



## PAINTER EXECUTIVE SEARCH

---

### **Creativity Explored Executive Director Position Description**

***Painter Executive Search is supporting Creativity Explored in their search for an Executive Director to lead the organization in advancing its mission to provide artists with developmental disabilities the means to create, exhibit, and sell their art and to celebrate the power of art to change lives.***

Creativity Explored, headquartered in San Francisco's vibrant Mission District, has been providing artists with developmental disabilities the opportunity to become working artists and earn income from their art since 1983. Creativity Explored (CE) is a welcoming, inspiring, and lively place where artists and art lovers meet and share their appreciation of art. Through the years, CE has grown into a robust community that supports approximately 130 artists working in two group studios. CE's studio artists have the opportunity to exhibit and sell their work in CE's Mission Street gallery, through the CE website, and in art fairs, galleries, and venues around the world, as well as license art with national retailers.

Creativity Explored is grounded in the principle that all people possess the ability to create, and that visual artistic expression is a viable means to self-growth. Supporting CE artists in their personal artistic growth and shepherding their acclaim in the contemporary art world disrupts pervasive notions about people with disabilities. Through their art practices, CE artists are identified by what they can do, not what they cannot. Through supporting these individuals as they develop their own creative voice and style and by celebrating their creative work in the public sphere, CE allows the art to stand on its own and to influence a broad social dialogue.

Building on more than three decades of thoughtful growth, fiscal stewardship, and trailblazing service, CE is well-positioned, not only to impact the lives of artists working in their studios, but also to integrate studio artists more actively into the Bay Area arts community and advance the arts and disability field worldwide. CE has recently developed a strategic plan that reflects commitment to the people they serve, the community where they operate, and the field of art and disability. The execution of this strategic plan and the day-to-day leadership of CE requires creative responses to expanding and strengthening current revenue models while retaining the organization's ability to tailor programs to meet the diverse needs of their artists and that joyfully explore each artist's path to fully expressing their unique artistic vision.

CE employs a staff of 30, including 12 management, administrative and support staff, and a teaching staff of 18 professional artists. CE's annual budget is approximately \$2.4 million and the organization has a healthy reserve of approximately \$700,000. CE receives approximately 70% of its funding annually through fee-for-service contracts with the California Department of Developmental Services via the Golden Gate Regional Center. CE also relies upon support from individuals, businesses, and foundations, and it generates earned income from the sale of art and related products and services, including licensing art for reproduction. The Board of 19 Directors have diverse skills and insights, including museum management, marketing, legal, finance, design, and fundraising experience. Together with an exceptionally talented and dedicated staff and Board, the ED is responsible for ensuring the organization remains a leader in the field of art and disability and for cultivating an

environment of respect that allows each CE studio artist the opportunity to express their personal creative passion.

## **POSITION SUMMARY**

The Executive Director (ED), reporting to the Board of Directors, will have overall responsibility for leading all aspects of CE's organizational effectiveness, health and sustainability. The ED has a key role in stewarding and advancing an internal culture that nurtures and celebrates individual creativity - a place where artists with developmental disabilities can thrive, create and be recognized through their work. Working in close collaboration with an experienced staff of teaching artists, the ED facilitates a culture of learning, inclusion, respect, and joyful chaos. Working together with staff, the ED will oversee programs that are designed, executed, and evaluated to confirm that they serve the community of CE artists and comply with all legal standards and regulations. In collaboration with administrative staff, the ED will ensure the organization is managed with sound fiscal practices that orient resources to produce desired outcomes. With the Board, staff and volunteers, the ED will build sustainable funding, growing both contributed and earned income and awareness of CE and its mission.

The ED has the responsibility to maintain CE's critical relationship with the Golden Gate Regional Center. While ensuring that CE's programs comply with changing mandates, it is also expected that the organization continue as a thought leader in the developmental disabilities community, and work to forge new ways to increase inclusion of their artists in the greater arts community. A successful leader will have a deep commitment to people with development disabilities and a passion for supporting those individuals in the exploration of their creative practice.

Additionally, the ED will need to be effective and creative in diversifying revenue. The ED will lead the programmatic efforts to ensure appropriate utilization of the government funds available to support CE's artists. The ED will lead the efforts to expand earned income through art licensing and sales, and actively build a more robust contributed income program that includes increased foundation, major gift and planned giving programs. Increasing CE's profile regionally, nationally, and internationally through the promotion of studios artists' work will be an important vehicle for ensuring the mission of CE is sustained over time.

