



ALFORD GROUP EXECUTIVE SEARCH | Strengthening not-for-profits

1603 Orrington Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201-3841

847 425 4112
847 425 4114 (fax)
www.ag-es.com



**Executive Director
Opportunity Guide**

www.urbangateways.org

Mission

Urban Gateways' mission is to ignite the full creative potential of all young people. We accomplish that mission by promoting and fostering learning in and through the arts within the Chicago metropolitan area.

Urban Gateways is one of the largest and most comprehensive arts education organizations in the country, providing in and out of school arts programming to more than 85,000 children in the metropolitan Chicago area. The organization has its roots in the civil rights movement and was founded in 1961 by a group of individuals who wanted to address the lack of artistic exposure in Chicago-area schools, particularly those in the inner-city. The original founders believed in arts education as a mechanism for social change, and thus, focused their efforts on providing neighborhood schools with free tickets to attend local arts productions.

Now over 50 years later, Urban Gateways has continued to grow and expand its reach to include programming in the literary, performing, media and visual arts that range from one time exposure to full immersion "Arts-Wired Schools." Programs include artist-in-residence programs, touring and matinee performances, professional development education for teachers and administrators, and family/community workshops. As Urban Gateways grows in size, influence, and impact, its core tenets remain at the forefront of everything they do, including beliefs in equitable access to the arts and the value of artists as educators, and a need for diversity and collaboration in arts education.

Urban Gateways is governed by a thirty-five member Board of Directors, plus two honorary directors, who are fully committed to supporting the work of Urban Gateways. In the last three years, a successful effort occurred to strengthen and grow the board, with careful attention paid to fundraising interest, professional expertise, ethnic diversity, and prior experience in nonprofit board and management. In 2009, the board engaged in a professionally facilitated strategic planning effort to affirm and refine the work of Urban Gateways, in an effort to meet the changing needs of those they serve, particularly in light of the changes in Chicago Public Schools and local community-arts leadership. The plan is being implemented methodically at this time.

Urban Gateways just closed its fiscal year (8/31/2011) with revenues in excess of \$2.6 million. The upcoming fiscal year projects a budget of \$2.2 million. Revenue comes from a variety of funding sources with the primary two areas being philanthropy and program income. There are eighteen staff members on the team, as well as artists and interns. The Executive Director has five direct reports: Director of Finance & Operations, Director of Development, Director of Education, Director of Community Partnerships, and an Executive Assistant.

The Opportunity: Executive Director

The Executive Director, while retaining significant internal responsibilities, is expected to become active externally as the face of the organization. The Board desires a leader who will take the organization from its current position, build stability with funding organizations during these turbulent economic times, and lead further growth with a specific focus on implementing the strategic plan and reaffirming the mission of Urban Gateways.

The Executive Director role at Urban Gateways will provide an experienced and successful leader with the opportunity to oversee a well-regarded, dynamic, arts education organization that is making a substantial societal impact in Chicago and setting the model for arts education organizations nation-wide. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will oversee all aspects of the organization, including vision-setting and strategic planning, fund development, staff management, finances, programs and relationship management with key stakeholders. The selection process will focus on past leadership success in complex organizations and a demonstrated passion for, and full commitment to, furthering the mission of Urban Gateways.

Primary Performance Objectives

Leadership

- Provide visionary leadership in the formulation and successful execution of Urban Gateways goals and strategies in order to best position Urban Gateways to continue to fulfill its mission in the changing city and educational environments.
 - Develop and implement measurable objectives, strategies, budgets, funding strategies and timelines.



- Appreciate and cultivate an understanding of the arts-education focused mission while viewing organizational decision-making and change management through the lens of this mission, history, and past accomplishments.
- Ensure the team (Board and Staff) are abreast of current patterns and trends in the arts-education field to inform decisions, funding, and positioning for the future.
- Provide collaborative leadership in maintaining a positive and productive working relationship among the Board of Directors, Urban Gateways staff, volunteers, and community partners.
- Lead, develop, motivate, supervise and maintain a highly effective, productive and cohesive staff with both professional (artistic) and operational expertise.

