitative and qualitative analytical skills necessary for identifying investment opportunities, assessing organizational health and capacity, designing initiatives, and evaluating proposals and outcomes. Familiarity with funding practices that strengthen organizations' capitalization and sustainability is a plus.
- Commitment to strive for excellence, act with humility, adopt a long-term perspective, and embrace risk – which are a reflection of Barr values.
- A collegial spirit in sharing ideas and receiving feedback.
- Experience building strong, positive, collaborative relationships with diverse constituencies, by listening to new ideas, encouraging open dialogue, and inspiring people to work towards common goals.
- Knowledge of the culture, neighborhoods, institutions, and leadership of Boston and Massachusetts would be an asset.
- Excellent writing and presentation skills, particularly in communicating with diverse constituencies in a variety of settings.
- Bachelor's degree required. Graduate degree in Arts, Arts Administration, Public Administration, Architecture, or a closely related field is preferred.

## To Apply

**The position is open. The Foundation seeks to identify qualified candidates as soon as possible, so applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.**

Please visit <http://bit.ly/2lqVaOz> to apply for this position. Only applications submitted via this link will be considered.

Questions may be directed in confidence to Denise Gillespie, Director of Human Resources, via email at: [barrjobs@barrfoundation.org](mailto:barrjobs@barrfoundation.org).

This position offers a competitive salary with excellent benefits.

*The Barr Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes a diverse pool of candidates.*