

**NEWFIELDS: A Place for Nature & the Arts**  
**The Indianapolis Museum of Art Melvin & Bren Simon Director**

***Newfields seeks a dynamic museum professional to be the Director of the IMA and: organize outstanding exhibitions, programs and education; manage and shape collections; drive museum attendance; and engage current and new audiences, donors, partners and constituents.***

Founded in 1883, the Indianapolis Museum of Art ([IMA](#)) is today part of a 152-acre campus called [NEWFIELDS](#), which is comprised of the Museum, [Fairbanks Park](#), [The Garden](#), [Lilly House](#) and [Elder Greenhouse](#) in Indianapolis and the iconic [Miller House & Garden](#) in southern Indiana.

For visitors, *NEWFIELDS* offers an ever-changing array of experiences of art, design, nature, educational programs, the culinary arts, music and performance that can be taken in by guests of all ages, interests and backgrounds. People can enjoy *NEWFIELDS* with deep or no prior knowledge of fine arts or of programs on offer, and people can explore again and again to have fresh, fun, enlightening experiences. *NEWFIELDS* is magnetic, welcoming and ever-changing.

At the core of the *NEWFIELDS* experience stands the Indianapolis Museum of Art. For 137 years, the IMA has built a solid reputation regionally, nationally and internationally and is today considered to be a museum on the leading edge of innovative practices. The Melvin & Bren Simon Director will extend the IMA's tradition of providing exceptional visual arts exhibitions and programs.

**IMA COLLECTIONS and ATTRIBUTES**

The Museum houses an encyclopedic [collection](#) of more than 45,000 works spanning 5,000 years. Highlights of the IMA's holdings include: the Samuel Josefowitz Collection of works by Gauguin and the School of Pont-Aven; the Holliday Collection of Neo-Impressionism, with works by Georges Seurat and his followers; the best and most extensive collection of works on paper and paintings by J.M.W. Turner outside Great Britain; the Clowes Collection of Old Master works; an outstanding collection of Japanese Edo-period paintings; the Chinese Art Collection; the Eiteljorg Collection of African Art; The American Art Collection; The Glick Collection of Contemporary Studio Glass; one of the foremost Design Arts collections in the world; The Fashion and Textile Collection and an evolving collection of work by leading contemporary artists. The IMA also houses state of the art conservation facilities, one of the few art science laboratories in the nation and is responsible for art located within The Garden at *NEWFIELDS* and the adjacent Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park.

The IMA's programming approach is innovative and pushes far beyond standard practice. This can unfold subtly, as when annual outdoor events include striking visual arts elements that might reference a season or horticultural features of The Garden or Park. A more striking example is [THE LUME](#), a 30,000 square foot immersive digital art experience. The only such space in any art museum in the world, THE LUME will open to the public in June 2021 with its first experience focusing on the work of Van Gogh. In these innovative galleries one can literally walk into paintings and experience technique in exciting, and otherwise impossible ways. What is it like to be so sensitive that color explodes within you, such that you must load your brush with vivid paint and create? THE LUME's intensity provides such insight, while adding to the portfolio of experiences to be enjoyed at *NEWFIELDS* and the IMA.

The IMA's building is one of the largest in the United States, and features 135,000 square feet of interior and special exhibition galleries. The IMA hosts about 500,000 visitors annually and

has 17,000 member households. Approximately 275 staff members manage and support IMA operations, and the IMA partners with *NEWFIELDS* Finance, Operations, Marketing and Parks & Garden departments to advance the work of the Museum.

The annual operating budget of *NEWFIELDS* is \$25 million with about \$20 million of that supporting the IMA, including its curatorial, exhibition, programming, collection management activities, etc. IMA staff functions include: exhibitions (planning and implementation); curatorial; conservation, registration, art acquisition and deaccession; design; public programs and education; academic engagement and docents; interpretation, media and publications; and library and archives.

### **BASIC FUNCTION of the IMA DIRECTOR**

Reporting to and aligning with the vision of the CEO of *NEWFIELDS*, the Melvin & Bren Simon Director will lead the Indianapolis Museum of Art. The IMA Director will set the IMA's artistic vision; manage museum exhibitions, programs and operations; and promote the Museum as one of the foremost cultural destinations in the Midwest.

