



Director, Krannert Art Museum
College of Fine and Applied Arts
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

THE SEARCH

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign seeks nominations and applications for the position of Director, Krannert Art Museum. The next director will be a visionary leader in the arts with a strong commitment to building a dynamic, inclusive, and collaborative museum hub that engages campus, community, and national constituencies in experiences of creative expression.

Krannert Art Museum is an engaged partner in the intellectual and cultural work of the campus and its host communities, actively involving local residents, faculty, students, and staff as initiators and partners in compelling investigations of contemporary culture and society. The museum has a collection of more than 11,500 works of art that date from the fourth millennium BCE to the present and reflect the museum's educational mission. The programming both mirrors and illuminates big questions and uncertainties, generating further inquiries along with robust, iterative responses to key challenges. Supporting the work of the museum includes 19 full time staff with the director overseeing a total budget of approximately \$2.6 million.

Major priorities for the next director include increasing the museum's integration into curriculum across campus, enlisting more of the intellectual assets of the campus into the museum's exhibition and educational objectives, and raising the museum's visibility as a leading campus art museum in the United States that engages locally and nationally. The director will be responsible for all activities of the museum, expected to work across the University and to provide strategic vision, direction, artistic oversight, and executive and administrative leadership for an organization that serves its campus and community. The director represents the museum to various external constituencies, most notably alumni and friends of the arts, public audiences throughout the region, and the museum and arts professions at large, cultivating donors and patrons to secure philanthropic support. Overall, the director provides strategic leadership for Krannert Art Museum, ensuring that the institution's mission is clearly understood and that its objectives are fully articulated and effectively pursued.

THE KRANNERT ART MUSEUM

Krannert Art Museum opened its doors in 1961, establishing a permanent home for the University's existing collection of fine art that dates back to 1872. In 1988 a new wing, the Kinkead Pavilion, was dedicated, almost tripling the building's size to 63,000 square feet and making Krannert Art Museum the second largest general fine art museum in the state of Illinois. The building's setting is enhanced by two volunteer-maintained gardens, the largest of which is known as "The First and Last Gallery". A rich, varied, and comprehensive collection of over 11,500 works of art ranges from the fourth millennium BCE to the present. The collection represents an extensive array of cultures and media, and reflects the museum's educational mission and the university's history of collecting. Areas of acknowledged strength include European and American paintings of the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, twentieth-century paintings from the United States, African art, pre-Hispanic Andean art, contemporary art, prints, and photography. The museum also has strong representative collections of Asian, ancient, and decorative arts. Krannert Art Museum presents 6-8 exhibitions a year (most of them organized by museum staff) and over 150 educational programs and special events. These exhibitions and accompanying publications instantiate the learning-in-relationship so valued by the museum: relationships among objects, people, disciplines, and cultures that animate dialogue and interaction.

The museum is a passionately engaged partner in the intellectual work of the campus, involving students and faculty in research and development of exhibitions and museum publications, organizing interdisciplinary workshops and other programs with its exhibitions, and inviting renowned artists and scholars to campus for workshops and residencies.

The current strategic plan upholds three core values: to position the museum as a laboratory, to promote sustainability in operations, and to center care and accessibility by prioritizing universal design, nurturing belonging and connectedness, and embracing multiple learning styles and types of knowledge. More information in the strategic plan can be found [here](#).

Krannert Art Museum operates deficit-free and is in good financial health with total budget of roughly \$2.6 million and 19 FTE staff members. The current budget is comprised of \$1.7 million in operational funds and an additional \$900k programmatic support. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is currently completing its reaccreditation process. Museum admission is free and all activities are open to the public. In 2024 regular attendance was over 14,000 visitors.

ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR

Reporting jointly to the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts, the director will serve as the chief administrative officer of the museum, responsible for all aspects of its operations and management, including fiscal and personnel management. Working closely with other academic and administrative departments on campus, the director represents the museum to various external constituencies, most notably alumni and friends of the arts, public audiences throughout the region, and the museum and arts professions at large. The director will be a

vocal champion for the critical need for the arts in society, cultivating donors and working strategically to secure funding.

The director leads a senior team including the Assistant Director of Community Engagement & Learning, Assistant Director of Marketing & Communications, Director of Exhibitions & Registrar, Senior Assistant Director of Operations & Strategy, Senior Curator & Curator of Global African Art, and Senior Director of Advancement. The director will partner with the Museum Council as key stakeholders and supporters of the museum.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Shape the museum's strategic vision and drive impactful outcomes.

