



Executive Director

Sorrell is pleased to partner with Houston Center for Photography (HCP) in its search for a new Executive Director. HCP is governed by an ethnically diverse 24-member board, which includes business professionals, physicians, lawyers, educators, photographers, and gallery owners. Additional guidance is provided by a 30-member advisory council comprised of collectors, curators, educators, and artists. The organization has grown to include a fulltime staff of six, which is assisted by several interns each semester and hundreds of volunteers. The current operating budget is between \$800K and \$850K, with the aspiration of increasing it to \$1M+ in the foreseeable future.

The Center has a passionate team that the Director will lead with a collaborative, transparent, and empowering style, and work with staff to examine opportunities to enhance policies and procedures, to increase staff capacity collaboration, and professional growth and satisfaction. The Director will foster a culture of open, inclusive, communication, and promote a strong sense of alignment with shared goals. He/she/they will lead an environment that enables, supports, and rewards outstanding work. A leadership approach that values personal connection will empower the staff to achieve strategic goals and succeed in their roles. As the Center continues to grow, the new leader will be critical to support staff, conduct long-term strategic planning, and increase capacity to meet organizational ambitions.

The overarching opportunity for the next Executive Director is to create momentum for HCP becoming a beacon of innovation and inclusion in the Houston cultural landscape and to bring the strategic, intellectual, and administrative talent and experience to foster the delivery of outstanding, relevant, and balanced artistic and educational programs; have a passion for the transformative power of art; and a record of success in generating the financial resources required to achieve HCP's mission. With a deeply personal commitment to HCP and its community, the Director will build and sustain relationships with current and future supporters and stakeholders, both locally and nationally. With a well-earned reputation for excellence among those familiar with HCP, awareness of the Center can and should be heightened.

About Houston Center for Photography (HCP)

Mission

Houston Center for Photography's mission is to increase society's understanding and appreciation of photography and its evolving role in contemporary culture. It strives to encourage artists, build audiences, stimulate dialogue, and promote inquiry about photography and related media through education, exhibitions, publications, fellowship programs, and community collaboration.

History

Houston Center for Photography began as a member and artist-run cooperative in 1981 and was officially incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1982. Its mission has always been to promote the art and practice of photography in all its forms through various programs that take place both on and off-site its museum district facility. HCP conforms to the kunsthalle tradition of a professionally managed, permanent institution that exhibits but does not collect works of art. In the four decades since its establishment, HCP has come to be seen as a model for mid-sized nonprofit arts organizations, receiving support from philanthropic leaders such as the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), [Houston Arts Alliance](#), [Houston Endowment](#), [The Brown Foundation](#), [Texas Commission on the Arts](#), and the [Joy of Giving Something Foundation](#), among others.

Services

In 2006, HCP opened the doors to its [Learning Center](#), and has since expanded its on-site education programming to reach over 1,500 students annually through over 300 classes taught by local experts as well as icons of the medium. The Learning Center includes a state-of-the-art Digital Darkroom, where artists can print their work using professional printers and scanners, a professional Lighting Studio, and a Critique Room, where classes and monthly member critiques are held. Finally, the Learning Center proudly includes the [John Cleary Library](#), which holds over 4,000 artists' books, monographs, histories, and journals on photography. It is the only publicly accessible library dedicated solely to photography in the region.

Outreach

Education and professional development are integral to the organization's mission. Staff engage with the public through programming, education, and active community outreach. HCP practices community-first program design and initiates relationships with community partners in lower income and underserved neighborhoods. HCP aspires to expand its Instructor pool to reflect the Houston Community.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA)

HCP is committed to the premise that the preservation of cultural heritage is inseparable from the belief that the creations and histories of all peoples must be acknowledged and honored. Through HCP's support of all fine arts photography professionals and students, HCP actively strives to create an inclusive and equitable environment in which all members of our diverse community are valued and respected. For information about one of HCP's DEIA efforts see <https://hcponline.org/education/access-community-education-programs/>.

For general information about HCP see <https://hcponline.org/>.

The Opportunity

Position Overview

The ideal candidate should have a background in arts administration, an understanding of the medium of photography and its related practices, and experience with fundraising, financial management, strategic planning, supervision of staff, and is invested in furthering the organization's commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will lead the staff, collaborate with community stakeholders, and inspire others to participate in the mission of the organization. This individual also promotes HCP as a unique educational resource for the surrounding communities and institutes of higher learning. The Executive Director is a pragmatic,

visionary leader and bridge-builder who will grow HCP's supporter organization. This person will also sustainably expand HCP's impact and network within its supportive local arts communities and beyond.

