

Position Specification

Director of Development
Bard Fisher Center

**FISHER
CENTER**
Bard

The Position

The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts (Fisher Center) seeks a Director of Development to build on its success and steward new expansion opportunities. The Center's magnificent Frank Gehry building stands within Bard College, a singular institution of higher education with global impact.

Background

The Fisher Center creates moments that inspire curiosity, learning, and civic participation. We believe that artists are uniquely able to lead discourse on the most urgent questions of our time, and that substantial, long-term investment in artistic innovation is vital to a well-balanced society. We seek to create a vibrant ecosystem for the arts locally, nationally, and internationally. Each year, the Fisher Center presents 200 events, welcomes 50,000 visitors, and engages 300 artists. We work at the intersection of student learning, professional artistic practice, and public life. As the central multi-venue arts platform in our region and a core program of a trailblazing global liberal arts college, we realize Bard's commitment to the arts as a cultural and educational right for all.

Located in New York's Hudson Valley, about 90 miles north of New York City, the Fisher Center serves communities and populations within a dynamic political, economic, and creative corridor. The Fisher Center is the cultural hub of the College, and home to Bard student and faculty work in the performing arts. Locally, we provide world-class arts experiences in a semi-rural region. We are a significant source of local economic prosperity, as well as a leading provider of arts education. Regionally, we address the lack of space and funds for New York City artists to create new work, particularly over long periods of development, and 30 percent of our audiences come from the New York metropolitan area. We produce new works that tour nationally and internationally: In the past five years, Fisher Center-commissioned projects have travelled to 100 communities around the world, while 30 percent of visitors to the Center come from outside New York.

The Center is known for SummerScape, an annual festival which produces opera, dance, theater, cabaret. It includes the Bard Music Festival, which promotes new ways of understanding and presenting the history of music. New multidisciplinary works are developed year-round through Live Arts Bard (LAB), the Center's residency and commissioning program. An annual budget of \$7.5M is supported by approximately 60% contributed revenue.

Recent artistic successes include the premiere of *Four Quartets*, which the New York Times called "the greatest creation of dance theater so far this century." A long history of singular productions of rare operas continued this summer with Rubenstein's *Demon*, which the New York Times dubbed "a winner." Meanwhile four Fisher Center productions are appearing in NYC this autumn, including the SummerScape production of *Oklahoma!* at St. Ann's Warehouse. fishercenter.bard.edu

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The Location

Bard's beautiful 1,000-acre campus is situated on the east bank of the Hudson River, in Annandale-on Hudson, New York. Community life is defined by numerous cultural and recreational opportunities in the surrounding historic Hudson River Valley and by proximity to New York City. Nearby towns and villages include Rhinebeck, Tivoli, and Red Hook, New York.

The Director of Development's responsibilities will take place at the Fisher Center with travel expected locally, regionally and nationally.

The Role

The Director of Development (DD), reporting to the Executive Director of the Fisher Center, will lead, manage, and execute the Fisher Center's fundraising program for annual and capital requirements, both short and long term, driving retention, acquisition, and strategic development including Board stewardship and expansion. This is an unique opportunity to define the processes, personnel, and culture of an expanding department.

The DD will work collaboratively with the artistic leadership and senior colleagues in Marketing and Audience & Member Services at the Fisher Center. At the Direction of the ED, the DD will work closely with Bard College's Vice President of Development and Alumni/ae Affairs, and support the fundraising efforts of Bard President Leon Botstein as they relate to the Fisher Center. In the unique structure of a presenting, commissioning and producing arts organization on a college campus, the DD will work with and is partially supported by Bard College's Office of Development and Alumni/ae Affairs. The Fisher Center development team reports to the DD.

The DD will be experienced and well versed in all fundraising arenas including but not limited to: individuals, institutions, sponsorship, and capital and endowment campaigns (planned giving a plus). In the arena of individuals, all areas of individual fundraising experience will be required with several years of major donor stewardship preferred.

The DD will be a strategic and creative thinker in a fast-paced artistic environment. The DD will work with the ED to expand leadership giving, and strategically activate and steward a sophisticated, accomplished, and deeply generous Board.

The DD will build on recent accomplishments in development structure and database analysis to build a department that will further align audience development with membership programs, marketing, and fundraising so that the organization can respond quickly, effectively, creatively and contextually to long-term financial requirements and short-term operating needs.

The DD will oversee the delivery of a high-touch stewardship and donor recognition program, interact regularly with major donors, and represent the Fisher Center in the community.

Primary Responsibilities

- Immediately assess the “state of play” of in-process fundraising efforts and provide support for those efforts as needed; assume a hands-on leadership role in the identification, cultivation and solicitation of major gifts.
- With ED, work to prepare the annual development operating plans and budgets. Set quarterly forecast goals and adjust accordingly toward successful budget achievement.
- Manage and personally engage in solicitation and stewardship activities.
- Develop and oversee the fundraising work portfolios of volunteers.
- Retain, recruit, and inspire a team of development professionals with appropriate balance of skills and experiences; establish work plans, performance objectives and goals, and regularly review performance; provide professional development and training opportunities to cultivate staff skills and professionalism.
- Manage special events including annual Galas.
- Manage and work with outside fundraising related consultants.
- Build on existing systematic approaches to prospecting, donor cultivation, and patron engagement.
- Build on the alignment of audience services and marketing with development in terms of customer service and data management.

Qualifications

- Substantial fundraising experience, preferably with a performing arts institution, that includes capital, endowment, annual fund, event and membership elements; successful experience raising principal or major gifts from individuals and institutional sources with an arts organization a plus.
- Exceptional communications skills, both in writing and orally.
- Demonstrated results in sophisticated fundraising efforts and abilities to analyze and formulate disparate information into a sound, well-organized plan.
- Broad-based knowledge of various development activities including: web, social media, direct mail, membership, proposal and grant development, capital campaigns, event planning and management, direct solicitations, leveraging fundraising databases and support systems for donor segmentation, research and volunteer management.
- Experience in structuring sponsorships; demonstrated success with establishing stewardship and donor recognition programs that sustain long-term relationships a plus.
- An understanding of fundraising systems and how data can be used to manage the fundraising process, enhance donor cultivation, and drive fundraising priorities.
- Enjoyment of a rigorous schedule of evening and weekend performances and events.

Contact

The Koltun Group has been exclusively retained for this search. Prospective candidates are invited to contact Marion Koltun Dienstag directly. All inquiries and discussions will be

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considered strictly confidential. Those wishing to apply are invited to send a cover letter including salary requirements and a resume with the subject "Fisher Center DD" to:

Marion Koltun Dienstag
The Koltun Group
Mkdienstag@gmail.com