

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

PBR
**EXECUTIVE
SEARCH**

Chief Advancement and External Affairs Officer



ORGANIZATION: Studio Museum in Harlem

POSITION: Chief Advancement and External Affairs Officer

REPORTS TO: Ford Foundation Director and Chief Curator

LOCATION: New York, NY; in-person

INFORMATION: www.studiomuseum.org

TO APPLY: Please submit an [interest form](#), uploading documents with title format “Last Name First Name – Letter (or Resume),” and complete the Voluntary Self Identification [form](#). This will assist us in improving our hiring practices and ensuring equal opportunities. Participation is voluntary and will not affect your candidacy in any way.

QUESTIONS: Please contact StudioMuseumCAO@pbrsearch.com

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1968, the Studio Museum in Harlem is the leading visual arts museum for artists of African descent locally, nationally, and internationally and for work that has been inspired and influenced by Black culture. Following a highly successful \$300M+ capital campaign and through a public-private initiative in partnership with the City of New York, the museum’s [landmark new building](#) was opened to the public in November 2025. The museum serves as a vibrant cultural anchor in Harlem, offering [exhibitions](#), [educational programs](#), and community engagement initiatives. The museum’s signature [Artist-in-Residence program](#) (widely regarded as one of the most important pipelines in contemporary art) continues to advance the work of the most influential Black artists working today. Artists such as David Hammons, Kehinde Wiley, Kerry James Marshall, Julie Mehretu, and Simone Leigh passed through the museum’s residency program during formative stages in their careers.

POSITION

The Chief Advancement and External Affairs Officer is a key member of the senior leadership team and the strategic architect of the Studio Museum in Harlem’s advancement efforts. In support of and in close partnership with Ford Foundation Director and Chief Curator Thelma Golden and the Board of Directors, the CAO will lead the museum into its next era of growth, with particular focus on expanding annual support and growing the endowment to ensure long-term financial sustainability. Building on the strength of an established advancement program and the momentum of the museum’s new permanent home, the CAO will raise more than 80% of the operating budget, deepen donor engagement, broaden and diversify philanthropic support, and strengthen a culture of philanthropy across the institution. They will lead an integrated advancement function encompassing fundraising, marketing, and communications, and will guide a high-performing team toward ambitious goals in support of the museum’s mission, programs, and future.

The ideal candidate is an accomplished advancement leader who embodies the mission of the museum, with a record of building and leading sophisticated development programs; securing significant gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations; executing successful campaigns; and telling compelling institutional stories that deepen engagement, expand audiences, and inspire philanthropic investment. A strategic and persuasive communicator, the CAO will galvanize board members, donors, staff, and audiences around the museum’s vision and its enduring role in Harlem and the broader cultural landscape.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead and execute an integrated fundraising and communications strategy aligned with the museum's mission, strategic priorities, and long-term financial sustainability.
- Serve as an integral member of the Senior Leadership Team, contributing to institution-wide strategy, planning, and decision-making.
- Partner with curatorial and programmatic leadership on long-range planning to identify emerging institutional priorities and translate them into compelling fundraising opportunities for donors and prospects.
- Establish ambitious annual revenue goals and performance metrics for all fundraising initiatives, including the Gala and spring luncheon; monitor results, philanthropic trends, and emerging opportunities to assess progress, inform strategy, and adjust course as needed.
- Develop and execute strategies to grow the museum's endowment.
- Build and sustain strong relationships with the Chair of the Board and Board of Directors, donors, and prospective supporters, and equip staff and board members to participate effectively in cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship.
- Serve as a key ambassador for the museum, deepening relationships with existing supporters while expanding the donor base and cultivating the next generation of philanthropic partners.
- In close partnership with the Director and Chief Curator and the advancement team, grow individual giving and strengthen the major gifts program by expanding the donor pipeline, deepening relationships with existing supporters, and personally cultivating, soliciting, and securing significant and transformative gifts.
- Lead, inspire, and develop a team of 16 advancement professionals, fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, professional growth, and high performance.
- Continually assess and evolve the department's structure, systems, technology, and ways of working to support ambitious fundraising and communications goals, while promoting strong collaboration across advancement, programming, marketing, communications, and operations.
- Staff and support the development committee and the committee on trustees; play an active role in board development.
- Represent the museum at programs, donor engagements, gallery openings, and events across the art world, using these opportunities to strengthen relationships, build networks, and expand the museum's visibility within the broader arts and philanthropic community; participate in the museum's evening and weekend events as needed and travel domestically and internationally approximately twice annually.

QUALIFICATIONS

Experience – Required

- 15+ years of fundraising experience with a track record of personal fundraising success
- Proven experience successfully leading development teams raising funds from a variety of sources
- Experience personally securing transformative major gifts

Experience – Preferred

- Experience with New York City-based nonprofit, cultural, or place-based institutions, as familiarity with the local landscape and dynamics is key to success in this role
- Experience leading capital, endowment, and/or other targeted philanthropic initiatives

Personal Attributes

- Passion for museums, arts and culture, and enthusiasm for advancing the Studio Museum in Harlem's mission to champion Black artists and serve as a vital cultural institution rooted in Harlem
- A natural relationship-builder with the presence and interpersonal skills to engage and galvanize board members, donors, staff, and other stakeholders
- A goal-oriented, collaborative leader committed to developing and mentoring teams and fostering a culture of trust, accountability, and high performance
- A strategic and entrepreneurial thinker with strong development operations experience and the ability to oversee systems, introduce new approaches, and support infrastructure that leads to long-term fundraising growth
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, paired with strong judgment, self-awareness, and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences
- A strong commitment to furthering diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in all forms

COMPENSATION

- Anticipated salary is \$275K - \$300K, commensurate with qualifications and experience; to be considered at the top end of the range, candidates must be able to demonstrate experience and success in all aspects of the job
- Comprehensive benefits package, including medical, dental and vision insurance, retirement contribution, and generous paid time off

Frequently cited statistics show that women and people from underrepresented groups apply to jobs only if they think they meet 100% of the criteria. If you meet many but not all the criteria and feel you may be a good fit for the role, Studio Museum in Harlem encourages you to apply.

Studio Museum in Harlem is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, national origin, ethnic origin, citizenship status, disability, race, religion, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, marital status, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law in its employment policies. Studio Museum in Harlem will provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities.