

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW

The Contemporary Dayton
Dayton, Ohio

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in The Contemporary Dayton.

This is an exciting moment in the organization's 35-year history. Following a period of organizational renewal, strengthened financial sustainability, expanded Board leadership, and renewed community engagement, The Contemporary Dayton is beginning a thoughtful search for its next Executive Director.

We are seeking a collaborative, entrepreneurial leader who believes in the power of contemporary art to enrich communities and create meaningful opportunities for artists. The next Executive Director will inherit an organization with a strong artistic reputation, an engaged Board of Directors, an exceptional Chief Curator, dedicated staff, and an active network of community volunteers helping shape the museum's future.

Most importantly, this is an opportunity to help define the next chapter of one of the Midwest's leading contemporary art organizations through strategic leadership, relationship building, and a shared commitment to artistic excellence and public service.

About The Contemporary Dayton

Founded in 1991, The Contemporary Dayton is southwest Ohio's premier non-collecting contemporary art museum. Located in the beautifully restored Dayton Arcade, the museum presents rotating exhibitions, public programs, artist-centered initiatives, and community partnerships that connect people with the art and ideas of our time.

Our mission is simple: **To advance art for the community and a community for artists.**

For more than three decades, The Contemporary Dayton has provided a platform for local, regional, national, and international artists while creating opportunities for dialogue, learning, and creative exploration. The museum presents museum-quality exhibitions that are free and open to the public and is recognized for championing women artists, artists of color, emerging artists, and socially engaged contemporary art.



Why This Opportunity?

The Contemporary Dayton is entering one of the most exciting periods in its history.

Recent organizational initiatives have strengthened the museum's financial position, expanded community leadership, and positioned the organization for thoughtful long-term growth. A newly negotiated strategic partnership has reduced one of the museum's largest operating expenses over the next five years, providing greater financial stability and flexibility.

At the same time, the Board of Directors has expanded with four new Trustees and more than thirty community volunteers serving on Board-led Working Groups focused on organizational sustainability, artist support, and community partnerships. Together, they are helping launch a comprehensive strategic planning process that will guide the museum's next chapter.

The incoming Executive Director will join an organization that has:

- an outstanding reputation for artistic excellence,
- an experienced and respected Chief Curator,
- an engaged and forward-looking Board,
- strong relationships throughout the arts and civic communities,
- a beautiful downtown home in the Dayton Arcade,
- and meaningful opportunities to expand fundraising, earned revenue, partnerships, and community impact.

Rather than maintaining the status quo, the next Executive Director will have the opportunity to help shape the future of the organization while building upon a strong foundation created over the past thirty-five years.

What Success Looks Like

The Board is seeking a leader who will build upon The Contemporary Dayton's strong foundation while bringing fresh ideas, new energy, and a collaborative leadership style.

Over the next three to five years, the Executive Director will have the opportunity to:

- Complete and implement a new strategic plan.
- Strengthen long-term financial sustainability through contributed and earned revenue.
- Continue positioning The Contemporary Dayton as a leading contemporary arts organization in the Midwest.
- Expand support and opportunities for artists throughout the region.
- Fortify partnerships with civic, business, educational, and healthcare organizations.
- Increase public engagement and museum attendance through innovative exhibitions and programs.
- Develop and mentor staff while fostering a collaborative organizational culture.
- Work closely with the Board to advance governance, philanthropy, and community leadership.

This position offers a rare opportunity to guide a respected institution that is financially stronger, strategically focused, and well-positioned for its next phase of growth.

Why Dayton?

Dayton is a city defined by creativity, innovation, and collaboration. Known for its history of invention and entrepreneurship, the community has experienced a remarkable downtown renaissance fueled by arts, culture, education, and public-private partnerships.



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STRATEGY & TRANSITION PRESS RELEASE

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The Contemporary Dayton Announces New Sustainability Initiative, Expanded Board Leadership, Strategic Growth Plans, and Executive Transition

DAYTON, OH — July 14, 2026 — The Contemporary Dayton today announced a series of initiatives that position the organization for a dynamic new chapter centered on financial sustainability, artistic excellence, community engagement, and long-term institutional growth.

