

ARTS ADMINISTRATION

CAREER GUIDE

**Fine Arts
Career Services**

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FINE ARTS CAREER SERVICES OFFERS:

ONE-ON-ONE ADVISING

Resume and cover letter reviews, mock interviews, graduate school advising and general career exploration. Call us for appointments!

JOB BOARD

Fine Arts Works is exclusively for COFA students and alumni. Check it out at bit.ly/fawjobs

PROGRAMMING

Tips and Tiffs professional development workshops, *Creative Exchange* guest speaker series and info sessions on FACS-specific initiatives

FUNDING

Intern Scholarship, Professional Development Travel Initiative (PDTI), New York Seminar Scholarship and more. bit.ly/facsfuns

AND MORE

Online internship classes, New York Seminar spring break trip, Networking Night and more!

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on taking the next step in thinking about your career in arts administration! Arts administration is well-suited for students from all fine arts disciplines. Whether you are a freshman or nearing graduation, now is a good time to think about your future. This career guide is meant to give you broad information as you picture yourself working in different environments. You are welcome to meet with Fine Arts Career Services for further guidance! We are here to brainstorm different career paths, give guidance on professional documents or help you find the right job or internship for your goals.

ABOUT ARTS ADMINISTRATION

Arts administration is the business of operating arts organizations. It encompasses many types of organizations including but not limited to performing arts venues, music venues, museums, galleries, theaters, symphonies, dance companies and auction houses.

Arts administration is the “behind the scenes” work of making art available, high-quality and sustainable in the world. It is more common to find jobs in non-profits than for-profits (although both exist) and it is sometimes known as “arts management.”

The needs of arts administration vary greatly depending on the type of organization. It is possible to get an arts administration job in a discipline that you did not study, but employers typically look for a strong knowledge base in the field. If you’re going to run the business of the art, they want you to love and be invested in the art, too!

Fine arts training intensively teaches time management, organization, attention to detail and cultural appreciation, which are critical skills for arts administration. Jobs in this field are categorized into development, marketing, education and operations. The size of the organization is directly related to the specificity of its jobs. For example, small organizations are less likely to have specialized positions than large organizations.

Arts administration has many entry-level jobs available to bachelor’s degree holders and is a common field for fine arts graduates to pursue immediately after graduation. Internships and volunteer experience at arts organizations directly relate to available entry-level jobs, and we strongly advise students interested in this field invest their time in internships and volunteering.

AREAS OF ARTS ADMINISTRATION

Operations in arts administration is extremely varied and dependant upon the organization. Operations is essentially the planning and strategy work necessary to keep arts organizations in motion. There is a high level of problem-solving in operations jobs, and this field requires thinking ahead to plan and foresee logistics. Typical operations positions in arts administration encompass budget management, human resources, volunteer management, security management, visitor and audience management, personnel hiring, training and scheduling, and equipment and facilities management.

Marketing in arts administration encompasses the same tasks as it does in other industries: managing social media, writing copy, tracking metrics of client and customer responsivity, creating and distributing promotional materials, public relations, community engagement and writing press releases. The goal of arts marketing is typically to promote art in order to convert the public into audience members or patrons of an organization.

Education and Community Engagement is a critical component at many arts organizations. Related tasks include creating curriculum for existing exhibitions or performances, coordinating visits or resources for schools and serving as the organization's outreach hub. Teaching certification is not necessary to pursue a career in this area.

Development essentially means fundraising. As you likely know, this is critical in the arts! Jobs and tasks grouped into development include writing and managing grants, letter writing, donor database management, donor recruitment and retention and event planning. Development is the area within arts administration that typically offers the most entry-level jobs.

ARTS ADMINISTRATION BY DISCIPLINE

Performing arts organizations encompass the disciplines of dance, music and theatre. In many smaller performing arts organizations, arts administrators are working in creative and administrative roles simultaneously. Even though these roles are more “desk jobs” by appearance, they often call on individuals to be highly versed in the inner workings of the disciplines. Theatre companies, dance companies, venues, non-profits, music festivals and educational entities all have performing arts administrators.

Visual arts organizations include exhibition spaces such as galleries, museums and public art programs. Many positions in these spaces require specialization only available with a graduate degree, but exceptions are made for the areas of marketing, development, operations and education. For example, museum curators nearly always have graduate degrees, but there are many entry-level development jobs at museums requiring only bachelor’s degrees. If you’re interested in working at museum or gallery, check out our Art History Career Guide.

Other spaces that offer arts administration jobs in the visual arts include artist residency programs, arts and social justice-oriented non-profits and community art organizations.

INTERN, INTERN, INTERN!

No matter what discipline or art form interests you most, it is extremely unlikely to receive a full-time job offer in arts administration without completing an internship. We recommend having your first internship in your second or third year so that you can learn about various roles within arts administration while becoming an increasingly competitive applicant. Austin is robust with arts administration opportunities! To learn more about internships, you can meet with a Career Advisor and explore our job board, Fine Arts Works.

JOB TITLES

Note: The word “associate” in this context implies jobs around entry level. You could substitute “manager” or “director” for higher leadership roles which typically require several years of experience and a graduate degree.

Operations

Docents and Tours Associate
Exhibition and Installation Technician
Finance Director
Human Resources Manager
Operations Associate
Security Associate

Marketing

Communications Associate
Marketing Associate
Public Relations Associate
Social Media and Digital Content Associate

Education

Education and Community Engagement Associate
Museum Educator, Family and Community Programs
Museum Educator, School and Teacher Programs

Development

Development Associate
Development Events Associate
Donor Relations Associate
Grants Associate
Membership Associate

Artistic

Artist Liaison
Artistic Director
Director of Artistic Planning

LET'S TALK ABOUT MONEY

We encourage students in every discipline to research within their field as early as possible so they know what to expect. Our office's favorite resource for salary research is Glassdoor (www.glassdoor.com). The Occupational Outlook Handbook compiled by the U.S Department of Labor (www.bls.gov/ooh/) is also a great resource that provides average salary ranges, estimated growth for various industries and more.

MAMA MINOR

If you are invested in gaining arts administration experience, you should consider the the Minor in Arts Management and Administration (MAMA)! Offered by the College of Fine Arts, this minor is open to students in any degree program at the university. Students broaden their understanding of careers in the commercial, nonprofit and public arts sectors, develop skills critical for arts managers in all arts disciplines and build career contacts through an internship experience.

FURTHERING YOUR EDUCATION

A *Master of Arts (MA)* in arts administration is a one to two year degree, and is sometimes offered by universities with blended curriculums from their respective business, law, and public administration programs. These programs often involve a practicum where students gain experience in an arts venue as they pursue their degree.

...NOW WHAT'S NEXT?

Maybe reading this guide has left you with questions, or feeling unsure about which career opportunities you want to explore.

That is okay!

Setting up an appointment with Fine Arts Career Services is a great way to brainstorm your next steps, whatever your goals may be!