The Krannert Art Museum is operating under a strategic plan that ends in 2027. The plan outlines the three priority areas of Art and Inquiry, Engagement and Belonging, and Sustainability. This strategic plan provides a strong foundation for advancing the museum's mission. The next director will have the opportunity to shape the museum's future and build toward the next strategic plan.

The director will lead the museum's next chapter with a vision that is ambitious yet actionable. This includes working to identify and implement measures that will sustain and enhance programmatic excellence, integration with the University's teaching and learning mission, robust public engagement, and financial sustainability. They will develop long-term initiatives that ensure excellence in exhibitions, collections, programmatic content, and engagement, with clear objectives for measurable success. While maintaining alignment with college and university goals, the director will create an environment that supports staff in connecting the work of all departments clearly to institutional objectives.

Lead, develop, and empower a high performing team.

The museum is home to a team of dedicated professionals. The director will be responsible for building and developing museum staff, demonstrating a full understanding of their work, thereby promoting institutional cohesion and a cooperative, shared sense of the museum's future. The director will be a values-driven leader who maintains clear communications, including through delegation of responsibilities and appropriate authority, maintaining transparency in decision-making, and regular supportive interaction with the full team. The director will be present and attentive to internal management necessary to facilitate the museum's mission.

Ensure meaningful and robust community engagement.

Recognizing that Illinois is a public, research-intensive, land-grant university, the director will be committed to Krannert Art Museum's role in serving the University, the local community, and the state. The director will represent the museum in the greater community as an active arts leader and partner. In addition to serving as the face of the museum, the director will prioritize outreach to expansively connect

with audiences and facilitate welcoming relationships. Serving as a hub for bringing the college and community together will raise the museum's profile and build its capacity for engagement.

Partner throughout the college and university to connect with students, staff, and faculty.

Within the campus, the director will be the chief liaison for the museum with the college and university and an eager partner with colleagues. While focusing on its integration with the University's academic mission, Krannert Art Museum is also in the position to emphasize its reputation and role as a teaching museum. The director must take advantage of the rich intellectual capital of the University and develop innovative academic collaborations that engage faculty and students and deepen connections across the campus, situating the museum at the center of educational activities and initiatives on campus. The director will widely engage in communication with leaders across divisions and units to strengthen and broaden campus collaboration and identify new opportunities to work together. Overall, the director will continue to be an active resource for members of the campus community, further positioning the museum as an integral part of the student, staff, and faculty academic experience.

Ensure long-term financial sustainability through exceptional management and fundraising.

The Krannert Art Museum is in a stable financial position, and the next leader will continue to grow resources for the museum. Deepening existing relationships and establishing new connections throughout the community will be an essential element in building philanthropic support. The director serves as the chief fundraiser for the museum and will partner with the College of Fine and Applied Arts advancement team to grow contributed revenue. Providing compelling storytelling to promote understanding of the museum and its mission is a key priority. The director will additionally bring a detailed approach to financial analysis to ensure efficiency in museum management and serve as an effective advocate for the museum within the University to demonstrate impact and effectiveness.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The committee is seeking candidates who demonstrate the following:

- A visionary approach to community engagement and the role of the museum in contemporary society, maintaining relationships with existing partners and building connections with new ones;
- A deep understanding of museum best practices, including collections management, exhibition development, community engagement, and educational programming;
- A strong record of success in or clear evidence of potential for donor relations and fundraising;
- Ability to communicate effectively with others, receive feedback, and manage conflict, while advocating core values;
- The skills to create a stimulating, healthy, and productive work environment for a variety of people and situations;
- Interest in and capacity to work well in an academic/research environment and make creative connections with faculty, staff, and students;

- An open and collaborative approach to management, building capacity among staff;
- An efficient, productive approach that anticipates contingencies and pays attention to detail;
- Commitment to the public land-grant mission of the University and an understanding of operating within an academic institutional environment;
- Cultural competency and experience engaging diverse stakeholder communities, actively seeking input from a wide variety of people and functions;
- Five or more years of leadership experience in a museum/non-profit venue; and
- A Master's degree (in art history, arts administration, museum studies, curatorial studies, or a related area); an MFA or PhD is preferred.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

This position has a salary range of \$180,000 – \$220,000. The full compensation package is based on qualifications and experience. This full-time academic professional position has a 12-month appointment and a negotiable start date.

