



New York Folklore is seeking an experienced and community-focused administrator to serve as Executive Director for the Schenectady-based, state-wide organization.

New York Folklore (AKA New York Folklore Society) supports folk and traditional artists and organizations, showcases traditional arts and culture of New York State, connects traditional artists and communities to a network of artists and tradition bearers, produces publications and programs, and builds community-based skills and expertise for greater appreciation of New York's diverse communities and heritages. Our mission is to collaborate with communities to identify, understand, and advocate for the needs of tradition bearers, artists, and everyday working people in the state, supporting cultural self-determination, agency, and sustainability. We strive to bridge lines of difference to create a world of greater dignity, respect, joy, and mutual understanding. New York Folklore is a membership organization, open to all, concerned with furthering cultural equity and strengthening the understanding of the role of folk and traditional arts in our lives.

Formed in 1944, New York Folklore began as a scholarly, public-facing organization dedicated to folklore and folk culture in New York and has enjoyed a long history of activism in public folklore. The organization became New York State's technical assistance provider for folk and traditional arts in 1990 and has enjoyed a long partnership with the Folk and Traditional Arts Program of the New York State Council on the Arts in that role. Besides serving as a folk cultural resource for artists and organizations, New York Folklore publishes the journal, *Voices: The Journal of New York Folklore*; manages and presents the annual New York Folk Arts Roundtable (a professional development conference); and provides a variety of technical assistance and professional development opportunities in folk and traditional arts and culture, including artists in the schools programs, entrepreneurial opportunities for artists, and fiscal sponsorships for artists and unincorporated cultural organizations. Headquartered in Schenectady, NY, the organization has a statewide purview and mission, while still maintaining a vibrant schedule of public programs based out of our gallery in downtown Schenectady and throughout the Capital region.

Responsibilities

The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day management of New York Folklore. The Executive Director reports directly to the Board of Trustees and is responsible for advancing its

mission through strategic leadership, financial stewardship, organizational management, and external engagement. The Executive Director is expected to be a highly visible leader who inspires confidence among staff, volunteers, donors, members, and community partners while ensuring the organization's long-term sustainability and continued growth.

The successful candidate will possess strong, collaborative leadership skills, and excellent organizational, administrative, communication, and managerial skills. Experience with grant writing and fundraising is essential to identifying and sustaining new projects and initiatives.

The Executive Director position is full-time and exempt. Applicant is expected to reside in the Capital region if offered the position. Some evening and weekend work should be expected. Statewide travel as needed.

Duties include:

Program development

- Work with Board of Directors and staff in developing a long-range strategy that achieves the organization's mission and reflects its organizational values, including an emphasis on public folk arts programming rooted in field work and community-based relationship building
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant developments and trends in the field of public folklore and community-based arts
- Maintain community partnerships and relationships with artists, cultural organizations, and community stakeholders

Personnel Management

- Supervise a current staff of 5, and hire for any vacancies or new positions that may arise
- Ensure that job descriptions are developed and revised as necessary, that regular performance reviews are conducted and that sound human resources are in place
- Maintain a climate that attracts, keeps, and motivates a diverse staff of high-quality people
- Other duties and responsibilities as may be necessary to ensure the safe and responsible operation and management of the organization and its staff

Budget and Finance

- Work with staff, Finance Committee and Board in preparing the annual budget; ensure that the organization operates within budget guidelines
- Take the lead on fundraising efforts on behalf of the organization, including longstanding and new grants through New York State and local governments, regional and national foundations, federal agencies, other organizations, and large individual donors
- Advance earned revenue through leading fundraising events, membership growth and retention, solicitation of gifts, and fee for service opportunities

- Work with contractual book-keeping firm to ensure that adequate funds are available to permit the organization to carry out its work , including by-weekly payroll; in addition, prepare financial information for annual accounting review, with annual filings such as the IRS 990, CHAR-500, and IRS-529

Communications

- Maintain regular communication with the Board of Directors on the condition of the organization and all important factors influencing it; prepare and convene quarterly Board meetings, committee meetings, fill vacancies as needed, etc.
- Ensure that activities, programs, mission and goals of the organization are publicized using traditional and social media, including New York Folklore's website, social media pages, and email lists
- Coordinate with the editor and editorial board the preparation and distribution of *Voices: the Journal of New York Folklore*
- Serve as the official spokesperson for New York Folklore with various constituents, including community leaders, politicians, organizational partners, funders, and the general public

Advocacy

- Serve as the organization's primary contact for the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and other government-based arts organizations
- Develop and lead local advocacy efforts with local, State and national elected officials
- Serve as the organization's representative to State and national arts advocacy organizations

Experience:

A master's degree in folklore with a focus on public folklore is preferred. A master's degree in a related or adjacent field of study (ethnomusicology, cultural heritage studies, museum studies, anthropology, etc.) will also be considered. **A minimum of five years of experience in a managerial capacity within a cultural organization is required (e.g., Executive Director or Program Director).** A knowledge of the geography and cultural/social history of New York State and its diverse regions is a plus. The ideal candidate leads first-and-foremost with compassion. They focus on building and caring for relationships, coalition building, collaboration, and "leading from the back." They are flexible, sensitive, understanding, and have exceptional listening skills.

Disclaimer: We recognize that it's unlikely that any candidate will meet 100% of the desired qualifications for a role. If much of this job description resonates with you, we strongly

encourage you to apply today. We're committed to welcoming candidates with a wide range of experiences and perspectives – especially those who see themselves contributing to our mission to support folk and traditional artists, organizations, and communities.

Qualifications:

- Visionary and innovative thinker
- Understanding of the unique needs of folk and traditional artists and tradition bearers from multiple backgrounds, and with multiple languages
- A commitment to assisting others in enriching the cultural fabric of New York State
- Understanding of non-profit funding sources available in New York State
- Ability to motivate and work collaboratively with all sectors of the community, Board of Directors, and staff
- Cultivate the energy and expertise of the Board of Directors to implement policies and directives
- Advanced knowledge of PC based computer systems and technology, including MS Office Suite (Excel, Word), Adobe, WordPress, POS systems, donor management and collections management software

This Position is: In-Person, with one day remote following probationary period

Position Type: Full-Time, exempt

Salary Range: \$72,000 - \$75,000 depending on education and experience.

Benefits: Paid vacation, holidays, and sick leave. Up to 5% employer contribution to a 403(b) plan. Employer-sponsored health insurance plan available after a probationary period, with employer paying 50% of the premium.

How to Apply: Please submit the following as a single PDF:

- Resume/cv
- Cover letter
- Contact information for 3 references
- 2 professional work samples (written, video, presentation, exhibition, etc.)

Send materials to: executivesearch@nyfolklore.org OR
Search Committee
% New York Folklore
PO BOX 110
Schenectady NY 12301

Deadline: Monday, January 4, 2027