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

Currently, approximately 130 adults with developmental disabilities ranging in age from 22 to 81 create art at Creativity Explored every year. Utilizing two San Francisco studios, the headquarters location on 16th Street in the Mission District and a second site in Potrero Hill, CE's studio artists create art every weekday in a wide variety of media ranging from pencil and paint to ceramics and computer animation. Professional artists/instructors assist studio artists as they pursue a meaningful art practice through experimentation and collaboration. Visiting artists work side by side, sharing their practice and enhancing CE's studio artists' exposure to new ideas and techniques. Studio artists are identified as learning, emerging or established artists and levels of support and staff/artist ratio are based on the needs of each individual. Through this rich engagement, studio artists become part of an artist community. Their lives are transformed as they develop an artistic voice and begin to identify themselves as artists. Sales and exhibitions of artists' work reinforce their personal growth and professional esteem. In expressing their thoughts, emotions, experiences, and cultures to their peers, instructors, patrons, and art lovers, studio artists engage not just a supportive community, but the world outside the studio through their art. By developing a meaningful art practice and creating a body of work, studio artists

acquire an expanded sense of self, realizing their potentials, amplifying their voices, and more fully establishing themselves in the world.

Creativity Explored has several programs to engage studio artists and develop their exposure and interest in various media. These include:

#### *Studio Arts Program*

Creativity Explored provides CE artists workspace, instruction, materials, and opportunities to explore art making five days a week through daytime programs. CE artists select the media, technique, and subject matter, and trained professional artists assist them in exploring the creative process and developing an art practice. Guest artists teach six- to twelve-week workshops to give studio artists opportunities to experiment with a wide variety of media and learn new techniques, and local artists complete three-month residencies in the studios.

#### *Community Arts Education Program*

Creativity Explored provides CE artists with opportunities to visit Bay Area museums, galleries, and local artists' studios. Groups of four CE artists are accompanied by an art instructor to experience and participate in the Bay Area arts community.

#### *Exhibitions Program*

Creativity Explored professionally exhibits and promotes artwork created by the studio artists. Exhibition venues include the on-site gallery and studio, as well as other galleries and museums throughout the world. CE's gallery, now visited by 15,000 people annually, provides the public opportunities to interact with CE artists, and to view and purchase art. As customary in art gallery practices, fifty percent of the sale of each artwork goes directly to the artist. CE also partners with a wide variety of businesses on mutually beneficial collaborative projects including art licensing for consumer products and art services. These important activities create additional exposure for artists' work as well as revenue.

### **History**

Creativity Explored was founded in 1983 by Bay Area artist and educator Florence Ludins-Katz and her husband, psychologist Dr. Elias Katz. Creativity Explored was one of three Bay Area art centers founded by the Katzes between 1973 and 1983, along with Creative Growth in Oakland and NIAD in Richmond. All three organizations are still thriving, and their work has dramatically changed attitudes towards art created by artists with developmental disabilities.

In recent decades, public policies and perceptions affecting people with disabilities have shifted dramatically. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, discrimination against individuals with disabilities was legally prohibited in all areas of public life. The purpose of the law was to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities and rights as everyone else. In 1999, the Supreme Court ruled that unjustified segregation of individuals with developmental disabilities constitutes discrimination and violates Title II of the ADA. In the years since that decision, the goal of the integration mandate – to provide individuals with disabilities opportunities to live their lives like people without disabilities – has yet to be fully realized. In November 2016, the US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division released guidelines stating that the integration mandate of the ADA applies broadly and the civil rights of people with disabilities are violated by unnecessary segregation in a wide variety of settings, including employment, vocational, and day programs.

Although CE offers its studio artists' off-site educational opportunities and ways to participate in the Bay Area arts community, the newly adopted strategic plan further outlines expanded opportunities for CE artists to work in integrated studio spaces. Artists traditionally create work in isolation, and CE has offered a supportive studio environment for people who often experience isolation and marginalization to come together with other artists in a communal, shared space. In light of these new guidelines requiring full-integration, CE will expand options for studio artists to work in community spaces and with other local artists in San Francisco including:

- Integrating workspaces for CE artists in communities of artists without disabilities;
- Supporting CE artists to take public classes throughout San Francisco; and
- Supporting CE artists to take workshops offered in private studios in the Bay Area.