The University of Illinois offers a very competitive benefits portfolio. Click for a complete list of [Employee Benefits](#).

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Inquiries, nominations and applications are invited. Review of applications will continue until the position is filled. Candidates should provide a CV/resume and a letter of application that addresses the responsibilities and requirements described above. Interested candidates are encouraged to submit materials prior to October 20, 2025. All inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications should be sent electronically to:

Benjamin Tobin, Ryan Leichenauer, and Alaine Small
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-illinois-urbana-champaign-college-fine-and-applied-arts/director-krannert>

The University of Illinois System is an equal opportunity employer, including but not limited to disability and/or veteran status, and complies with all applicable state and federal employment mandates. We welcome individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas who embrace and value [diversity and inclusivity](#). Please visit [Required Employment Notices and Posters](#) to view our non-discrimination statement and find additional information about required background checks, sexual harassment/misconduct disclosures, COVID-19 vaccination requirement, and employment eligibility review through [E-Verify](#).

Applicants with disabilities are encouraged to apply and may request a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (2008) to complete the application and/or interview process.

Requests may be submitted through the reasonable accommodations [portal](#), or by contacting the Accessibility & Accommodations Division of the Office for Access and Equity at 217-333-0885, or by emailing accessibility@illinois.edu.

The University of Illinois must also comply with applicable federal export control laws and regulations and, as such, reserves the right to employ restricted party screening procedures for applicants.

ADDENDUM

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Founded in 1867, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign has a stellar reputation as a world-class leader in research, teaching, and public engagement. From the development of the modern web browser to the visible LED to the fundamental discovery of Archaea (the third kingdom of life), Illinois has a long-standing history of creating life-changing innovations that impact the world. Researchers at Illinois continually make foundational discoveries that transform the way we tackle global problems, develop technology, and expand the human experience.

The University of Illinois System has campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago, and Springfield. The flagship campus in Urbana-Champaign is the largest of the three, situated on 1,783 acres. The metro population is more than 230,000, according to the 2020 U.S. Census.

Mission

The campus is led by Chancellor Charles L. Isbell, Jr., who is the chief executive officer for the Urbana-Champaign campus and is responsible for all financial programs, campus policies, and priorities, with the mission of ensuring a transformative educational experience for the world's next generation of leaders. Illinois remains true to the land-grant mission — to enhance the lives of all citizens in Illinois, across the nation and around the world through leadership in learning, discovery, engagement, and economic development. This includes launching the Illinois Commitment, which provides free tuition and fees to qualified in-state undergraduates. The University provides strong undergraduate and graduate education programs; undertakes basic, translational, and applied research; and supports outreach, extension, continuing education, initiatives, and programs, as well as other public engagement activities to multiple communities.

Collaboration and innovation are hallmarks of the Illinois research enterprise —researchers are accustomed to working across disciplines, institutions, and international boundaries. The University's powerful reputation attracts extensive international partnerships that create opportunities for Illinois students and faculty to work with colleagues around the world.

National and Global Impact

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is a member of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the Association of American Universities, as well as the Big Ten Academic Alliance, which is governed by the provosts of the member universities.

Illinois is a recognized leader in national and international education. With an international student enrollment of over 12,000 in 2024-25, Illinois ranks second in the nation among public colleges and universities and includes students from over 120 countries. More than 1,600 students studied abroad in 2024-25, and around 300 programs are offered each year in 50 countries around the globe.

In 2024-25 the campus community included:

- ~37,000 undergraduate students
- ~21,000 graduate and professional students
- 3,360 tenure system and specialized faculty members
- ~3,700 academic professionals
- ~6,100 civil service staff members

Comprehensive Academics

More than 37,000 undergraduate students are enrolled in 11 undergraduate colleges and divisions, which together offer courses in more than 150 fields of study. The campus enrolls approximately 21,000 graduate and professional students in more than 200 programs and is among the top universities in the number of earned doctorates awarded annually in the U.S.

Colleges and divisions enrolling undergraduates and graduate students include:

- College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences
- College of Applied Health Sciences
- Gies College of Business
- College of Education
- The Grainger College of Engineering
- College of Fine and Applied Arts
- College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- College of Media
- School of Information Sciences
- School of Social Work
- Division of Exploratory Studies

The following units offer programs leading to graduate or professional degrees:

- Carle Illinois College of Medicine
- College of Law
- College of Veterinary Medicine
- School of Labor and Employment Relations

The campus is highly regarded in accountancy, biochemistry, chemistry, engineering, information science, education, microbiology, and computer science. Additionally, it is nationally recognized for its strengths

in the arts and humanities, collaborative and interdisciplinary research culture, highly ranked professional schools, and one of the world's great libraries.

