



Director and CEO  
Honolulu Museum of Art  
Honolulu, Hawai'i

## THE SEARCH

The Honolulu Museum of Art seeks a visionary, community-driven arts leader with the insight and integrity to shape its future as its next Director & CEO. Building on the momentum of its upcoming Centennial, HoMA seeks a leader to steward its legacy and set a dynamic course for its next century of impact. The Director will collaborate closely with staff and trustees to connect the Islands' singular fine arts institution with the public and the world yet always rooted in Hawai'i's distinct sense of place and animated by the values that make HoMA a beloved home of art and education for all.

The Honolulu Museum of Art, initially known as the Honolulu Academy of Arts, opened to the public in 1927 with a progressive, forward-looking vision: to give the gift of art and art education to Hawai'i's diverse, multicultural community. Nearly one hundred years later, HoMA is the largest art museum in Hawai'i and a vibrant center of culture for a diverse region. HoMA offers an array of special exhibitions, events, and programs to augment its exceptional collections of over 55,000 objects spanning 5,000 years of human creativity. On an island of approximately one million residents, HoMA draws an audience of nearly 100,000 annual visitors to its 40,000 square feet of exhibition space.

As the primary visual arts institution in the state, HoMA has an extraordinary opportunity to increasingly expand its exhibition, education, and community programming in ways that engage locals and visitors alike and serve as a hub for the Asia-Pacific region. Overseeing 160 staff, a total budget of nearly \$18M, and an endowment of approximately \$90M, the Director is responsible for HoMA's fundraising, programmatic excellence, fiscal health, community engagement, day-to-day operations, employees and volunteers, public profile, long-range planning, collection care and development.

HoMA has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in the recruitment of its next Director & CEO. Please direct all applications, nominations, and inquiries to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document.

## THE HONOLULU MUSEUM OF ART

HoMA's [history](#) began with the activities of art collector Anna Rice Cooke, her daughter Alice Spalding, daughter-in-law Dagmar Cooke, and Catharine Cox, an art and drama teacher, who obtained a charter for the museum from the Territory of Hawai'i in 1922. Mrs. Cooke donated the land for the museum, along with its initial endowment, and the Honolulu Academy of Arts opened its doors in 1927.

Over time, the museum's permanent collection has grown from approximately 875 works to more than 55,000 pieces spanning 5,000 years. The museum has also physically grown from its original building, with additions including an expansion to the library (1956); education wings (1931, 1961); a gift shop (1965); a cafe (1969); a contemporary gallery, administrative offices and 292-seat theater (1977); an art school for studio classes and expanded educational programming (1990); and a wing housing the shop and café, as well as dedicated gallery space for historic and contemporary art of Hawai'i (2001).

In 2011, The Contemporary Museum, founded by Thurston Twigg-Smith and his family in 1988 in the historic Spalding House, gifted its assets and collection to the then-Honolulu Academy of Arts, significantly strengthening its collection. The following year the combined museum changed its name to the Honolulu Museum of Art. Spalding House was sold in 2023 as a key step in strengthening the museum's ability to achieve its long-term mission.

Today, HoMA continues to reflect Mrs. Cooke's vision by being an inclusive space dedicated to serving the community through art and education. As the museum approaches its Centennial, HoMA's [2021–2026 Strategic Plan](#) charts a vision for ensuring the museum is a relevant and sustainable 21st-century institution deeply rooted in accessibility and community. The plan calls for creating dynamic, world-class art and education experiences; serving, nurturing, and showcasing the community of which the museum is a part; and embracing best-practice stewardship with a five-year campus and financial plan to realize long-term sustainability.

To learn more, please visit: <https://honolulumuseum.org>.

## COLLECTIONS AND EXHIBITIONS

Situated in two iconic buildings in the heart of Honolulu, HoMA's encyclopedic collection includes significant holdings in Asian art, American and European painting and decorative arts, 19th- and 20th-century art, arts of Hawai'i and the Pacific, an extensive collection of works on paper, Asian textiles, and traditional works from Africa, Oceania, and the Americas. HoMA presents original and traveling exhibitions featuring local, emerging, and world-renowned artists. Recent highlights include [Mary Cassatt at Work](#), [Hawai'i Triennial 2025: Aloha Nō](#), [Home of the Tigers: McKinley High and Modern Art](#), [Fashioning Aloha](#), and more.

The Robert Allerton Art Library at HoMA is a community resource containing more than 40,000 holdings. The library collects books and periodicals that focus on the artists, art, and art movements represented in

HoMA's collection. Integral to HoMA's mission and vision, the library seeks to edify the quest for knowledge, understanding, and beauty that inspires museumgoers.