The announcement follows a significant turning point for the organization. Working in partnership with Board leadership and community partners, Executive Director **Eva Buttacavoli** recently negotiated a new strategic partnership that will reduce organizational expenses by approximately **\$500,000 over the next five years**. The agreement addresses one of the organization's largest operating expenses, strengthening its financial foundation while allowing greater investment in artists, exhibitions, public programs, and community engagement.

The organization has also expanded its leadership capacity through the addition of **four new members to its Board of Directors** and the formation of **Board-led Working Groups** involving more than **thirty community volunteers**, including artists, business leaders, healthcare professionals, educators, and civic stakeholders. Together, these groups will help shape the organization's next strategic plan through three primary areas of focus: **organizational sustainability and advancement; artist support and program excellence; and community engagement and strategic partnerships**.

Building on this momentum, The Contemporary Dayton is launching a comprehensive strategic planning process that will guide its next phase of growth while strengthening its founding mission to **advance art for the community and a community for artists**. Today, the organization is recognized for presenting museum-quality contemporary art while making it welcoming and accessible to broad audiences. It has earned a reputation for bringing nationally and internationally recognized artists together with local and regional talent, enriching the cultural life of Dayton while creating meaningful opportunities for artists to exhibit, connect, and grow professionally.

After fifteen years as Executive Director, Buttacavoli will step down from her role at the end of 2026 to expand her art appraisal and consulting practice. She will continue supporting the organization during a six-month transition period in the temporary role of **Director of Advancement & Transition**, focusing on major donor stewardship, institutional continuity, fundraising strategy, and leadership onboarding. Her departure concludes a distinguished **35-year museum career** dedicated to advancing artists, expanding

access to contemporary art, fostering arts education for audiences of all ages, and strengthening the institutions that serve their communities.

As part of the transition plan, the organization has appointed **Heather Jones**, its current Curator and Director of Programs & Engagement, as **Interim Director & Chief Curator** from July through December 2026 while a search is conducted for a new Executive Director. The organization also announced a new **Development Coordinator** position to strengthen annual fundraising, membership, sponsorship, grants administration, and donor engagement.

During her tenure, Buttacavoli helped build upon the organization's strong foundation by expanding its institutional capacity, strengthening museum operations and exhibition practices, deepening community partnerships, and elevating The Contemporary Dayton's regional profile. The organization completed a **\$1 million capital campaign** and relocation to the historic Dayton Arcade, adopted the name **The Contemporary Dayton** to more clearly reflect its mission, better represent the artists and audiences it serves, and strengthen its identity within the national network of contemporary art centers and museums. Additional milestones included securing major support from the **Ohio Arts Council**, **National Endowment for the Arts**, and **The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts**; implementing integrated donor management, retail, communications, website, social media, and digital engagement systems; developing **The Contemporary Dayton Shop (The CoSHOP)** as a year-round platform supporting artists through retail and exhibitions; and hiring the organization's first professional curator.

The Contemporary Dayton also strengthened its role as both a presenter and champion of contemporary artists, expanding opportunities for exhibitions, public art, commissions, and community partnerships. The organization developed major collaborations with the **Downtown Dayton Partnership** and the **City of Dayton**, including **Five Rivers MetroParks' River Run Mural**, downtown's **ArtWraps**, and the **8/4 Memorial** commemorating the 2019 Oregon District tragedy. It also facilitated significant installations and commissions with **Premier Health**, **Dayton Children's Hospital**, the **University of Dayton's Roger Glass Center for the Arts**, and other regional partners, creating new opportunities for artists while bringing contemporary art into public and civic spaces.