The Director will manage all IMA staff and the budgets that directly support the art collection and art-related programming. The Director will work to increase representation in the collection of artists who are under-represented in IMA collections, including works by women, people of color, indigenous, LGBTQ+ and others. The Director will also shape related programming that is respectful of different points of view, and that provides contextualized interpretation of works. The focus will be on exhibition and program quality, and on engaging the interest of audiences of diverse ethnicities, ages, orientations and genders.

The Director will have the personnel, finance, fundraising, communications and administrative skills required to manage the day-to-day operations of one of the largest and oldest visual arts museums in the country, while ensuring a compelling and inclusive arts exhibition and programming schedule. The IMA Director is responsible not only for art exhibitions, installations, programs and presentations within the Museum, but also throughout *NEWFIELDS*, including in the The Garden, The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park, The Lilly House and The Miller House & Garden by working in concert with the Director of the Garden and Park.

The Director will ensure that all IMA activities adhere to best museum practice, while also ensuring that Indianapolis visitors and residents feel respected, welcome and engaged. The primary goal of *NEWFIELDS* as an organization, and of the IMA as part of *NEWFIELDS*, is to capture the interest and support of both the IMA's core art audience of traditional supporters and a broader, more diverse local and regional population of potential visitors. The IMA Director must be: a willing collaborator practiced in establishing and leveraging innovative partnerships with other art organizations and colleagues; a community leader; and a person with the judgment required to bend rigid strictures of tradition in order to make the Museum more user-friendly and welcoming for everyone.

### **IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES**

It is expected that the Director will be a visionary museum professional, and a grounded administrator who can generate innovative ideas, inspire others to champion them and motivate individuals to explore their creative limits. The Director will:

- Know the IMA thoroughly – its institutional history, culture, traditions, collections, exhibitions, educational and public programs, operations and constituents; understand the institution’s geographic context, base of support and its potential; help position the IMA as a vibrant, integral participant in the life of its local community, as well as the region and in the museum field; and develop and implement strategic initiatives to enhance those positions.
- Provide direction for and work closely with the IMA staff, listening to their ideas, understanding their strengths and encouraging each team member’s professional growth; create an atmosphere that rewards initiative, risk-taking, holds all accountable, exceeds industry standards and encourages productivity and cross-departmental collaboration. Grow diversity, equity, inclusivity and accessibility among the staff by a focused recruitment, compensation, training, engagement and succession program for employees. Work with the Volunteer manager to increase the number and diversity of volunteers supporting the Museum.
- Work closely with the CEO, senior colleagues and other staff members to build an infrastructure for the IMA that will sustain growth; evaluate the Museum’s operations already in place; where appropriate, create and implement new systems and procedures throughout the Museum; evaluate the IMA’s programming carefully; continue to enhance the art collection by privileging the finest quality pieces already in the collection, only acquiring A-level new acquisitions and deaccessioning works of lesser quality; provide direction for future exhibitions, scholarly publications, programs and educational outreach; ensure integration of exhibition, collection development and education objectives with Marketing with the goals of increasing community awareness of the IMA’s activities and goals of diversifying attendance and, where possible, increasing revenue from programmatic initiatives.
- Forge a strong working relationship with the CEO of *NEWFIELDS* and by extension the Board of Trustees and Board of Governors to engage them fully to bring forth their best ideas and support; and attend Board and Art Committee meetings, as well as other committee meetings as required.
- Along with the CEO take joint ownership of immediate and ongoing fundraising needs for the IMA and work closely with the Advancement staff and key volunteers to continue sound fundraising strategies; and strengthen ties with existing supporters as well as identifying new ones.
- In tandem with the CEO and the Director of The Garden and Park, build stronger bridges between *NEWFIELDS* and the community, especially with local communities of color with the goal of inviting them to utilize *NEWFIELDS* facilities more and co-creating programming.