To learn more, visit: <https://honolulumuseum.org/collection-highlights-8jzs>.

## LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

From its beginnings as the Honolulu Academy of Arts, HoMA has brought people and art together through a broad array of formal and informal learning opportunities for all experience levels and ages. Today, the HoMA Art School at Linekona resides in the historic former McKinley High School and Linekona Elementary School building. The School offers a full curriculum of studio art classes for students of all ages, including drawing, painting, fiber arts, printmaking, metalwork, and more, taught by practicing artists and educators. The School also maintains a lending collection for students, educators, and community members.

HoMA's Department of Education and Public Programs provides 1,504 unique art education programs and activities to over 43,000 people annually. In addition to studio art classes, these include exhibition programs, school and teacher programs, activities and events for families, film screenings, and community engagement. Many of these programs involve collaborations with community organizations, schools and teachers, and selected artists. The museum's 292-seat Doris Duke Theater is the largest art-house theater in the state of Hawai'i and screens the best in narrative, documentary, animated, and short films.

To learn more, visit: <https://honolulumuseum.org/art-classes-5r5n>.

## ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR & CEO

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the Director & CEO will continue to advance HoMA's impact and legacy in Hawai'i and increase its regional, national, and global profile. The Director will serve as the public face of the museum, nurturing and expanding relationships with civic institutions, community partners, donors, artists, stakeholders, and the field. A Centennial capital campaign is underway, and the Director will ensure its successful completion. The Director will lead a talented and dedicated staff, including a senior leadership team of nine direct reports.

## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DIRECTOR & CEO

As HoMA nears its Centennial, it seeks to deepen its role as a cultural cornerstone for Hawai'i and a bridge to the broader Asia-Pacific region. The next Director & CEO will join an established institution with a committed and professional leadership team, and a community eager for vision and care. In this uniquely multicultural and historically layered context, the Director will demonstrate humility, curiosity, and a deep commitment to place, forging authentic relationships and honoring the museum's legacy and aspirations. They will have the opportunity to shape HoMA's next century through inclusive and thoughtful leadership,

and an inspiring yet grounded vision for the future. As HoMA looks toward this future, the Director is expected to address the following key opportunities and challenges:

**Collaboratively develop a bold, strategic vision for HoMA's next century.**

- Partner with the Board, staff, and diverse constituents to develop and execute plans for HoMA's Centennial celebrations.
- Effectively develop, align, and execute an artistic vision, strategic plan, and capital campaign.
- Foster trust and build authentic relationships with Hawai'i's diverse communities. Demonstrating humility, curiosity, and a commitment to place, engage the local community fully as reciprocal partners in a museum that honors Hawai'i's culture and champions its potential.
- Leverage Hawai'i's position as a hub within the Asia-Pacific region.
- Oversee an exhibition strategy that optimizes the museum's collections; develop compelling local, digital, and traveling programs that unlock opportunities to increase impact; attract and engage new audiences.
- Lead development of a robust, forward-thinking digital strategy.
- Develop strategies to cultivate and sustain a healthy arts ecosystem with and for the local community.
- Convey professionalism, excellence, inclusivity, and enthusiasm as HoMA's ambassador and civic leader in the active public life of Hawai'i. Lead with a passion for art, education, HoMA and the Islands that inspires others towards shared ambitions.

**Strengthen the museum's financial position and ensure operational excellence.**

- Serve as chief fundraiser, adept at stewarding existing support while attracting and retaining new generations of philanthropic investment.
- Identify sustainable sources of earned revenue to enhance institutional resources.
- Increase endowment to ensure financial sustainability commensurate with growth.
- Apply financial acumen and experience with complex organizational budgets to actively manage daily operations and ensure a vital and healthy museum.
- Steward HoMA's iconic buildings and site, addressing deferred maintenance and necessary infrastructure upgrades. Catalyze long-term campus planning to ensure accessibility, inclusivity, and sustainability.
- Lead collection management and deaccessioning efforts in service of the museum's artistic and strategic ambitions.

- Attend to the universal museum challenge of essential collection storage and care.

#### **Cultivate and steward key relationships to expand HoMA's impact locally, regionally, and beyond.**

- Ignite and sustain Board support for ambitious outcomes grounded in informed risk taking and a passion for mission and place that advance HoMA and Hawai'i.
- Further develop and build the Board, drawing upon deep individual and collective expertise in service, the artistic mission, and fiduciary and governance responsibilities.
- Practice generational attentiveness, keeping loyal members engaged while cultivating meaningful connections and opportunities with rising generations.
- Strengthen advancement infrastructure and stewardship practices. Fortify existing relationships while activating new networks locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Strengthen relationships with the museum's public and private sector partners, paying close attention to local needs and opportunities for reciprocity and mutual benefit.

