



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Position Profile

Location: U.S.-based remote

Posting Date: May 18, 2022

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

The Craft Emergency Relief Fund, also known as CERF+, is a national artists' service organization whose mission is to help craft artists build strong and sustainable careers. Since its founding in 1985, CERF+ has grown from a modest, grassroots mutual aid organization into a leader in the field of arts emergency readiness, relief and recovery.

Active in both emergency and non-emergency periods, CERF+ provides resources, educational programs, advocacy and emergency relief and recovery funding. With 36 years of responding to artists facing myriad climate-related disasters, global pandemics and personal crises such as illness, injury and home/studio fires, CERF+:

- Rapidly responds and provides support to artists from the onset of an emergency to recovery,
- Works with state, regional and national arts organizations and agencies and the emergency management community to highlight the important roles artists play in disaster recovery and to address artists' unique needs and challenges in crises, and
- Promotes and advances the proactive protection of creative careers.

For the past 26 years, Executive Director Cornelia Carey has guided CERF+ through extraordinary growth and evolution to become the leading organization that it is today. She has announced that she will complete her tenure in the fall of 2022.

CERF+ seeks a bold and innovative individual to be its new champion for artists who work in craft disciplines. This people-centered executive would direct an influential, rapidly expanding arts organization and be a prominent voice within the arts emergency management community and beyond.

WHAT IS CRAFT TO CERF+?

Craft is the creation of original objects through the skillful manipulation of materials. These materials were traditionally considered to be clay, fiber, metal, wood or glass. However, today's artists working in a craft discipline may also employ concrete, plastic, synthetic fibers, recycled materials and other non-traditional materials, and may self-identify as a maker, designer, potter, ceramicist, jeweler, glass artist, woodworker, mixed media artist, etc. CERF+ broadly defines craft to be inclusive of all materials-based artists regardless of whether they use "craft" to describe themselves.

Craft objects may be functional or nonfunctional, but both types derive part of their meaning from their association with traditional functional forms such as chairs, vessels, garments or implements and/or

their association with cultural traditions. Qualities that contribute to the success of a craft object include the skill of the maker, the use of the material, the refinement of the design, the originality of expression, its cultural significance – or all of these.

THE OPPORTUNITY

CERF+ envisions a world where craft and studio artists are resilient in the face of disaster. It takes an integrated approach to explore and address root causes and barriers to that resilience. Its work straddles three mission categories: disaster preparedness **education**, **advocacy** and emergency relief **funding**.

This remote position is an incredible opportunity for a seasoned, energetic leader who has an affinity for craft and the role it plays in civil society. This affinity is tangential to an ability to promote and further the protection of craft arts careers through preparedness and response education, advocacy and funding. The Executive Director will lean into CERF+'s mutual aid society roots to engage the craft community, build relationships and boldly represent the emergency relief interests of the craft community. Applicants from within and outside of the craft field are welcomed and encouraged.

The Executive Director will be charged with and empowered to:

- Partner with the 18-member Board and 7-member staff to formalize a multi-year strategic plan to define the work, structure, activities, priorities and approach CERF+ will take in its leadership of a national, widely diverse constituency.
- Ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion are woven into the values, outreach, programming and design of CERF+ initiatives.
- Engage artists to leverage their local wisdom and industry influence to identify preparedness and disaster needs within the craft and studio arts community. Refine, scale and grow the organization to align with those evolving needs.
- Work across and within the emergency response community to advance thought leadership and elevate the needs and interests of craft artists.
- Advocate for public policies that bolster artists and the sustainability of their creative pursuits and cultural contributions.
- Expand and diversify the CERF+ funding base through partnerships, additional revenue streams and strong, trusting relationships with donors, foundations, corporations and the government. Steward and manage resources in a fiscally sound manner.
- Utilize a people-centered approach to develop and lead a professional team in a work environment that reflects the values of the organization, inspires high performance and a connection to the mission.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

As an organization, CERF+ is at a transformational moment in its history. The confluence of a global pandemic, America's racial reckoning in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and an onslaught of devastating climate-induced disasters in North America prompted CERF+ to pause, look inward and assess its trajectory. It also invited supporters and stakeholders to provide their insights. Through the lenses of climate change, emergent craft disciplines, the demographics of craft artists and artisans and

public policy, CERF+ reviewed its engagement of the artist community, its diversity, equity and inclusion practices and how it was living its values. These reflective findings have informed its strategic vision for the future, including the desired qualities and talents of its next Executive Director.

Equipped with a report and analysis that features constituent and introspective revelations, the next Executive Director will be poised to shepherd the organization into a new era while honoring its history and mission fundamentals. The ideal candidate will embody the values of CERF+ and bring a thoughtful, innovative and strategic approach to the work through the following skills and characteristics:

- **Artist-centric**—must recognize that craft artists are at the core of the organization’s purpose and will keep pulse on the evolving needs and trends of that community. CERF+ was created for and by artists. Since 1985, it has provided a place for artists and their allies to contribute and demonstrate solidarity, particularly in times of crisis.
- **Culturally Responsive**—socially aware, able to honor and make space for the rich and varied ethnicities, generations, backgrounds and artistic provenance represented in the craft community. Committed to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- **Visionary**—strategic, progressive innovator who can see the big picture, identify potential, and remain grounded in pursuit of aspirations.
- **Humanitarian**—demonstrates compassion and empathy, particularly in times of crisis.
- **Compelling Communicator**—can passionately express artist narratives and the case for CERF+ to strengthen fundraising, inspire action, promote advocacy and bring visibility to the emergency relief and preparedness needs of the craft arts community.
- **Fundraiser**—expand the fundraising infrastructure to grow the \$3 million budget and \$6 million endowment.
- **Participatory Leadership Style**—uses emotional intelligence to give voice to the artist constituency, establishes intentional relationships to build bridges among artists and peer organizations. Able to work as a convener and operative within a collective.
- **Disciplined Executive**—cultivates a partnership with the Board, ensures the financial solvency of the organization, adapts business models to changing needs and empowers the staff. 7+ years’ experience in a supervisory management role.
- **Digital Proponent**—embraces active use of technology to lead a team and to augment in-person interactions that sustain and grow internal and external relationships. Integrates digital and traditional communication methods to reach a diverse constituency. *CERF+ is transitioning to a 100% remote work environment for its staff.*

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

CERF+ offers competitive wages and excellent benefits, including comprehensive health insurance with dental, employer HSA contributions, life insurance, a 403(b)-retirement plan and other work/life benefits. The salary for this position starts at \$125,000 and is negotiable.

CERF+ is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to a diverse workplace. People from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and persons with disabilities are highly encouraged to apply. CERF+ does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, non-disqualifying physical or mental disability, national origin, veteran status, or any other basis covered by appropriate law.

TO APPLY

Candidates may submit their cover letter, outlining their interest and qualifications, along with their resume via the [online application](#).

Inquiries and nominations related to this position should be sent to Nadia Mitchem at nadia@fortifyconsultllc.com. All nominations, inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

More information about CERF+ can be found at cerfplus.org.

Application Deadline

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. For priority consideration, please apply by June 30, 2022.