

Baltimore Office of Promotion & the Arts (BOPA) Chief Executive Officer

Partnering with the Board of Directors, Mayor and City Council, the CEO and the BOPA Team will attract support for Baltimore City's diverse arts and artists and produce cultural and community events, in the process advancing Baltimore as a regional center of America's creative economy.

Baltimore Office of Promotion & the Arts ([BOPA](#)) is a 501c3 nonprofit that supports arts and culture for the benefit of Baltimore residents and visitors, by connecting artists, arts nonprofits and creative businesses to the resources they need to thrive. BOPA promotes Baltimore as a destination for creativity and culture, produces cultural events in partnership with City of Baltimore and State of Maryland government entities, and advocates for and uplifts Baltimore's creative community by providing funding and other support to artists, arts programs and arts nonprofits.

The purpose of BOPA is to bring arts institutions, artists, government, and the community together to celebrate the people and places of Baltimore. BOPA is a guiding force for the arts and for the City of Baltimore – helping both thrive creatively. BOPA's mission is to amplify Baltimore by creating pathways for engagement with the arts and support equitable growth of its diverse cultural community. BOPA's strategic priorities are to:

- Clarify BOPA's focus
- Capitalize on BOPA's strengths
- Sustain the commitment to DEIA
- Contribute to fiscal sustainability
- Enhance collaboration (internal, external)
- Drive trust/support (city/state, arts community)

Major marketing initiatives: **promote Baltimore** as a creative hub for the film and other creative industries, **attract tourists** to Baltimore museums, performances, galleries, public spaces and events, and **engage businesses** that employ professionals in the creative space. Specific programs include:

ARTS COUNCIL – For more than 30 years BOPA has served as the arts council for Baltimore City supporting artists, creatives, cultural institutions, and Baltimore City residents by providing grant funding and guidance, best practices, and direct commissions on behalf of the City of Baltimore. The Arts Council also helps artists and community stakeholders create art in Baltimore City and staffs the Baltimore City Public Art Commission. In the fiscal year 2022, BOPA awarded more than \$700,000 to individual artists and organizations.

FILM OFFICE – Between 2011 and 2022 the projected economic impact related to the work done by the Baltimore Film Office is estimated at over \$1 Billion. The Film Office also acts as a mentor and support to film students from Morgan State University, MICA/Hopkins, Towson University, Stevenson University, UMBC and the Baltimore School for the Arts as well as local film organizations.

HISTORIC FACILITIES – BOPA manages several destination venues used by tourists and residents. Venues include the Baltimore City owned Top of the World Observation Level, the

Studio 33 Art Center, and the Cloisters Castle along with the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower which is co-owned by BOPA and the City of Baltimore.

LIVE EVENTS – BOPA plans, produces, manages and stages a number of recurring events in partnership with the City of Baltimore and community groups, which are estimated to have a beneficial impact of \$182m on the region’s economy each year. Events include:

- **Artscape**, America’s largest free arts festival, is held over three days and attracts art lovers, families and tourists who come together to celebrate the arts in Baltimore by showcasing artists, live concerts, visual arts experiences, performing arts, fashion designers, kid-focused activities, films, experimental music, improv and comedy, literary arts programming and culinary delights.
- **The Book Festival** features hundreds of appearances by local, celebrity and nationally known authors, book signings, nonstop readings on multiple stages, cooking demos by top chefs, etc.
- **Baltimore Farmer’s Market and Bazaar**, a community gathering place where Baltimoreans can connect, shop for fresh produce, and support local businesses, organizations, and performers.
- **Light City**, a free festival of light, music and innovation.
- **The Martin Luther King Day Parade**, an annual celebration of Dr. King and a reminder that the struggle for civil rights and true equality continues.

BOPA is also responsible for orchestrating or assisting with any number of other periodic large-scale city events, which have included 2014’s Star-Spangled Spectacular, the NFL Kick-Off in 2013, the Star-Spangled Sailabration in 2012, and Super Bowl Victory Parades for the Baltimore Ravens. With oversight by an eight member Board of Directors, BOPA has a staff of 30 and an annual budget of approximately \$5 million.