#### **Partner with, support, and inspire the dedicated museum staff.**

- Motivate and mobilize staff at all levels, fostering a transparent, collaborative, and team-oriented environment.
- Continue to align staff to more fully reflect the diversity of Hawai'i. Sustain a strong sense of community in which colleagues feel empowered to do their best and work towards a shared purpose.
- Model an accessible, empathetic approach to leadership. Assess and address staff concerns and encourage professional growth, excellence, exchange with institutional peers, and best practices.
- Inspire a shared belief in what art can do, what staff and the museum can be, and how HoMA can serve its communities.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

While no one person may embody all, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional qualifications and personal qualities.

- A passion for HoMA's mission, values, and collection. The ability to build rapport with and command the respect and support of collectors, curators, colleagues and the public;
- Proven success as a senior leader of a museum, cultural organization, arts institution, nonprofit, or civic institution exercising international reach and impact;

- Appetite for and successful track record in revenue development, including individual, institutional, and endowment fundraising; significant capital campaign experience required;
- Demonstrated experience in increasing visibility and impact of a civic institution;
- Commitment to museum best practices, their implementation, and impact;
- Success driving digital strategy and audience engagement for an arts organization;
- Experience leading, serving, and working with a governing Board;
- Demonstrated success in building meaningful partnerships with diverse constituencies, as well as advancing equity, inclusivity, and belonging;
- A curious, collaborative, and transparent leadership style that fosters trust and accountability, with demonstrated change management experience;
- Exceptional communication skills, encouraging and facilitating dialogue around challenging issues with grace, humility, and integrity;
- Experience building and managing budgets while driving sound financial and policy decisions within an organization of ideally comparable complexity and similar funding streams; and
- Extensive executive experience leading strategic planning and operations.

## COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

This is a permanent, full-time position based in Honolulu with a targeted starting salary range of \$350,000-\$400,000, commensurate with experience.

O‘ahu is the third largest Hawaiian island and home to the majority of the state’s diverse population. The island is famous for its tropical terrain, wide range of outdoor activities, and fusion of East and West cultures rooted in the values and traditions of the Native Hawaiian people. Honolulu, the capital city of Hawai‘i, is consistently ranked among the safest and most livable cities in the United States and offers a unique blend of cosmopolitan energy and island lifestyle. HoMA’s local institutional peers of scale include the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, the Bishop Museum, Capitol Modern, Hawai‘i Symphony Orchestra, Shangri-La, and more.

Living and working in Hawai‘i rewards newcomers who engage deeply with its multi-layered, richly diverse population and proud cultural heritage. The state’s two official languages—Hawaiian and English—reflect its commitment to honoring Indigenous traditions while welcoming global perspectives. Honolulu is home to the only royal palace in the United States, more than 130 beaches, and a thriving artistic and creative scene. The city’s location in the heart of the Pacific positions it as a strategic hub between Asia and North America, with direct access to economic and cultural leadership across the region.

While the cost of living in Hawai‘i is higher than many locations on the continent, newcomers will find a strong sense of place, slower pace of life, and a community that values connection, stewardship, and reciprocity. The next Director & CEO will have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the state of Hawai‘i and the broader Asia-Pacific region.

To learn more about Hawai'i and Honolulu, visit: <https://www.gohawaii.com>.

## APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/honolulu-museum-art/director-and-chief-executive-officer>.

Sarah James, Courtney Wilk-Mandel, Aku Ammah-Tagoe, Cara Meyers  
Isaacson, Miller

*HoMA is proud to be an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing equal opportunity for all employees and applicants. HoMA recruits, hires, trains, promotes, compensates, and administers all personnel actions and benefit programs without regard to race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, including pregnancy and gender identity and expression, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, reproductive health decisions, marital status, arrest and court record (except as legally applicable), citizenship, credit history, military and veteran service, victim of domestic violence or sexual abuse victim status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.*

*HoMA welcomes people from all backgrounds and walks of life, and this is reflected in our diverse community of employees. We encourage applications from candidates across a wide variety of backgrounds, including, but not limited to, people of all races and ethnicities, people with disabilities, women, veterans, and all members of the LGBTQ community.*

*This document has been prepared based on the information provided by the Honolulu Museum of Art. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by HoMA would supersede any conflicting information in this document.*