Fund Development

- Engage leadership in the development of an aggressive, but feasible, fundraising goal that challenges and motivates staff and donors in order to grow the scope of the organization in the future.
- Develop a stronger individual and major gift plan to engage, cultivate and solicit prospective major donors, which will support nearly all of Urban Gateways' operations.
- Identify and cultivate major prospective donors and maintain positive relations with current and past contributors of significant gifts, serving as the chief external fundraiser.
- Lead efforts to analyze fundraising performance and return on investment and develop and implement efforts to strengthen returns and manage expenses.
- Nurture and expand the donor base as a foundation for greater unrestricted support.

Board Relations and Community Outreach

- Partner with and support the Board in its leadership role as they work to implement the strategic plan
- Regularly provide the Board with thoughtful analysis of the Agency's performance and engage it in discussion around critical issues and scenarios.
- Ensure that programs are mission driven and in line with organizational goals.
- Serve as the primary ambassador of Urban Gateways and its mission to the public, including funders, community partners, city and Chicago Public Schools/Chicago Board of Education officials.
- Develop and maintain excellent relations with private foundations, local corporations, and philanthropic individuals throughout the community.

Financial and Organizational Management

- Coordinate and oversee operations and management of the whole organization.
- Maintain consistent reporting and oversight on the organization's overall financial position and responsibility. This includes: accurate sales and fundraising projections



budget development, monitoring and modification (as needed) throughout the fiscal year

- Ensure that accurate and timely financial records and documents are maintained and are in compliance with all federal, state and local laws providing for a timely response to all inquires for information.
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and efficient use of all organizational resources.
- Oversee human resource and administration activities for the organization including, staff hiring, training and development; salary, benefits, and recognition programs, disciplinary and/or dismissal actions. Review and approve personnel recommendations from direct reports.

The Qualified Candidate

Urban Gateways seeks a high energy, mission-driven executive with strong relationship, communications and organizational skills. He or she will have a proven and measurable history of success with strategic planning, fundraising, and staff management and motivation. The successful candidate will be a goal-oriented, accomplished leader who is passionate about and committed to the arts and arts education.

Specific requirements include:

- A demonstrated commitment to and passion for Urban Gateways mission and guiding principles.
- Proven ability to build strong external relationships with a variety of donors, volunteers, public leadership, partner organizations and other stakeholders.
- Experience in nonprofit management with a strong external focus preferred (while ensuring smooth internal operations).
- A track record of providing leadership to fundraising programs and building diverse streams of private income.
- Proven success in building strong and productive work teams with a focus on mentoring and nurturing staff development.
- Strong analytic and strategic-thinking skills, with demonstrated ability to create, implement and monitor complex plans, and translate those plans into goals and concrete strategies.
- Career track record that shows stability with an organization and capacity to develop and nurture relationships culminating in overall success.
- Unquestionable moral ethics and integrity.
- A Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree desired; experience in the arts/arts education preferred.
- A minimum of 7-10 years of progressive experience in leadership and management, with documented ability to manage staff and lead teams.



This position offers a competitive salary with strong benefits. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

Urban Gateways is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other occupationally irrelevant criteria. The organization values diversity and believes that a diverse staff with diverse talents allows us to achieve organizational, strategic and community goals.

To Apply

The search is being managed by Heather A. Eddy, CFRE, President and COO of Alford Group Executive Search. To apply, candidates should submit their cover letter and resume and complete the online application at <http://ag-es.kintera.org/applicant>. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence. **No applications will be accepted via email.** Questions may be addressed to Kelly Clarke at kclarke@alford.com.

Alford Group Executive Search (www.ag-es.com) is a retained search firm dedicated to providing recruitment services of exceptional quality and strengthening the not-for-profit community through professional staffing solutions.

