

Orange Show Center for Visionary Art

Houston, TX

Director of Development

The Executive Director and Board seek a proven fundraising relationship builder to drive donor solicitations for the capital build-out of its campus, and to fund ongoing programs and events that engage the public in visionary art experiences.

[Orange Show Center for Visionary Art](#) offers engaging experiences of visionary artists through extravagant, boundary-challenging events, exhibitions, installations, ArtHomes, maker spaces, education and programming. The emphasis is on joy, creation, and an embrace of new ideas that is open to, and actively engages with, different ways of being.

BACKGROUND

[The Orange Show Monument](#) is Orange Show Center's beating heart. The work of outsider artist (and retired mail carrier) Jeff McKissack, this work was created between 1956 and 1979 within a 3,000 square foot lot now owned by Orange Show Center and on the National Register for Historic Places. Also owned by Orange Show Center is [The Beer Can House](#), created by outsider artist (and railroad employee) John Milkovich between 1968 and the late 1980s, and [Smither Park](#) which has extensive public art installations.

Inspired by such artists, other Houstonians transformed old vehicles into moving works of art and held the first parade of these popular and idiosyncratic works in 1986 with 11 art cars. By 1988 there were 40 art cars, and the event continued to grow into the Annual [Houston Art Car Parade](#). In 2027 the Parade will enter its 40th year and I feature approximately 300 art cars and 350,000 visitors, making it the largest single-day event in Houston and Texas. Other events and programs that have emerged over the years at the Center include an Art Bike Festival and Parade, the Artist-In-Residence program and a broad range of festivals, installations and educational programs, including a planned Neurodivergent Art Studio for Adults. Orange Show Center is adjacent to the 13-acre Fonde Park and The Bayou Greenway & Bikepath.

The [Orange Show Campus Plan](#) was created by Rogers Partners. Features of the design include:

- **The Art Car Museum** - with 20–25 art cars exhibited at any one time, it is expected to attract over 100k visitors in its first year of operations;
- **The Houston Visionary Art Center**, which involves the conversion of an existing 31,000 sq. ft. warehouse building into a flexible exhibition and performance space;
- **The Plaza** – an open space for installations, concerts, events, booths, gatherings and parking;
- **The Ramp and Big O** – a utilitarian work of art in the form of a ramp that visually connects the entire campus and can be used by cars and pedestrians;
- **Education Center and Maker Spaces** – education and maker spaces for car art and other artists and creator teams;
- **The Neurodivergent Art Studio for Adults**, which will host 50–60 adults with disabilities, enabling them to develop their art and integrate artmaking into their lives.

Orange Show Center's management structure includes an Executive Director and an Artistic Director who work closely together. **This position reports to the Executive Director.**

The capital and endowment campaign is expected to be \$45m, of which about \$10m has been raised. The 2026 annual operating budget is \$2.9m, and will grow to \$3.4m by the end of 2027. The 23-member Board is led by a nine-member Executive Committee and is expected to evolve over the

coming years along with the campus. The plan is to deliver the full campus by 2031.

The first deliverable on the Orange Show Campus Plan will be the construction of the Art Car Museum. Most of the funds required have been raised for this, and the Museum is expected to be completed by 2028. The next deliverable will be the Education Center and Makers Spaces.

The Director of Development will orchestrate and coordinate all fundraising by the Executive Director, Board members and the Artistic Director. The Director of Development will also target, qualify and directly solicit individual, foundation and business donors.

BASIC FUNCTION

GOALS, STRATEGY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Work with the Executive Director and Board to translate all plans and Campus capital project deliverables into concrete projects that route charitable gifts to defined capital, annual and endowment funding priorities.
- Develop and implement meaningful metrics of progress toward fundraising objectives defined in plans for Orange Show Center, and report on the progress of those objectives.

FUNDRAISING

- Carry a personal portfolio of annual, capital and endowment prospects, setting goals and serving as an example for the team.
- Work with members of the Orange Show Center board, staff and others in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting different individual, foundation, business donors and other external sponsors; establish consistent donor cultivation and stewardship workflows and progress tracking; orchestrate outreach to different kinds of donors through events, social media and mass mailings, direct solicitations, grant proposals, sponsorships, co-op fundraising with partners, planned giving solicitations, etc.
- Monitor progress toward goals; share expertise on the different philanthropic tactics and approaches needed to secure gifts from individual philanthropists (high-net-worth donors, major donors, and annual fund donors), institutional and family foundations and businesses.
- Systematically leverage diverse communication and marketing channels to build awareness among prospective donors and keep current donors informed, including through newsletters, impact reports, direct response (mail, email, and social media) and events.
- Manage day-to-day fundraising solicitations.

MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY

- Advance the Orange Show Center brand with residents and visitors to Houston through different types of in-person and online outreach, speaking engagements, events and advocacy that increases the embrace of Orange Show Center's vision, elevates its reputation and drives audience attendance; grow the organization's digital presence, including through mobile apps, online gaming, social media and other tech that can connect to a global audience.
- Engage current constituents and those that do not yet consider themselves to be part of the Orange Show Center family; align all online and in-person messaging, logos, websites, social media posts and other elements in support of the organization's identity; position Orange Show Center as a top-of-mind, unique, not to be missed, repeat experience; study the shifting audience and visitor landscape, employing concrete metrics to highlight strengths and improve on weaknesses related to in-person and on-line visitor engagement;

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- Advance Center interests with key leaders in public education, Houston city and county government, and with other public arts institutions nationally and internationally.

QUALIFICATIONS and EXPERIENCE

The Director of Development will be an entrepreneurial, big-picture thinking, roll-up-your-sleeves leader, with demonstrated expertise in each of the areas identified above. In addition, the successful candidate will have a background which includes:

- Senior-level managerial, operational and financial experience in areas that intersect with the mission of Orange Show Center.
- Highly accomplished fundraising experience achieved by being comfortable seeking and asking for individual and major gifts and grants; being adept at developing institutional partnerships to advance the mission.
- A track record of managing aggressive top-line growth in funding and revenue while being a team builder; a leader who understands the subtleties of motivating, directing and retaining a diverse group of personalities with different work styles; fortitude and grace under pressure.
- Experience in leveraging existing technologies to maximize online presence and optimize innovation, magnify impact and improve fundraising efforts.
- Strong written and oral communication skills, and an ability to translate Orange Show Center's mission and programs into fundraising initiatives that garner financial support and build constructive working relationships with potential donors characterized by a high level of acceptance, cooperation, and mutual respect.
- A sense of humor and perspective.

The compensation range for this position is \$140,000 – \$175,000.

For more information please contact:

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