"These accomplishments have always been about building a stronger institution for artists and for our community," said Buttacavoli. "Over the last several years, we have worked hard to stabilize and strengthen the organization while expanding our role as a cultural partner in downtown Dayton. We are entering this next chapter with renewed energy, an engaged Board, extraordinary community leadership, strong partnerships, and a clear vision for the future."

"The Contemporary Dayton is entering this next phase from a position of strength," said Board leadership. "Eva's leadership has helped position the organization for long-term success, and we are grateful for the foundation she has helped build. With new Board leadership, engaged community volunteers, strengthened partnerships, and a thoughtful transition plan in place, we are excited to build upon this momentum and shape the next chapter of The Contemporary Dayton."

DAYTON BUSINESS JOURNAL ARTICLE ON ANNOUNCEMENT

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Career & Workplace

The Contemporary Dayton executive director exits as organization cuts \$500K in costs



The Contemporary Dayton (The Co) Executive Director Eva Buttacavoli
THE CO



By [Nicole Mistretta Tempanaro](#) – Managing Editor, Dayton Business Journal
Jul 13, 2026

One of Dayton's largest visual arts organizations is tackling a bevy of change as its current executive director plans to step down from her role at year's end.

The Contemporary Dayton (The Co) Executive Director Eva Buttacavoli will step down from her role at the end of 2026. She will then focus on expanding her art appraisal and consulting practice.

Buttacavoli will continue to support The Co during a six-month transition period in a temporary role of director of advancement and transition. That role will focus on major donor stewardship, institutional continuity, fundraising strategy and leadership onboarding.

The transition, for Buttacavoli, concludes a 35-year museum career. During her tenure with The Co, the organization completed a \$1 million capital campaign and relocation to the historic Dayton Arcade – which resulted in the adoption of its name. Other major milestones included:

Securing major support from Ohio Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Implementing integrated donor management, retail, communications, website, social media, and digital engagement systems

Developing The Contemporary Dayton Shop (The CoSHOP) as a year-round platform supporting artists through retail and exhibitions

Hiring the organization's first professional curator.

Buttacavoli also recently negotiated a new strategic partnerships that will reduce organizational expenses by about \$500,000 over the next five years. The organization stated the agreement addresses one of the organization's largest operating expenses, strengthening its financial foundation and allowing greater investment in artists, exhibitions, public programs and community engagement.

As the organization searches for its next leader, The Co Curator and Director of Programs & Engagement Heather Jones will step in as interim director and chief curator from July through December.



Heather Jones will step in as interim director and chief curator
KNACK VIDEO + PHOTO

A new position has also been created, development coordinator – aimed at strengthening annual fundraising, membership, sponsorship, grants administration and donor engagement.

“The Contemporary Dayton is entering this next phase from a position of strength,” board leadership stated. “Eva's leadership has helped position the organization for long-term success, and we are grateful for the foundation she has helped build. With new Board leadership, engaged community volunteers, strengthened partnerships, and a thoughtful transition plan in place, we are excited to build upon this momentum and shape the next chapter of The Contemporary Dayton.”

Planning for the future

As The Co moves toward the transition, other leadership moves are underway. Four new members have been added to the organization's board of directors:

- **Jen McCormick**, human resources director for City of Centerville
- **Kevin McCurdy**, partner at LWC
- **Tim Kambitsch**, former executive director at Dayton Metro Library
- **Edd McGatha**, former director of facilities & planning at Dayton Children's Hospital

Board-led working groups have also been formed which involve more than 30 community volunteers – from artists and business leaders to healthcare professionals, educators and civic stakeholders.

Together, the groups will shape The Co's next strategic plan through three primary areas of focus:

- Organizational stability and advancement
- Artist support and program excellence
- Community engagement and strategic partnerships

Building on that momentum, The Co plans to launch a comprehensive strategic planning process that will guide the next phase of growth – while also strengthening its founding mission to advance art for the community and a community for artists.

Today, the organization stated it is recognized for presenting museum-quality contemporary art while making it welcoming and accessible to broad audiences. It has earned a reputation for bringing nationally and internationally recognized artists together with local and regional talent, enriching the cultural life of Dayton while creating meaningful opportunities for artists to exhibit, connect and grow professionally.

The Co has expanded its role as a champion of contemporary artists through exhibitions, public art, commissions and community partnerships. The

organization has also launched or expanded initiatives such as Community Supported Art, the Dayton Art Fair, Arts & Wellness programming, the Art Dinner series and artist professional development opportunities.

“These accomplishments have always been about building a stronger institution for artists and for our community,” Buttacavoli said. “Over the last several years, we have worked hard to stabilize and strengthen the organization while expanding our role as a cultural partner in downtown Dayton. We are entering this next chapter with renewed energy, an engaged board, extraordinary community leadership, strong partnerships, and a clear vision for the future.”

T H E L I S T

Dayton–Area Visual Arts Organizations

Budget

Rank	Prior Rank	Organization
1	1	Dayton Art Institute
2	2	Rosewood Arts Center
3	3	We Care Arts

[View This List](#)

JOB DESCRIPTION

Executive Director

Full-Time, Exempt | In-Office Position

Compensation: \$80,000–\$90,000 annually

Reports To: Board of Trustees

Position Summary

The Executive Director serves as the chief strategic and administrative leader of The Contemporary Dayton, responsible for advancing the organization’s mission, financial sustainability, curatorial vision, community impact, and long-term success.

The Executive Director provides leadership across development, operations, staffing, institutional partnerships, and long-range planning while working collaboratively with the Board of Trustees, Working Groups, and Chief Curator, staff, and volunteers.

The position requires a dynamic and community-oriented leader with strong fundraising, organizational management, and relationship-building skills, as well as a demonstrated commitment to contemporary art and cultural engagement.

Essential Functions and Responsibilities

Leadership & Strategic Vision

- Lead organizational planning, sustainability initiatives, and long-range strategic goals.
- Advance the mission and public visibility of The Contemporary Dayton throughout the community and region.
- Foster a collaborative and inclusive organizational culture.
- Develop and lead the execution of the organization’s strategic plan in partnership with the Board and staff.

Fund Development & Advancement

- Serve as the lead strategist and relationship manager for major gifts, corporate sponsorships, foundation support, and institutional partnerships.
- Oversee annual fundraising goals, earned revenue initiatives, membership growth, and campaign development.
- Work closely with the Development Coordinator to strengthen fundraising systems and donor engagement.
- Ensure fundraising goals align with organizational capacity and strategic priorities.

Board & Community Relations

- Serve as primary liaison to the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee.
- Support Board development, governance, and strategic planning efforts.

- Represent The Contemporary Dayton publicly with artists, donors, civic leaders, government agencies, media, and community partners, advocating for the organization's mission, programs and community impact
- Provide strategic leadership for the organization's external presentation, public messaging and brand identity.
- Serve as the organization's chief spokesperson and public representative.

Operations & Administration

- Oversee financial management, budgeting, staffing, and organizational operations.
- Hire, mentor, supervise and retain an engaged competent and qualified staff. .
- Ensure organizational compliance, reporting, and operational continuity and longevity.
- Actively engage in fiscal management through budgetary development, cash flow and expense management and oversight of all financial activities.
- Maintain an organizational calendar of key deadlines and duties for all areas of operations.

Curatorial & Program Support

- Collaborate with the Chief Curator to align exhibitions and programs with organizational mission and financial capacity.
- Support institutional partnerships, artist engagement, and audience development initiatives.

Qualifications

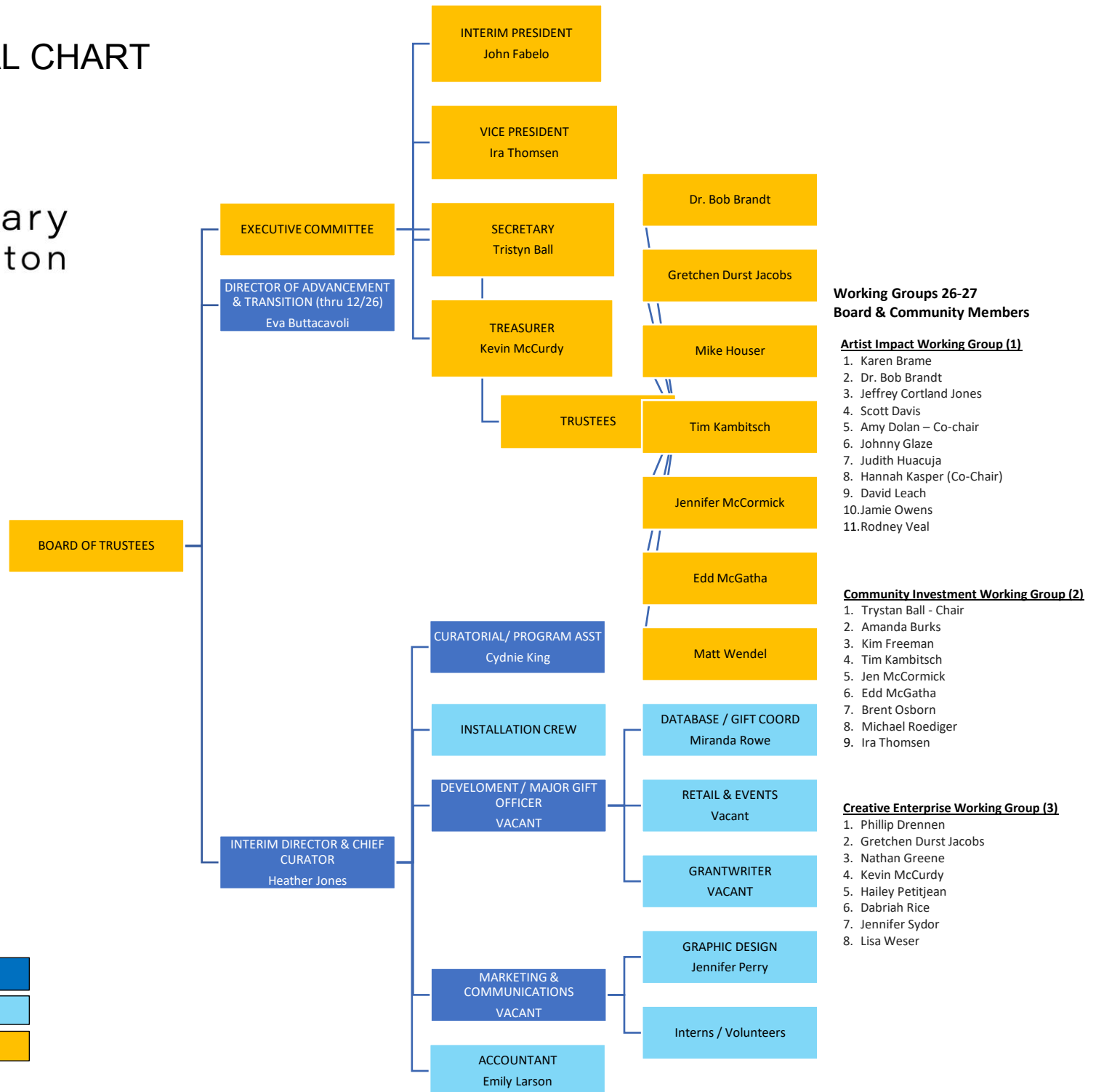
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree or equivalent nonprofit leadership experience preferred.
 - Demonstrated experience in nonprofit management, fundraising, arts administration, or institutional leadership.
 - Strong communication, relationship-building, and organizational management skills.
 - Proven ability to cultivate donors, sponsors, and strategic partnerships.
 - Commitment to contemporary art, accessibility, and community engagement.
-

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Key

Salaried Staff (FT, No Benefits)
Contracted (PT)
Volunteer



BOARD OF TRUSTEES STRUCTURE

Overview

The Contemporary Dayton (TCD) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization founded in 1991, now in its fourth home in the historic Dayton Arcade. With over 6,000 square feet of free, public exhibition and program space, The Co connects our community to the art and ideas of our time.

