



**American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.)  
Director of Development  
Position Description**

***Painter Executive Search is supporting American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) in their search for a seasoned Director of Development to lead all aspects of fundraising to solidify a sustainable base of annual support, grow enthusiasm for opportunistic project fundraising, and position the organization for its next Capital Campaign.***

Celebrating its 50th Anniversary, American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) is San Francisco's Tony Award-winning premier nonprofit theater company. Internationally recognized for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting, A.C.T. is renowned for the rich variety of its programming, pushing the boundaries of theatrical storytelling.

A.C.T. is the largest theater company in the San Francisco Bay Area and employs more than 800 people each season, from teachers and artists to technicians and administrative staff. During the past five decades, more than 300 A.C.T. productions have been seen by close to 7 million playgoers.

While A.C.T.'s programming is well-known, fundamental to A.C.T.-- its mission and vision-- is training and education. A.C.T. was the first theater to win a Tony Award for the quality of its training program as well as its performances. A.C.T. was also the first independent theater in the nation to win academic accreditation and the authority to grant a Master of Fine Arts degree in acting through its Conservatory for Actor Training. A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory, as well as its education and community engagement programs, serve a broad constituency. From professional actors and theater patrons, to youth at various stages of development, A.C.T. is actively enhancing the experience of its performances, teaching acting and providing opportunities that expand engagement with the art form. In addition to providing access and education to students, A.C.T. has in-depth residency programs that encourage and give voice to those who are often left without access to traditional training programs. Embedded in its commitment to excellence in actor training and building engagement with the community, is the belief that great art can change the world. At A.C.T., students, working alongside professionals, on and off the stage, are exploring how theater can invigorate our lives and stimulate imagination and empathy.

**POSITION SUMMARY**

The Director of Development ("DoD") in collaboration with key leaders across the organization, will structure and execute a strategic fundraising plan that aligns the activities of the Development Department with core organizational needs. Both a seasoned fundraiser and an organizational leader, the new DoD will lead a team that will engage the whole organization in building a culture of philanthropy in support of A.C.T.'s vision. Working across departments, the DoD will assess the range of philanthropic opportunities within A.C.T.'s programs and be an effective advocate for building resources for them and for the organization as a whole.

Reporting to, and working closely with, the Executive Director, the DoD serves as a key member of the Operating Committee (Senior Management Team) and an active participant in making strategic decisions for A.C.T. The DoD contributes to institutional planning, including guidance for annual and long term revenue budgets and expense planning. The DoD is ultimately responsible for directing the resources of the Development Department and creating any new initiatives required to assure aggressive growth of contributed revenue for the organization.

He/she is responsible for all fundraising activities, including annual and capital programs, planned giving and endowment efforts, prospect research, database maintenance, mentoring and supporting all volunteers and staff involved in fundraising, supervision of donor cultivation efforts, preparation of relevant reports, government funding, and fundraising events. Additionally, the DoD will support the recruiting of new members of the Board of Trustees. Working closely with Board of Trustees' leadership including the Board Chair and Board President, as well as the Development Committee and the Committee on Trustees and Governance, the DoD will partner in building organization-wide capacity in support of A.C.T.'s fundraising goals.

Critical to the success of the role is the commitment of the DoD to personally build support for A.C.T. Connection to the art form and a deep comfort with engaging high-net worth individuals will be needed. The DoD will effectively represent and advocate on behalf of the organization in public forums, meetings and with a broad range of patrons, public officials, artistic partners, nonprofit and business partners and prospective supporters. Adeptly facilitating donor's engagement with A.C.T. leadership and producing partners so that opportunities for creating enthusiasm and deeper support are maximized, will be needed to grow a stronger more diverse base of support. In partnership with the Marketing Department and the external public relations firm, the DoD will develop key messages for external constituents to promote understanding and recognition of A.C.T.'s role in the community and beyond.

## **BACKGROUND**

A.C.T. operates with a \$20 million annual operating budget of which approximately \$7.5 million in contributed income is projected for 2017. A.C.T. is financially sound with an endowment that flows approximately \$1 million dollars to operations annually. The Board of Trustees is engaged and open to learning and supporting fundraising efforts. The DoD will lead a team of 11 development professionals responsible for Major Gifts, Annual Individual Giving, Institutional Gifts and Planned Giving Programs. The organization currently utilizes Audience View for all ticketing and development activity, but may be considering migrating to another system in support of development activities.

### ***History***

Founded by William Ball and led for the last 24 years by Artistic Director Carey Perloff, A.C.T. takes pride in its tremendous theatrical legacy of performance and training, and its vital role in creating the art and artists of the future. Perloff, known for her outspoken, passionate leadership, recently published a memoir, *Beautiful Chaos*, which chronicles her experiences leading A.C.T. after the challenges before and after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake.