Core Responsibilities and Duties

As the leader of the organization, he/she/they will:

- Serve as the primary interface with the Board of Directors and cultivate staff/Board relations.
- Clarify/refine in collaboration with the Board of Directors and staff the overarching vision for the future.
- In collaboration with the Board of Directors, develop a long-range strategy and tactical plan that ensures fiscal stability while allowing the organization to fulfill its core mission.
- Serve as the lead fiduciary for the organization. Oversee and manage all budgets in partnership with the Board Finance Committee. Evaluate the current revenue model and modify to achieve growth goals.
- Serve as the lead fundraiser for HCP, a responsibility that entails establishing fundraising goals, working closely with the staff to maintain and increase contributions by existing and new donors, and submitting grant requests to foundations, government agencies, and individuals to achieve the established goals.
- Serve as the face of the organization and the spokesperson for HCP with the media and the public and ensure that the HCP message is clear, consistent, and positive and that there is a favorable public perception of HCP. Raise the overall visibility of HCP through marketing initiatives, and actively engage in professional and public outreach to expand HCP's reputation and deepen relationships with existing stakeholders.
- Develop and contribute curatorial vision for the exhibitions at HCP.
- Engage local, national, and international artists to curate/create exhibitions and exhibition-related programming.
- Develop sustainable programs and initiatives that advance the educational goals and growth strategies.
- Lead, manage, inspire, and motivate staff ensuring a positive organizational culture; mentor staff and encourage their professional development.
- Oversee all Human Resources matters, including staff performance management and salaries. Develop succession plans and staffing requirements in collaboration with the Board. Direct personnel policies and procedures for compensation/benefits and all staff activities.
- Manage consultants, contractors, and volunteers contributing to HCP services, programs, and HCP communities.
- Evaluate existing contracts, policies, and procedures. Make modifications to improve operations, workflow, and budget impact. Manage facilities including collaborating with The Menil on mutually beneficial rental terms and property improvements/upgrades.
- Embrace and promote the possibilities presented by digital technologies.

Key Skills and Requirements

- Successful experience in positions of increasing responsibility in leadership level, operations management and/or administrative roles coupled with a collaborative spirit and practice.
- Experience with major, multifaceted not-for-profit cultural/educational community facing institutions.
- Experience leading an organization or department of a cultural institution, including oversight of staff.

- Vision and the ability to execute that vision sustainably. Creative and expansive thinking coupled with the ability to nurture innovative ideas and bring them to fulfillment. Demonstrates a versatile, flexible, and entrepreneurial leadership capacity.
- Experience with both contributed and earned revenue sources. Ability to understand, create and manage budgets and to reach benchmarks and deliverables. Ability to analyze trends, project management deadlines, and performance metrics.
- Proven fundraising experience, including the ability to raise funds creatively and obtain grants to support mission-focused work.
- Excellent communicator, team builder, and motivator. Able to relate well to and enjoy interacting with anyone and everyone inside and outside HCP and the art world, including staff, Board members, collectors, museum and gallery professionals, donors, artists, scholars, academic partners, students, and the public. The ability to persevere in the face of challenges and demonstrate a relentless commitment to higher standards, which commands respect.
- Undergraduate degree in fine arts or related field is required and Advanced degree is highly desirable.
- 7-10 years of experience in a museum or similar environment caring for exhibitions of notable quality, or an equivalent combination of experience and education.
- Exposure to field of photography is preferred and solid connections to the art world. Familiarity and appreciation of art in all media, and from a range of cultures and eras.
- Experience working with populations diverse in background, age, learning styles and abilities, and creating accessible and inclusive programs.
- Fluency and interest in using digital technologies to benefit the organization and its constituents.
- Arts advocacy, and/or educational program development and implementation experience is highly desirable.

Compensation

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience. Benefits and ongoing training and development are included.

Application and Referral Process

Applicant review is currently underway and will continue until the candidate has been selected. To nominate or be considered for this position, please contact Laura Sorrell at laura@sorrellco.com and 713.854.5351, or Priscilla Plumb at priscilla@sorrellco.com and 281.224.0881. If you have an interest but don't meet 100% of the qualifications, we still encourage you to apply. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

About Sorrell

Sorrell is a highly relational provider of executive recruiting. Our mission is to serve as partners with our clients to accelerate their efforts to attract, hire and retain talent that impacts the future of the organization. For more information, call 713.840.1870.