The Board of Trustees is a **governing and working body** of committed community leaders, artists, and professionals who ensure TCD's mission, financial health, and visibility. The Board includes **Trustees** and **Working Committee Members**, who together balance policy-level governance with hands-on engagement, outreach, and advocacy.

I. Board of Trustees

(Governance, Oversight, and Strategic Leadership)

Commitment

Serve one **3-year term**, renewable once.

- Attend all scheduled Board meetings.
- Serve on at least **one standing committee** (Development, Finance, Governance) or one **Working Group** (Creative Enterprise & Earned Revenue, Artist Engagement & Community Activation, Community Investment & Philanthropic Partnerships)
- Maintain an **annual membership** and contribute to annual fundraising efforts through personal giving, sponsorship, or corporate contribution at the \$1,500 level or above.

Expectations

- Attend and actively participate in Board meetings and discussions.
- Be informed about TCD's mission, goals, programs, and financial health.
- Review all Board materials and come prepared to engage thoughtfully.
- Uphold fiduciary duties of **care, loyalty, and obedience**.
- Respect confidentiality and diverse points of view.
- Maintain professional conduct consistent with TCD's mission and values.

Responsibilities

- Provide **policy and strategic guidance** that ensures TCD's long-term success.
- **Hire, support, and evaluate** the Executive Director.
- **Review and approve budgets, audits, and financial reports.**
- Advocate for The Contemporary Dayton to the community and strengthen relationships with partners, funders, and donors.
- Attend major programs and fundraising events.
- **Cultivate and solicit support** from individuals, corporations, or foundations within your network.
- Sign and adhere to **Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Code of Ethics** policies.

Restrictions

- Do not issue special requests or directives to staff without prior approval from the Executive Director or Board.
 - Do not act independently of the Board without its express permission.
 - Avoid public statements that conflict with official Board actions or votes.
-

II. Working Group Members (Made up of Trustees and Community Members)

Groups

1. Creative Enterprise & Earned Revenue Growth
2. Artist Engagement & Community Activation
3. Community Investment & Philanthropic Partnerships

Commitment

- Serve a 1-year **term**, renewable.
- Attend at least **75% of Committee meetings**.
- Maintain an **annual membership** and fulfill a **give/get goal of \$500**, through personal giving, sponsorships, or cultivated gifts.

Expectations

- Participate actively in **community-facing and program initiatives**.
- Be an **ambassador for TCD** in both professional and personal circles.
- Attend exhibitions, receptions, and events as schedule permits.
- Share feedback from the community to help inform programming and audience engagement strategies.
- Promote The Co's events through social and professional networks.
- Collaborate closely with staff on project-based initiatives that advance visibility and outreach.

Responsibilities

- Help grow **audiences and membership** by inviting and connecting new visitors to The Co.
- Support **signature events and programs** such as *In Small Measure Exhibition* & Art Sale, Art Dinner, Opening Receptions
- Participate in committee work, artist receptions, and installations as needed.
- Assist in identifying and cultivating new sponsors, members, and collaborators.
- Serve as a **community bridge** between The Co and the region's creative, business, and civic networks.

Restrictions

- Committee Members serve under the same ethical and fiduciary expectations as Trustees, but do not make policy decisions unless delegated by the Board.
- May not speak on behalf of TCD in media or public forums without prior authorization.

CURRENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Following a year of reflection, financial analysis, community conversations, and Board-led restructuring efforts, The Contemporary Dayton has emerged with a clear, three-pillar framework that will guide our evolution into a more sustainable, imaginative, and artist-centered organization.