Perloff has teamed up with Peter Pastreich, A.C.T.'s Executive Director to prepare the organization for its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season and the next phase in its growth. Pastreich oversees all of A.C.T.'s

administration including all fundraising activity and Board engagement. Pastreich brings more than 50 years of highly successful management experience to this Executive Director role.

### ***Facilities***

A.C.T. owns two theatrical buildings, the historic Geary Theater and the recently-opened, state-of-the-art Strand Theater, and operates five performance spaces, a costume shop, and an urban campus that includes rehearsal studios and teaching spaces for its schools, and offices for a staff of sixty.

The beautiful, historic Geary Theater which rose from the rubble of the catastrophic earthquake and fires of 1906, has been A.C.T.'s home since its beginnings in 1967. When the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake ripped a gaping hole in the ceiling, destroying the proscenium arch, the San Francisco community rallied together to raise a record-breaking \$30 million to rebuild the theater. Located in the heart of the Union Square shopping and theatrical district, The Geary boasts 1,029 seats and can be employed for a variety of purposes, including theatrical presentations, lectures, meetings, screenings, and grand receptions. In addition to its grand auditorium, The Geary includes three meeting and lounge areas for special events and pre-and post-show mingling: Fred's Columbia Room, a 1,346-square-foot downstairs lounge; the top-floor Garret Room, a private space for receptions and meetings; and the stunning Sky Lobby, located between the two balconies and overlooking bustling Geary Street.

The Strand Theater, located directly across from Civic Center's lively UN Plaza, is a dynamic and intimate performance complex. Resurrecting a 100-year-old movie theater, the award-winning project opened in late spring 2015. This flexible space includes a 283-seat theater, a 120-seat event and performance space, and a welcoming lobby and cafe that is open to city residents seeking a new destination in the Central Market neighborhood. The Strand allows A.C.T. the flexibility to stage an expanded range of productions each season, including specially commissioned new work, cabaret and theater performances by A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program and Young Conservatory students, educational workshops with school partners, event rentals for community groups, and memorable celebrations for the A.C.T. community. Most significantly, The Strand allows A.C.T. to deepen its presence and impact on the city and community.

### ***Opportunities***

This is an exciting time for A.C.T. With the recent successful opening of the Strand Theater, the organization now has a facility that provides both flexibility and a focal point for its increased community engagement. Guided by their Strategic Plan, A.C.T. has developed innovative programs to inform and engage a broader constituency including year-long intensive residencies serving underserved students in San Francisco public schools, ongoing after-school and summer programs in collaboration with nonprofit partner organizations serving low-income students to encourage diverse audiences to participate in theater.

These and other programs complement A.C.T.'s fee-based training programs, which include the Young Conservatory for high school age actors, Studio A.C.T., the SF Semester, the Summer Training Congress, and the only M.F.A. program for actors in America run by a professional theater. A.C.T.'s MFA program consistently ranks as one of the top five Master of Fine Arts programs in the country. The program offers a rigorous three-year course of training designed for the most promising young actors. Prominent

alumni include Elizabeth Banks, Annette Bening, Benjamin Bratt, Anika Noni Rose, and Denzel Washington. A.C.T.'s Tony Award–winning Young Conservatory, teaches students ages 8 to 19 to develop their talents, perform in professional-caliber productions, and gain the confidence to succeed. Courses such as acting, musical theater, clowning, and physical comedy are taught by active theater professionals who understand and enjoy working with young people.

A.C.T. is a place of innovation. On stage and off, A.C.T. strives to bring forth challenging and transformative experiences, building both the capacity of individuals to contribute to the art form and the audience's knowledge and appreciation. They take seriously sector building by engaging in important discussions around the future of theater. One recent example is the three-year study developed in partnership with the Wellesley Centers for Women which studies gender equity of leadership opportunities in nonprofit American theater. Additionally, A.C.T. actively commissions new original works and adaptations and develops opportunities for collaboration through residency programs. A.C.T.'s New Strands Festival is devoted to supporting local, national, and international artists in the creation and completion of original theater. Program opportunities abound at A.C.T. All signs suggest that A.C.T.'s next 50 years will be as remarkable as its first.

## **DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **LEADERSHIP**

- Be visible and accessible to the donor community; represent A.C.T. and department initiatives by cultivating and deepening relationships throughout the San Francisco Bay Area philanthropic community and among those who love theater everywhere;
- Foster a culture of philanthropy across the organization through stronger internal relationships;
- Together with development department staff and other internal leaders, develop, plan, and implement annual and long-range strategies to ensure A.C.T. achieves its funding goals for both annual operating needs, projects and long-range goals;
- Participate in the Operating Committee ensuring that a fundraising perspective is embedded in all strategic decisions;
- Be a trusted partner to the Executive Director and Artistic Director; ensure maximum value from their diverse connections, effectively utilize their time and personal participation in fundraising efforts;
- Revitalize and manage the Development Committee of the Board of Directors; work in close partnership with the Executive Director, the Development Committee Chair, the MFA Board and other governing board members to build the Board's fundraising capacity and comfort with solicitation;
- Communicate effectively across all levels of the organization to facilitate the effective use of staff resources and to support information flow;
- Be an inspiring and supportive team leader; identify and acknowledge quality work; value and celebrate individual and collective success;
- Coordinate with marketing and communications colleagues to develop and implement strategies to ensure that development communications reflect and amplify the A.C.T.'s brand and effectively engage current and prospective donors;
- Support the Board of Trustees and Executive Director in the identification, cultivation and recruitment of new Board Members and assist in Board orientation, support and onboarding.

