ALLEY THEATRE

Chief Human Resources Officer

Sorrell is proud to partner with Alley Theatre, which is seeking a new Chief Human Resources Officer.

Founded in 1947 by Nina Vance in Houston, Texas, Alley Theatre is a pioneer of regional theatre and one of the leading nonprofit theatre companies in the United States. It reaches almost 200,000 people each year through delivering world class theater performances on its two stages and through its robust education programs and community engagement work. The Alley has been awarded the prestigious Regional Theatre Tony Award® and the Texas Medal of Arts Award. The Alley has transferred productions to Broadway, Off-Broadway, major European Festivals, and to 40 American cities.

Unique among regional theatres, the Alley is committed to maintaining a Resident Acting Company and providing them with work year-round. Nationally recognized directors, actors, playwrights, and designers from across the country have regularly joined the Resident Acting Company to create productions. The Alley operates on a $24 million annual budget and has $138 million in net assets. The 2026/2027 season marks the Alley's 80th year.

Led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Jennifer Bielstein, the Alley focuses on delivering excellent programming to inspire and enchant lives through theater and prioritizes creating a welcoming environment for all.

For more information, see https://www.alleytheatre.org/.

Position Summary

The Chief Human Resources Officer serves as a key member of the leadership team, providing strategic leadership across all human resources functions. This role is responsible for ensuring full compliance with federal and state employment laws and for cultivating a welcoming, inclusive, and high-performing organizational culture. Areas of responsibility include talent acquisition and retention, compensation and benefits, payroll, compliance, employee relations, performance management, safety, and organizational culture and wellness initiatives.

Key Responsibilities

Employment & Talent Management

- Oversee the full employee lifecycle including recruitment, onboarding, performance management, and offboarding.
- Manage hiring processes; provide guidance and resources to hiring supervisors; lead equitable, structured search processes designed to attract and retain a diverse workforce.
- Develop and update job descriptions in partnership with department leaders.
- Plan and conduct new employee orientation covering role expectations, policies, and benefits enrollment.
- Prepare separation documentation, conduct exit interviews, and administer COBRA and other post-employment benefits.

Payroll, Compensation & Benefits

- Oversee and process bi-weekly payroll; ensure wage and hour compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Maintain payroll records and administer changes including compensation adjustments, exemptions, deductions, job classifications, and departmental transfers.
- Partner with the Managing Director and department heads on compensation strategy and market-aligned pay decisions.
- Collaborate with the Managing Director, General Manager, and Chief Financial Officer to develop and renew employee benefit programs.
- Ensure ongoing compliance with ERISA, HIPAA, COBRA, and other health and welfare plan regulations; serve as the primary liaison with benefit brokers and vendors.

Compliance, Policy & Records

- Identify legal requirements and government regulations affecting HR functions; ensure all policies, procedures, and reporting are in compliance.
- Develop, update, and distribute the employee handbook and all HR policies; respond to policy interpretation inquiries; maintain current labor law postings.
- Prepare and submit required reports including OSHA logs, DOL filings, and other government agency requests.
- Maintain complete and compliant employee files and department records.
- Administer all leaves of absence including FMLA, ADA accommodations, and short- and long-term disability.

Organizational Culture & Wellness

- Partner with the Managing Director, Artistic Director, and senior leadership to develop and implement organizational culture and wellness initiatives.
- Facilitate all-staff meetings, trainings, and organization-wide culture initiatives.
- Monitor organizational climate and advance strategies that reinforce a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace for all employees.
- Design and deliver employee engagement events, recognition programs, and workplace culture initiatives; oversee the Employee Engagement and Community Involvement working committees.
- Develop systems and communications that establish clear norms, expectations, and accountability aligned with the Alley's values.

Training, Employee Relations & Safety

- Coordinate the annual performance review process; coach and support supervisors in delivering effective appraisals.
- Conduct impartial internal investigations; develop action plans, manage follow-up, and engage legal counsel as appropriate.
- Advise leadership on employee relations matters, conflict resolution, and appropriate corrective action; serve as the primary HR contact with employment legal counsel.
- Provide ongoing coaching, training, and guidance to managers and staff; assist supervisors in monitoring performance across staff, interns, and volunteers.
- Oversee the Safety Committee; implement and maintain compliant health and safety programs in partnership with department managers.
- Coordinate with insurance carriers, healthcare providers, and workers' compensation administrators to manage workplace injuries and ensure timely resolution.

In addition to the duties listed above, the Alley Theatre expects the following of each employee: adheres to theatre’s policies and procedures; works in a safe manner; performs duties as workload necessitates;

maintains a positive and respectful attitude; communicates regularly with supervisor about department issues; demonstrates efficient time management and prioritizes workload; demonstrates regular and consistent attendance and punctuality; meets department productivity standards; participates in Alley Theatre events as needed or required; and completes other duties as assigned.

Core Competencies

- Strategic leadership and executive-level collaboration.
- Project management: ability to manage competing priorities, timelines, and resources effectively.
- Confidentiality: rigorous maintenance of employee and organizational information security.
- Policy development, interpretation, and implementation.
- Data-driven decision-making and analytical problem-solving.
- Composure and sound judgment in high-stakes or sensitive situations.

Minimum Qualifications

- Ten or more years of progressive HR experience, including managerial-level responsibility, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Comprehensive knowledge of federal and state employment law (FLSA, FMLA, ADA, ERISA, HIPAA, COBRA, OSHA, Title VII, and related regulations).
- Demonstrated ability to develop and administer compensation, benefits, and performance management programs.
- Proven skills in employee relations, conflict resolution, and conducting internal investigations.

Physical Requirements / Working Conditions

- Full-time, exempt, in-office position based at Alley Theatre in Downtown Houston.
- Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk and working on a computer.
- Ability to lift and move 25 lbs.
- Must be comfortable working in a fast-paced environment where directions and priorities can change rapidly.
- Typical hours are during the day, but the position requires flexibility to be available for weekends, holidays and evening work hours as needed for performances, programs, donor stewardship, and special events.

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience. Generous benefit package, including;

- Medical, dental and vision insurance
- Paid vacation, floating holiday and sick time
- 401(k) with matching
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) (Alley paid deductible)
- Free and discounted tickets to Alley Theatre performances
- Discounted parking ($4 Bi-weekly)
- Discounted gym membership
- Employee wellness program and Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefits
- Houston, TX is one of the most affordable cities in the nation with no state or city income tax.

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 Priscilla Plumb at priscilla@sorrellco.com / 281.224.0881 or Stacie Gaff at stacie@sorrellco.com / 832.594.1925. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

Alley Theatre is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and disabled veterans in its job application procedures. If you need assistance or an accommodation due to a disability, you may contact hrdept@alleytheatre.org.

Alley Theatre is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable local, state, or federal law. We encourage people of all backgrounds to apply.

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.