BASIC FUNCTION

The next Chief Executive Officer of BOPA will:

- Report to a Board of Directors and partner with the Board, staff, the Mayor of the City of Baltimore and City Council, and arts and culture partners to realign the strategic direction and focus of the nonprofit to better serve its mandate as a quasi-city agency, promote Baltimore’s artistic and cultural diversity, and fulfill its mandate to the diverse stakeholder groups it serves;
- Work with the Board of Directors and leaders of the City of Baltimore to develop a vision and strategic plan for BOPA’s next chapter that grows partnerships and cultivates relationships in order to amplify resources, improve communications and build trust;
- Prioritize a strong focus on diversity and equity and put local creatives at the center of its work to drive vitality in Baltimore’s neighborhoods through accessibility to arts;
- Help rebuild BOPA internally as a high-functioning organization, committed to financial and cultural accountability and able to realize its mission and meet its obligations to its many partners and constituencies.

The CEO of BOPA serves on the Mayor's cabinet and ensures BOPA's programs are aligned with the Mayor's initiatives. Acting as a liaison to major municipal arts and cultural organizations the CEO represents BOPA and the City at local, regional, national and international promotions and at all major events produced in the City. The CEO will be a highly visible face of the organization. S/he/they will represent BOPA in the broader arts, government and civic communities and to residents and visitors throughout the City and will lead BOPA's fundraising efforts. The CEO will have operational responsibility for BOPA's programs, advocacy efforts, fundraising, events, finances and staff.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The next CEO will:

- Understand the uniqueness and diversity of Baltimore and serve as a primary advocate-leader of the arts and culture community, enhancing BOPA's mission with a keen understanding of the importance of cultivating sustained partnerships with local artists, arts organizations and arts patrons, as well as businesses and non-arts organizations;
- Be a strategic thinker, visionary leader, possess an entrepreneurial spirit and demonstrate tactical acumen to advance BOPA in a complex and dynamic community; feel comfortable interacting in an urban environment, be able to communicate effectively with politically sensitive and sometime fractious constituencies, and possess a strong commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and inclusive thinking;
- Demonstrate that BOPA is a trusted and collaborative partner with the Mayor, City Council, government officials, funders, influencers, community leaders, creative economy leaders and the BOPA Board;
- Understand how to create, coordinate, and market events, and galvanize among Baltimoreans a sense of uplifting pride for their City;
- Raise money through earned and contributed revenue streams and personally cultivate, solicit, and steward donor and funder relationships among foundation, government, corporate, and individual donor communities;
- Possess strong financial experience and accountability; negotiate contracts with vendors and talent (assuring compliance to terms), establish performance metrics, manage and maintain facilities, and ensure effective financial controls.
- Develop a strategy to maximize the use of BOPA facilities balancing the need to support BOPA's mission while exploring revenue generating opportunities.

CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE and CHARACTERISTICS

Candidates should have the following experiences and qualifications:

- Significant management and leadership responsibility in creative economy nonprofits, businesses, foundations or government entities that advance artists, arts organizations, creative and cultural initiatives and economic development programs, policies or investments at a community, state or national level;

- A demonstrable history of integrating values of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and inclusive approaches within organizations and programs; a skilled leader with a track record of success in managing teams and shaping a highly-productive and accountable organizational culture that delivers outcomes valued by communities;
- Practical experience producing events and marketing and raising the public profile of creative industries and connecting art and its creators to the economic development of the region; demonstrated track record of shaping events and galvanizing diverse partners in support of programs, performances, exhibitions, economic development, citizen involvement, neighborhood & regional development, festivals, happenings and other initiatives at the intersection of art, culture, the economy and civic life;
- Proven ability to work successfully with donors, community leaders, artists, curators, educators, political and business leaders and boards to develop a unified plan to strengthen Baltimore City's profile as a vibrant creative hub;
- Experience engaging with the management and/or development of art-centric real estate including galleries, performance spaces, artists studios, etc.;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills, including the means to address issues in non-confrontational and non-polarizing ways, but nevertheless with determination and cultural sensitivity; a track record as an effective communicator with diverse groups and media channels;
- A good listener and strategist; comfortable receiving input from many sources, and able to synthesize information into a sound, well-organized plan; intrepid yet tactful; determined yet respectful of others' concerns; someone with the flexibility and creativity needed to find alternative ways to reach objectives when barriers arise; a skilled negotiator who does not drive themselves or others into a corner;
- A team builder – confident and competent, with strong skills in management and leadership; one who understands the subtleties of motivating and directing a diverse group of personalities with different work styles.

COMPENSATION and BENEFITS

Salary Range: \$175,000 - \$200,000 annually

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