Supporting artists with developmental disabilities in fully integrated, small community settings is relatively new and it is, in effect, uncharted territory. In the next two years, these pilot programs will help identify the range of supports required for CE artists to work successfully in these settings, ensure that programs are effective for the other artists in these settings, and explore further opportunities for collaboration.

In addition to changes at the federal level, public perception of art by artists with developmental disabilities has also shifted. Their work is no longer categorized solely as "outsider art," rather, it is beginning to be regarded as a significant and sophisticated contribution to contemporary arts and culture. Art by artists with disabilities is already included in the permanent collections of prestigious museums, including the Berkeley Art Museum, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art.

In addition to exhibitions in CE's Mission Street gallery, CE's studio artists have reached wide audiences over the years, exhibiting nationally and internationally. In the past five years, artists have shown their work at venues such as:

- Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) (The *Create* exhibition toured the US after opening at BAM/PFA.)
- Musée de la Creation Granche, Bègles, France
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit, MI
- Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA), San Francisco, CA
- Outsider Art Fair, New York
- The Good Luck Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- Fleisher/Ollman, Philadelphia, PA
- Direct Art Gallery, Düsseldorf, Germany
- MADmusée, Liège, Belgium
- Art Market San Francisco, San Francisco, CA
- art museum VERSI in Yongin-si, Gyeonggi-do, Korea
- 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan
- SFO Museum, San Francisco International Airport, San Francisco, CA

## **Staffing and Operations**

CE operates primarily in two leased facilities. CE1, the headquarters includes the both office and studio space and the storefront gallery. CE2, the second studio in Potrero Hill, accommodates those artists who use wheelchairs and/or need more physical assistance. Both studios are managed by a fulltime Studio Manager who, in addition to teaching, coordinate the teaching artist schedules and oversee the operations of the facility and

interface with case workers. CE1 is home to the majority of staff including the Gallery Manager, Development Director, the Art & Exhibition Preparator, as well as the Marketing and Business Development Director who is responsible for all the earned revenue programs including art licensing and services. Many of the teaching artists work in both facilities and have been with the organization for over 20 years creating a family like atmosphere. Additionally, one of the senior teaching artists manages CE1's functions as a service coordinator with families, other service providers and the GGRC. The current facilities are at nearly maximum utilization and that limits both growth of the programs and staffing. The ED's office, as well as other administrative space is shared and utilized for multiple purposes.

## **Challenges**

Today, CE faces great opportunity and increased uncertainty. Understanding of and approaches to serving adults with disabilities continue to evolve. New mandates have challenged established programming and significant changes are required to ensure the government funding that is critical to the current funding model. Uncertainty of funding changes at the federal level may also create new, unknown challenges. In addition to the developmental disabilities field and funding changes, the landscape in which CE operates is also changing. Although San Francisco is home to a robust arts community that presents significant opportunities to collaborate and share resources, rising costs, particularly in real estate and compensation, increase financial pressure on CE. Looking forward, CE will be looking to address long-term facilities needs and continue to develop diversification in revenue sources in order to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Leadership**

- Provide vision and leadership to the Board and staff;
- Ensure that CE continues to foster an environment that ensures the fullest exploration of creative expression for artists with developmental disabilities;
- Work together with the Board and staff in the adaptation and implementation of the strategic plan increasing CE's long-term sustainability;
- Actively engage with the Golden Gate Regional Center, seeking to ensure the most advantageous funding opportunities are clearly understood and established;
- Be an effective and visible advocate for CE and for those it serves; represent CE to key partners and expand relationships with those in a position to support CE's mission, impact and operations;
- Participate in advocacy efforts in support of the rights of people with developmental disabilities and funding;
- Be visible and active participant in the arts community; develop opportunities for expanded partnerships, curation and visibility for CE, studio artists and educators;
- Work closely with the Board to ensure the development of strong Board governance, establish clear lines of communication and organizational transparency; provide well-defined opportunities for committee and staff engagement;
- Assist the Board in the recruitment, selection and evaluation of board members and actively inform and engage the Board in issues of importance to the operations and strategy of the organization.

