

About Stages

Stages was founded in 1978 and has grown to become one of Houston's largest nonprofit performing arts organizations and the largest outside the downtown theater district, offering an average of 12 productions each season to more than 75,000 visitors. Artistic Director Kenn McLaughlin joined the company in 2001, serving as Managing Director for five years before becoming the theater's longest-tenured artistic leader.

As part of a five-year strategic plan adopted during the 2015-2016 season, Stages nearly tripled its operating budget, tripled its subscriber base, increased overall attendance by 50 percent, and completed a \$35.4 million capital campaign to build its game-changing new facility, The Gordy.

Opened in January of 2020, The Gordy is a 66,850-square-foot performing arts campus unlike any in the region. The Gordy includes the 251-seat thrust Sterling Stage, the 223-seat theater-in-the-round Lester and Sue Smith Stage, and the 134-seat flexible configuration Rochelle and Max Levit Stage. Beyond the performance spaces, the facility includes rehearsal and education studios; full production and design workshops; meeting, event, and shared community work spaces; full administrative suite; public lobby; pedestrian plaza and green space; and patio and balcony. The Gordy was intentionally envisioned and designed to be centered on community, creating an intimate space to bring audiences and artists closer together. Stages plans to reopen The Gordy for performances in the Fall of 2021.

Driven by the belief that 'People Make Theater,' Stages' commitment to personal relationship building is considered the key to the theater's success, with a mission to invite everyone to live more deeply and love more boldly. Stages' staff and board are committed to the theater's mission, vision, and values and the principles of its 2024 Strategic Plan, *Setting the Stage*, which include four strategic goals:

- Advance the artistic potential of Stages
- Activate The Gordy as a hub for theater in Houston
- Strengthen the creative capacities of Houston theater artists, technicians, and administrators
- Build equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Stages community

Stages produces a broad scope of theatrical experiences ranging from jukebox musicals and family entertainment to world premieres and new work by emerging writers. Stages' focus on the growth of artists has created a theater that leads in the advancement of artists and practitioners, fostering the development of emerging talent and new work. In addition to an exceptional community of locally-based artists and craftspeople, Stages engages occasional guest directors, actors, and designers from around the world to complement Houston talent.

Stages' education opportunities include a student matinee series, performance and production internship programs for college students, and a conservatory each summer for middle and high school students. During the 2019-2020 season nearly 20 percent of audiences experienced art free of charge through such programs as Sin Muros: A Latinx Theater Festival and performances at Miller Outdoor Theater. During the adjusted 2020-2021 season, Stages will have produced more than 30 digital programs, including live broadcast performances and recorded plays.

Stages has a 33-member board of directors, led by Chair Steven Owsley and President Jane Crowder Schmitt. The organization currently operates with a staff of 36 employees. Prudent financial management allowed the theater to successfully maintain the entire staff without any layoffs, furloughs, or wage reductions during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, Stages reported revenues of \$4.8 million, including \$3.1 million from contributions and grants and the balance from earned revenue. Total expenses were \$4.8 million.

About Houston

Houston, Texas is the fourth largest city in the United States, with a multi-county metropolitan area population of seven million people. A global, sophisticated city with an entrepreneurial bent, Houston is one of the most diverse cities in the nation, with large Hispanic/Latinx, White, Black/African American, and Asian populations. Houston is one of the fastest growing and most affordable big cities in the nation, with a cost of living 5 percent below the national average. The city operates two major airports that serve 118 domestic and 71 international destinations.

Houston's arts and cultural sector is fueled by a deeply generous philanthropic community. The city is home to leading symphony, ballet, opera, and theater companies and has the highest concentration of working artists in Texas. Houston boasts seven Actors' Equity Association member theaters, presenting a wide array of perspectives and programming. The downtown theater district is known to have more theater seats than any city outside of New York. Home to more than 150 museums and cultural institutions, Houston also offers plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities, including more than 300 parks, many hike and bike trails, gardens, and a wide range of sporting activities.

Sources: Houston.org, visithoustontexas.com, datausa.io

Position Summary

Working in full partnership with the Artistic Director and reporting to the board of directors, the Managing Director will co-lead one of Texas' most vibrant cultural institutions. Providing visionary strategic leadership, this individual will build and maintain connections with staff, board, donors, and audiences throughout the city. With responsibility for all business and administrative functions, the Managing Director will operate as a central figure in the business infrastructure. They will also lead the company to ensure the programmatic and operational integrity, sustainability, and excellence.

