



# COVER LETTER HANDBOOK

## EXAMPLE COVER LETTERS:

- Early college experience **2**
- Mid-level college **3**
- Graduating senior **4**
- Post-undergraduate experience **5**

## WHAT IF THEY DON'T ASK FOR A COVER LETTER?

Sometimes employers will phrase their ask for a cover letter as, "Send us your resume and a few reasons why you're a great fit for our company!" In this case, you can assume that it is appropriate to send them a cover letter.

A cover letter is a one-page letter addressed to an employer to tell them why you are qualified for their open position.

## OVERVIEW:

A cover letter has a **salutation, introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion,** and a **signature.**

Try to not list everything from your resume. Instead, select some **success stories** from your past experiences and relate them to the job!

Research the company's **mission** or **values** so you can relate your letter to these objectives.

Use the **same header** from your resume as the header for your cover letter.

If the job description does not include who the cover letter should be addressed to, **"Dear Hiring Committee"** is a safe bet!



## **Ally Alphabet**

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June 29, 2022

Dear Hiring Manager,

I was fourteen when I first felt part of the arts community that The Contemporary Austin fosters. I remember being dropped off at the Jones Center for weekly Young Artists meetings—getting to socialize with other teens deeply curious about art, many of whom came to be my colleagues later at UT Austin’s College of Fine Arts. I remember late nights at Laguna Gloria, watching movies by the water, crafting buttons to trade with my new friends, and feeling a sense of belonging getting to see so many familiar faces at every Teen Night. As a college student, I had the opportunity to witness talks, exhibitions, and performances that have undoubtedly contributed to my education as an artist. It has been an immense privilege to take part in these public programs, and as the Temporary Program Coordinator I would uphold The Contemporary Austin’s reputation as a hugely influential force within the local arts scene.

Throughout 2022, I have collaborated with the Programs Manager of UMLAUF Sculpture Garden + Museum to host events for both children and adults. I have demonstrated that I am creative, flexible, and proactive by designing craft activities for Family Day and After Dark events, stepping in to read for bilingual Story Time, and helping to reinstate the museum’s after school program, Shaping Space. Not only have I been a part of the behind the scenes making of these events, but I have also helped them run smoothly day of, serving as a representative of the museum. Additionally, my experience with Backstage Marketing during their COVID vaccine outreach campaign has given me the skills necessary to coordinate multiple moving pieces of an event. I am a strong communicator who is not afraid to ask for help when I need it. I am punctual and compassionate in how I respond, both online and off. I have experience in communications as an assistant to M.E. Laursen for the 7up Austin Art Newsletter and as an intern at Landmarks, and both positions have taught me to have a keen sense of the contemporary art world locally and at large.

As the Temporary Program Coordinator, I will diligently ensure that the programs for The Contemporary Austin are hosted in ways that are inviting, fun, and educational. I am dedicated to making sure every visitor leaves as inspired and welcomed as I have been by this museum. Thank you for your time and consideration of my application, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,  
Ally



# Molly Music

555-555-5185 | [mollymus@yahoo.com](mailto:mollymus@yahoo.com)

January 12, 2022

Americans for the Arts

RE: Intern

Dear Hiring Committee,

I am writing to you to express my interest in the Diversity in Arts Leadership program with Americans for the Arts. As an undergraduate at the University of Texas at Austin pursuing a BFA in Acting, I am always seeking ways to highlight and empower diverse voices in the arts. After reviewing the internship requirements and duties, I believe that my qualifications and education are a great match for the Diversity in Arts Leadership Summer Program.

Recent coursework and my research project thesis over the misrepresentation of Asian women has inspired me to incorporate more social activism into my career and apply for the DIAL internship. As an Asian American actor, I have frequently been typecast or excluded from roles where I don't "fit the bill". Efforts to fix these inequities in creative spaces need to be supported at institutional levels, which is precisely what Americans for the Arts works to do. The American for the Arts mission strongly aligns with my own values, because they advocate for equity in the arts and push the boundaries of the performance industry. Gaining this valuable experience in the DIAL internship program would help me further my understanding of how to support underrepresented communities within the performing arts.

My leadership experience in the arts and my experience working in fast-paced environments will serve as an asset to the DIAL internship program. I have gained leadership skills working as an officer in various positions for National Honor Society and Texas Thespians. Most recently, I had the opportunity to be a part of a cast of three in a production, *Meek*, which was performed in the Lab Theatre at UT Austin. Since then, I have also participated in multiple short film projects within UT's Radio, Television, and Film program. My involvement in these fast-paced, collaborative artistic projects taught me take initiative and to persevere when faced with obstacles. Additionally, I have learned to deal with challenging, sudden issues that require quick thinking during my time serving tables at a local Chinese restaurant.

My passion for diversity in theatre, my arts leadership experience, and my service experience make me a fantastic candidate for the Diversity in Arts Leadership internship program. It would be an honor to be a part of the initiatives the DIAL program spearheads, and I hope to have the opportunity to speak with you soon about the internship. Thank you very much for your time and consideration of my application.

Sincerely,  
Molly Music



Luiz Library

Luiz.Library@gmail.com  
555-555-5155

August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Questroyal|Fine Art, LLC  
903 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10075

Dear Hiring Committee,

As a studio artist, one of my primary interests has been relaying the intricacies of the arts to a public audience. My dedication to working with audiences in the visual arts is my primary reason for applying to Questroyal Fine Art as an Administrator. As a result of my background in customer service and art handling alongside my trilingual knowledge, I believe I would be a great candidate for this position.