These pillars articulate how The Contemporary Dayton will:

- strengthen its business model,
- deepen its relationships with artists and the community, and
- build a resilient base of philanthropic support.

Together, they define a balanced model for the next decade — one that honors artists, engages audiences, and ensures long-term financial health.

They also reflect the unique ecosystem of the Dayton Arcade, where creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, and community life naturally intersect.

PILLAR 1: Creative Enterprise & Earned Revenue Growth

Turning creativity into sustainability through mission-aligned business avenues.

This pillar focuses on building sustainable, diversified earned revenue streams that strengthen our ability to remain free, accessible, and artist-centered. Through partnerships, rentals, corporate engagement, retail innovation, and high-quality learning experiences, The Contemporary Dayton can become a regional leader in creative enterprise.

Key growth areas include:

- Gallery rentals & creative meeting experiences
- Corporate curatorial services, rotating exhibitions, and rent-to-buy art programs
- Retail & commissions, including artist-designed products and hospitality collaborations
- Ticketed events and cultural experiences
- Business of Art workshops, master classes & creative leadership trainings

This pillar ensures that earned revenue becomes a true engine — supporting artists, exhibitions, and operational stability.

PILLAR 2: Artist Engagement & Community Activation

Centering local and regional artists while building meaningful connections among donors, audiences, and community partners.

This pillar reinforces our identity as Dayton’s artist-centered contemporary art hub. It outlines a deep and sustained plan to elevate local artists, strengthen their careers, connect them with donors, and cultivate a community that champions their work.

Engagement strategies include:

- Board/Donor “adopt-an-artist” or “adopt-a-show” programs
- Artist dinners, studio visits, salons, and behind-the-scenes tours
- Donor and Board storytelling, testimonials, and advocacy
- Pop-up exhibitions, mural walks, and community activations
- Career support, mentorship, grant-writing guidance, and introductions

This pillar builds the emotional, relational, and cultural foundation that will define our future impact.

PILLAR 3: Community Investment & Philanthropic Partnerships

Building a broad, committed base of supporters who invest in the future of contemporary art in Dayton.

The third pillar establishes a unified strategy for growing **membership, individual giving, corporate and foundation partnerships, and legacy gifts.**

Its goal is to build a culture of philanthropy that is welcoming, multi-generational, and aligned with our mission.

Focus areas include:

- Membership growth and revitalization across all levels
- Annual giving and leadership donor cultivation
- Corporate and foundation partnerships driven by transparency and impact
- Multi-year and restricted gifts that fuel exhibitions and artist support
- Planned and legacy giving as long-term commitments to Dayton’s cultural future

This pillar provides the financial backbone that ensures our exhibitions, programs, and services continue to flourish.

TOGETHER, THE THREE PILLARS:

- Strengthen our financial foundation
- Deepen our impact with local artists
- Expand our regional presence
- Build community belonging
- Position The Contemporary Dayton as the creative heart of the Arcade and the region

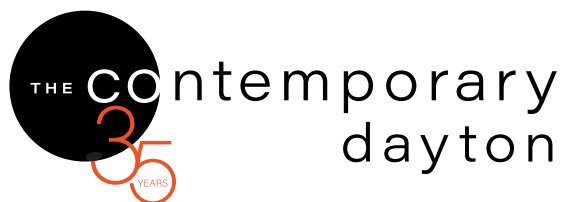
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Interested candidates should submit via email to cking@codayton.org:

- A cover letter describing their interest in the position and how their experience aligns with The Contemporary Dayton's mission and future direction.
- A current résumé or curriculum vitae.
- Contact information for three professional references (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission).
- Optional: Up to three examples of work that demonstrate leadership, fundraising, strategic planning, program development, communications, or other relevant accomplishments.

The search committee welcomes candidates whose experience has been gained in museums, contemporary arts organizations, higher education, community arts, philanthropy, cultural leadership, or related nonprofit fields.

Priority consideration will be given to applications received by September 11, 2026. The position will remain open until filled.



The Contemporary Dayton
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