Roles and Responsibilities

Financial Management

- Develop and execute Stages' business plan, meet revenue targets, and control expenditures within the approved budget.
- Lead the management team and partner with the Board Finance Committee to develop the annual financial plan and operating budget, including annual capital expenditures.
- Identify and develop innovative sources of funding and earned revenues.
- Build appropriate financial plans that support stated strategic goals, including around issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion, so all initiatives are properly resourced.
- Negotiate and create effective agreements and relationships with Actors' Equity Association and other unions as needed, as well as publishing houses.

Fundraising and Audience Development

- Drive Stages' fundraising efforts, developing strong relationships with donors and executing strategies to achieve contributed revenue goals, including planning Stages' first endowment campaign.
- Lead the expansion and diversification of Stages' subscription and single ticket audiences.
- Apply knowledge of marketing, public relations, and organizational strategies to further the expansion of a clear identity and reputation for Stages regionally and nationally.
- Expand partnerships and deepen relationships with other artistic and civic organizations.

Strategic and Institutional Leadership

- Oversee all strategic planning processes in collaboration with the Chair of Strategic Planning, including the execution of *Setting the Stage: Stages' Strategic Plan Through 2024* and evaluation of all new strategic issues.
- Creatively and strategically rebuild the forward-looking operations of Stages, including supporting the full realization of The Gordy's potential in its first full season and beyond.
- Collaborate closely with the board in the management of board activities and initiatives while serving as a member of the Audit, Development, Finance, and other committees as needed.
- Work with board members to recruit, engage, and support volunteer leadership, with particular emphasis on building on the current members' strengths, filling gaps in expertise, and expanding its diversity.

Traits and Characteristics

The Managing Director will be a people-focused leader who sets and accomplishes clear, strategic goals. With a deep understanding of how resources in a mid-sized arts organization must be managed, they will be willing to act boldly and take carefully considered risks to advance the mission. The Managing Director will have a passion for theater and Stages' work, as well as a desire to play a vital role during a crucial period in the organization's history.

Other key competencies include:

- **Personal Accountability and Priority Management** – The ability to prioritize and complete tasks for oneself and others in order to reach desired outcomes consistently within well-paced and reasonably determined time frames, using ensuing results to self-evaluate, learn from mistakes, and accept responsibility for actions and decisions.
- **Leadership and Collaboration** – The dexterity to appropriately use positional and relational influence to organize people to pursue a collective vision with a sense of purpose and direction, without micromanaging.
- **Customer Focus and Diplomacy** – The capacity to anticipate, meet, and exceed customer needs, wants, and expectations while being perceptive and emotionally intelligent to effectively handle difficult or sensitive issues.
- **Planning, Organizing, and Decision Making** – The aptitude to analyze all aspects of a situation to make consistently sound and timely decisions, including addressing difficult situations head-on, and to establish forward-looking courses of action to ensure that longer-term efforts are completed effectively and efficiently with appropriate participation from the entire team.

Qualifications

Qualified applicants will have demonstrated senior management experience in a complex operational environment, ideally in theater or other performing arts. A master's degree in arts administration, business, or nonprofit leadership is a plus. Leading candidates will have strong previous success with direct major gift fundraising and strategies for audience or customer growth. Experience negotiating and operating under union agreements, particularly Actors' Equity Association, is preferred. Evidence of specific actions to advance equity, diversity, inclusion, and access in previous environments is essential. A history of engagement with national networks of arts leaders and interest in the key issues and developing strategies in the field are of great benefit. Candidates must possess exceptional communication skills to represent Stages in public speaking engagements.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Stages is committed to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as creating and maintaining a safe creative environment for staff, artists, and the community. Through discussion and expression, Stages continues to promote change in a positive direction. Stages believes that diversity on and off stage is important and is committed to bridging cultural gaps and creating an environment of inclusion and equity for all.

Compensation and Benefits

Stages offers a competitive salary, anticipated to be in the range of \$120,000 to \$150,000, and a comprehensive benefits package that includes medical, dental and vision insurance; life and disability insurance; and generous paid time off and holidays. This position will be based in Houston.

Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments (electronic submissions preferred), please click [here](#) or visit artsconsulting.com/employment. For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

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Stages provides equal opportunities to all who may apply and welcomes every race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, genetic makeup, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, and thinking style.