At my internship with TND Marketing, I gathered and worked upon client feedback to construct marketing materials for various clients. This role taught me valuable customer service skills such as communicating responsibly and delivering information efficiently. Similarly, at the Frisco Arts Foundation, my role emphasized customer outreach and public participation. As an intern, I collaborated with the team to create marketing materials for art donors. These experiences encouraged me to pursue a role working with gallery audiences, as I discovered I excelled best working with others. I am prepared to begin integrating these skills into the responsibilities of Questroyal Fine Art.

My degree at the University of Texas at Austin's department of Art and Art History allowed me to build an extensive understanding of varied art forms with an emphasis on painting, drawing, and printmaking. At UT Austin, I also participated in exhibitions where I gained experience in art handling and outreach. The university furthered my passion for the visual arts and provided me with an appreciation for communicating and interacting with others that I believe suits the difficult task of familiarizing the public with art. In addition, my trilingual and international background also has provided me with experiences interacting with diverse peoples with different cultures and backgrounds. I am fluent in Portuguese, Spanish and English. These languages have become an important asset in professional settings as it has allowed me to comfortably communicate with international audiences like that of Questroyal Fine Art.

Due to my commitment to working with Texas audiences utilizing my trilingual skills, I believe I that I am well-positioned to be an Administrator at Questroyal Fine Art. Thank you for your consideration; I look forward to hearing from you. Please let me know if there is anything else I can provide you.

Sincerely,

Luiz Library



[Redacted]

**composer, clarinetist, arts administrator**

[Redacted]

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May 21, 2022

Dear Operations Coordinator Hiring Committee,

As a trained classical musician with a keen interest in planning and logistics, I am highly aware of the amount of the work that goes into producing extraordinary musical experiences. With my knowledge and skills both on stage and backstage, I would be an excellent candidate for the Operations Coordinator position.

I most recently worked as an Event Manager at the Butler School of Music at the University of Texas, where I had staffed over 70 concerts across the school's three performance halls, often working independently, and at times serving as the representative of the operations staff. In this position, I coordinated with many stakeholders including faculty, guest artists, box office, and recording services to ensure a successful program. For student recitals, I was in charge of managing both the stage and the front-of-house. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, I ensured that safety and social distancing protocols were adhered to, and was the first to oversee a recital with these procedures in place. With a large staff change in the new school year, I was often responsible for making sure the new hires were comfortable with and knowledgeable of the duties of the job. From this position, I became accustomed to being reliably excellent at what I do when upwards of 600 musicians and audience members are counting on the show to go on.

Last fall, I worked as an intern with the Grammy-award winning choral ensemble Conspirare, specifically in the administrative and production realms. My usual tasks included updating the budget sheets for the upcoming or recent performances, reviewing and organizing contracts for artists and crew members, and the general assemblage of itineraries, nametags, and signs. During the concert weeks, I assisted the stage managers and technical director with various crew tasks including unloading equipment, putting together the modular stage, and placing spike marks. Along the way, I also conceptualized and budgeted for future outreach/education events to be associated with a concert program debuting next fall involving the Miró Quartet and 10 guest composers. Besides my office and crew work, my biggest takeaway from my time with Conspirare was the importance of how you treat your artists. Seeing how my fellow administrative staff communicated with and accommodated the needs of the many singers and instrumentalists with such care and respect will continue to be a large influence on me moving forward in my career.

In the summer of 2021, I had the opportunity to intern at the OKM Music Festival in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. While it is one of the shorter of my experiences, it was definitely one of the most intense! Throughout the two weeks, I was involved in almost all facets of the production and operations of the festival, from making day sheets for the interns, to setting up backline and audio equipment. I was responsible for recruiting festival volunteers, with whom I kept in contact when we needed to change a venue due to inclement weather. I also facilitated some marketing projects, most notably distributing about 2,000 print brochures to pizza places around town. Being out of town, I also got to interact with a musical community outside of Austin, absorbing how a music organization adapts to a changing audience. Overall, this experience proved to me that I can be flexible in order to further the mission of the organization and in supporting the community that the organization is based in.

These past experiences, as well as my background as a composer and performer, have affirmed that I am truly passionate about putting in the behind-the-scenes efforts to make life-transforming musical moments possible. I would be thrilled to bring my skills and expertise to an organization that values great music and fostering the next generation of music-makers like the Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra. Thank you so much for your time and consideration, and I look forward to speaking with you soon!

Sincerely,

[Redacted]



## GENERAL STRUCTURE:

Header

Salutation

2-3 body paragraphs that highlight your experience

Conclusion

Signature

## WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE?

That's okay! Maybe you're just starting out in college, had to take a break, or have other responsibilities.

Focus on what you **have** done in your college career. Maybe you had a big project in one of your classes you could highlight, or you have worked on some skills at home that could apply to the job! Expand on what you have, and remember that everyone starts somewhere!

## ADDITIONAL INFO:

A common mistake when writing a cover letter is telling the employer you are excited about the opportunity because it will give you a chance to learn. Though learning is certainly something we want you to be excited about, you want the reader to walk away feeling like you are capable of doing the job rather than that you want to come in and learn from them.

When reviewing the job posting, highlight some key words or skills that you see. If possible, try to integrate those words into your cover letter—this way, you “mirror” the job posting and align yourself with the values and requirements!

When thinking about what information to present in a cover letter versus a resume, it's helpful to think of the resume as the data of your professional experience and the cover letter as the narrative of your professional experience. You don't want to repeat the same information; rather, you should connect the experience listed on your resume to the skills and qualifications needed for the open position.

Avoid using passive language. Saying “I believe I am qualified for your position” sets a different tone but shares the same information as “I am qualified for your position.” Similarly, saying “My previous internship helped me gain new skills in communication” also sets a different tone than “I gained new communication skills in my previous internship.”