## **OPERATIONAL AND STAFF MANAGEMENT**

- Recruit, mentor and retain a highly-qualified and motivated staff; delegate specific responsibilities with appropriate authority and establish accountability and clear lines of communication;
- Manage the daily activities of the Development Department including individual giving, institutional (corporate and foundation) giving, fundraising events, fundraising systems, and planned giving;
- Establish a strategic framework for fundraising activity so that individual staff and collective department goals can be established, attained and celebrated;
- Ensure that effective donor cultivation and recognition activities, special events, and volunteer programs are well-received, achieve stated fundraising goals, and stay within established budgets;
- Supervise and expand an effective prospect research program and continue to build a systematic effort to increase the A.C.T.'s base of support;
- Establish and monitor performance measures, evaluate the effectiveness of the fund development programs, and make recommendations for redesigning the current programs or creating new efforts;
- Oversee maintenance of the records management system, including gift processing, donor acknowledgment, data maintenance, and development reports; coordinate these activities with the Finance, as appropriate;
- Collaborate with the Finance team to ensure the accurate and timely reporting and forecasting of contributed income and departmental expenses;
- Maintain accountability and compliance standards for donors and funding sources.

## **PERSONAL FUNDRAISING**

- Develop a keen understanding of institutional priorities and A.C.T.'s broader vision; personally commit to supporting those priorities and vision;
- Identify, cultivate and solicit major gift prospects; maintain and manage a personal portfolio of high-level prospects;
- Support Board members, the Board Chair and Board President, Development Committee Chair, the MFA Board, other fundraising volunteers and staff in identifying, cultivating and soliciting gifts;
- Be a partner for A.C.T. leadership; develop methods for best using their talents and networks;
- Mentor others in fundraising best practices.

## **EXPERIENCE**

### ***A successful Director of Development candidate will have:***

- Successful leadership demonstrated by achieving fundraising goals in a nonprofit organization of similar size and complexity, preferably in performing arts or nonprofit organizations;
- Transformative leadership skills as evidenced by a track record of creativity and significant personal achievement;
- A strategic thinker with an ability to manage and implement change; someone who can motivate and mentor staff while increasing individual and team performance;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills; ability to influence and engage a wide range of donors and build long-term relationships;
- Excellent quantitative skills and a proven ability to utilize analytical tools to make sound development decisions;

- Flexibility and capability to think creatively, communicate broadly and demonstrate solutions-oriented leadership;
- Experience with developing and maintaining achievable financial projections and budgets;
- Experience in managing a professional staff, demonstrated ability to guide and mentor with an emphasis on team work and team building;
- Strong organizational skills and a commitment to ethical and humane behavior
- Technical knowledge in a variety of fundraising areas, including major gifts, annual giving, planned giving, foundation and corporate grants, capital campaigns and endowments.
- Ability to communicate in an effective, tactful, and professional manner with the internal and external teams, the media and the public;
- Experience fostering deep relationships with volunteers and valuing their contributions of time, expertise and passion;
- Ability to work well under pressure and adapt easily to changing situations and priorities, exercise good judgment and stay focused on overarching goals;
- Knowledge of local, federal and state legislation, and of accounting and tax laws, regulations, and rules affecting charitable giving;
- Bachelor's degree - an advanced degree is preferred.

#### **ATTRIBUTES**

- Genuinely enjoys engaging donors and the fundraising process;
- A strong intellect; able to contribute to discussions on a wide range of topics;
- Gravitas—the sophistication, knowledge and bearing required to represent A.C.T. to local, national and global cultural, business, social and philanthropic communities;
- High integrity and commitment to goals;
- A strong manager able to nurture both camaraderie and accountability;
- Capable of both strategic and tactical work; strong problem-solving attributes including drive, flexibility and creativity;
- The ability to work independently and as a team player, to take initiative and to manage multiple tasks and projects at a time.
- Superior organization and time-management skills;
- Able to inspire confidence and trust; able to celebrate successes and build upon challenges;
- High degree of emotional intelligence and self-awareness;
- Strong work ethic and the willingness and ability to regularly participate in evening events and to travel, as required.

For additional details or to submit your experience for review, please send your materials or contact;

Nancy Painter

[Nancy@painterexecutivesearch.com](mailto:Nancy@painterexecutivesearch.com)

(415) 202- 6240