U.S. News & World Report's America's Best Colleges (2024-25) rated the Urbana-Champaign campus as 9th among public universities and 33rd among all national universities. In all of Illinois' current graduate and undergraduate rankings, there are 37 programs in the top five, 67 among the top 10 and 97 in the top 20. Illinois is delivering excellence on a massive scale.

World-Class Faculty, Distinguished Students, and Alumni

Among the campus's most significant resources are its talented faculty and students. Many faculty members are recognized for their exceptional scholarship, with memberships in the American Philosophical Society, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, the National Academy of Medicine, the National Academy of Inventors, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the National Academy of Education, and the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Faculty members at the University have won and received Nobel Prizes, Wolf Awards, Pulitzer Prizes, MacArthur Fellowships, Guggenheim Fellowships, Fulbright Awards, the Crafoord Prize in Biosciences, Blavatnik Awards, the Japan Prize, the National Book Award, the National Medal of Science, the National Medal of Technology, and Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, as well as awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Academy of Education, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Each year, Illinois students receive some of the world's most prestigious scholarships, including Rhodes, Truman, Marshall, Gates, Goldwater, Churchill, and Luce and Fulbright Scholarships. Illinois has been named a top producer of Fulbright Students and Scholars, often ranking in the top 10 among public universities and top 25 among all universities. Another prime indicator of the University's excellence is the success of its alumni — boasting one of the world's largest, most diverse alumni communities in the U.S. and around the world. The Illinois alumni base includes 11 Nobel laureates, 26 winners of the Pulitzer Prize, and 212 Guggenheim Fellows.

Arts and Culture

A major center for the arts, Illinois attracts dozens of nationally and internationally renowned artists each year to its widely acclaimed Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Designed by alumnus Max Abramovitz, an architect of New York City's Lincoln Center, the facility has four indoor theaters and an outdoor amphitheater. In the more than 50 years since its opening, the center has welcomed hundreds of thousands of patrons for more than 350 performances each year.

The University also supports two major museums: Krannert Art Museum and Spurlock Museum. Spurlock Museum, a museum of world history and culture, holds approximately 50,000 artifacts from diverse cultures and varied historical time periods.

In addition to visual and performing arts, Illinois promotes cultural education through resources offered to the entire campus community. The Asian American Cultural Center, International Education, Japan House, La Casa Cultural Latina, Native American House, Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center,

Salaam Middle East and North African Cultural Center, Women’s Resources Center, Diversity and Social Justice Education, and Gender and Sexuality Resource Center provide opportunities to learn and experience the rich historic traditions and modern living cultures that shape our world.

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA

While Champaign-Urbana is home to one of the world’s great public research universities, a vibrant arts and culture scene, an internationally diverse population, a strong technology base, and a commitment to societal issues make the area a destination for professionals of all kinds. The twin cities feature highly desirable attributes — top-notch restaurants, concert arenas, and parks and recreation facilities — commonly found in larger cities.

Champaign-Urbana is consistently ranked as a great place to live and work, with an average commute time of just eight minutes. Combining natural Midwestern beauty with cultural resources typically found in larger metropolitan areas, the twin cities retain the charm, friendliness, safety, and affordability of smaller communities. Housing, entertainment, and living expenses are comparatively low. Easy commutes, a designated bike-friendly community, and an award-winning mass transit system (free with campus ID) make it quick and simple to get from here to there.

Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy 12,000 acres of community parks throughout the area and a wide variety of outdoor sports and activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, camping, biking, and cross-country skiing at one of the major forest preserves in Champaign County. Golfers enjoy a number of public golf courses within 15 miles of Champaign and three private clubs. The annual Illinois Marathon is a national event that brings together thousands of athletes, spectators, and volunteers for a weekend of races and activities.

Within a three-hour car ride to Chicago, St. Louis, or Indianapolis, individuals in the community can enjoy sporting events, world-class museums, or dinner at renowned restaurants. Amtrak and American Airlines offer daily transportation from Champaign, allowing ready access to almost anywhere in the world. As a community that makes it easy to balance work with family and leisure, it doesn’t take long for newcomers to realize that this community is a wonderful place to call home.