## **OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES**

### LEADERSHIP & GENERAL MANAGEMENT

- Ensure, by effective leadership and management, that the day-to-day operations and programs of the IMA are professionally and efficiently administered; manage the business affairs of the IMA with the intent of supporting its mission and goals while

achieving greater financial growth, funding diversity and supporting permanent sustainability for the Museum with the context of *NEWFIELDS*;

- With the CEO and Boards, communicate the mission of the IMA to the larger community and articulate its place among cultural institutions in Indianapolis, the state of Indiana, the United States and globally;
- With the *NEWFIELDS* Director of Human Resources, hire, supervise, motivate, develop and evaluate staff, ensuring that staffing is appropriate to meet the IMA's goals; ensure that approved policies are consistently implemented;
- In partnership with the CEO, Director of The Garden and Park, staff and appropriate constituencies, enhance and refine *NEWFIELDS* [strategic plan](#) on an as-needed basis; develop and align short- and long-range objectives with the values-based strategic plan; and ensure that approved policies are adhered to and evaluated for updating periodically;
- Manage the IMA in a fiscally responsible and savvy manner, taking into consideration the financial implications of operations, programming and acquisitions within the context of *NEWFIELDS*' core values of Stewardship, Inclusivity, Service and Excellence.

#### EXHIBITIONS, COLLECTIONS AND PROGRAMS

- Provide direction for the development of new exhibitions, outreach efforts and education programs; ensure that best museum practices are employed; leverage the collections in ways that are locally relevant and that promote recognition of the collections throughout Indiana, the region and the United States;
- Maximize unique programmatic opportunities, working closely with the curatorial, education and public programs divisions to animate the permanent collection galleries in innovative ways that attract a broader and more diverse audience while maintaining the Museum's traditional, core, white art audience; work in concert with the Director of The Garden and Park to ensure the creation and coordination of engaging art and nature programming in the Museum, Garden and Park.
- Explore innovative paths to enhance the collection, including: developing relationships with collectors and artists that may lead to appropriate gifts and commissions for the IMA: on-going deaccession of lesser works of art and increased investment in works of art by women, people of color, indigenous, LGBTQ+ and other under-represented artists; preserve works of art in the IMA's collection;
- Work collaboratively and appropriately manage various relationships with other museums, collections, schools, universities, patrons, volunteers and other community members; serve as an advocate for the organization's collections, curators and education professionals, assuring that the interests of the IMA are advanced and fully understood;

#### REVENUE AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Serve as the chief fundraiser for the Museum; work closely with the CEO, Boards, staff and advisors to expand and diversify revenue streams from annual giving, licensing, facility rentals, concessions and other sources; set high expectations for increased

financial support from foundations, corporations, individuals, government and other philanthropic sources for the IMA's programs, exhibitions and capital projects;

- Solidify IMA's reputation as an exceptional museum that provides unique insight into the diverse art, history and culture of the world, and continue to raise awareness among regional, national and international audiences; work with the CEO and marketing department to promote the IMA on a local, regional and national levels; cultivate mutually beneficial partnerships with other local, regional national and international institutions;
- Serve as an articulate and persuasive spokesperson for the IMA; represent IMA to all of its constituencies, including funders, the arts and collector communities, civic organizations, business alliances and current and prospective visitors; cultivate strong and supportive relationships with other institutions in the region and in the arts community;
- Remain up-to-date on the latest developments in museum management and the art world through ongoing dialogue with colleagues and specialists in the field; hold membership in and attend meetings of appropriate professional organizations, including the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD); and be knowledgeable about current, sound legal practices in the cultural arena, sharing information with staff and the CEO as appropriate.

## **EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS and VALUES**

The IMA Director should have the following:

- Senior-level exhibition, programming and management experience in an art museum known for quality and excellence; knowledge of the art world and its key players locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; demonstrated ability to develop innovative and meaningful collaborations, exhibitions and possible acquisitions;
- Fundraising aptitude including successful experience cultivating and soliciting financial and art gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations;
- An interest in community building, especially among Indianapolis' African-American, Indigenous and Hispanic populations; a commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity and Accessibility (DEIA); experience implementing programs that successfully engage under-represented constituencies;
- The ability to work in a team fashion, while building and nurturing relationships with staff members and other individuals from a broad swath of society – from the core art enthusiasts to unengaged, potential visitors, along with dedicated volunteers, artists, funders and collectors;
- The ability to plan, set the standards for and manage exhibitions, programs, collections and systematic community outreach; a track record of managing people, operations and budgets in a complex organization;
- Experience serving as an effective spokesperson and ambassador for an institution or program, with outstanding verbal and written communication skills; the ability to generate awareness of, excitement for, and appreciation of an organization.

- An individual with high integrity who is committed to excellence, practices good judgment and exudes genuine interest, credibility and a delight in the work at hand;
- A person with a sense of humor, grace and perspective.

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