## **Operational and Staff Management**

- Recruit, nurture and challenge a highly-qualified and motivated professional staff; delegate specific responsibilities with appropriate authority and establish accountability; foster open communications;
- Lead ongoing development and improvement of organizational policies and practices—including stewarding the pilot program changes outlined in the strategic plan;
- Engage the staff in organization-wide projects such the annual gala, exhibitions and program events, annual reporting;
- Working closely with the staff, prepare and present the annual budget to the Board for approval, oversee regular variance updates;
- Report to the Board of Directors regularly on key information including the financial health of the organization, specific updates on fundraising progress, financial results relative to budget, liquidity, and cash flow. Provide additional reporting as required to keep the Board appropriately informed of any significant change in financial or operational status; ensure organizational risks are well known and managed effectively;
- Maintain and advance relationships with the Golden Gate Regional Center to ensure a smooth, collaborative relationship, as well as compliance with all program and funding and reporting requirements;
- Oversee philanthropic grant administration and ensure compliance with all policies, legal and contractual obligations.

## **Fundraising and Partnership Development**

- Be the chief advocate and external face of CE;
- Effectively represent the organization to the public, to the diverse provider community within the developmental disabilities service arena, to partners and colleagues in the art and gallery world, and to current donors and prospective supporters;
- Actively develop diversification of income for CE particularly by building deeper individual and foundation support for its work, increase opportunities to partner with businesses on licensing and art services projects;
- Actively engage in the Bay Area Arts community and beyond (including museums, galleries, collectors, educational institutions, studios, curators, artist and others) in order to establish new opportunities for exhibitions, exposure and collaboration in alignment with CE's strategic plan;
- Ensure that the Board is supported in its fundraising efforts, facilitate and train the Board in fundraising and advocacy on behalf of the organization, and allocate appropriate staff time to sustain these efforts;
- Strategically raise the visibility and reputation of CE's programs and artists regionally, nationally and internationally;
- Actively reach out to a wide range of constituents, including philanthropic decision-makers, advisors, partners, consultants, and individuals to develop their support for the mission of CE;
- Assist in the preparation of grant and contract proposal budgets and reports, as appropriate.

## **EXPERIENCE**

A successful ED candidate will likely have:

- Significant experience within a nonprofit organization experiencing growth and change including skills in Board development, governance and engagement, as well as experience within the developmental disabilities community and/or significant arts management experience;
- Demonstrated leadership and evidence of a management style that encourages creativity, collaboration, transparency and egalitarian decision-making;
- Past success in diversifying funding sources including individual donors, foundations and corporation support, as well as skillful development of earned income streams;
- Experience and interest in engaging the arts community and supporters of the arts in order to develop further opportunities to partner programmatically, develop exhibitions, showcase programs, art or artists and generally further the mission of CE;
- Strong financial and organizational management skills; a track record of managing a lean budget and strengthening organizations operationally and financially;
- A history of strong collaboration; someone who actively seeks strategic partnerships and develops effective relationships;
- Experience as the face of an organization; well-developed interpersonal skills; approachable with excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Experience fostering a creative culture where individual contributions are celebrated and respected and freedom of expression is encouraged;
- Ability to work well under pressure and in tight quarters; adapts easily to changing situations and priorities and exercises excellent judgment;
- A strong commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and openness.

#### **ATTRIBUTES**

- A passion for expanding opportunities for artists with developmental disabilities grounded in a deep respect for their creative capacity and regard for their unique needs;
- A team builder with both vision and strong management skills; one who can motivate toward shared goals while establishing accountability and shared success;
- Emotionally mature with a good sense of humor, someone who is both open to learning and willing to take responsibility;
- Extremely proactive approach to work; solutions-oriented with attention to detail;
- Inspires trust, creativity and cohesiveness;
- A hard worker; a 'doer' with a willingness to work hands-on with a high-energy level;
- Resourceful—able to set priorities and respond to challenges creatively;
- Exercises the highest ethical standards.

***Creativity Explored operates facilities licensed by the State of California. California Care Licensing (CCL) mandates the following: record of criminal history obtained from California Department of Justice, i.e., clearance to work in a licensed facility; record of health screening including negative TB test results, and current First Aid and CPR certification.***

**For additional details or to submit your resume and cover letter for review, please contact;**

**Nancy Painter**

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

**(415) 202- 6240**