



Executive Director
The Concord Museum
Concord, Massachusetts

ABOUT THE CONCORD MUSEUM

Named the #1 “Best Small Town Museum” by USA TODAY in 2025, the Concord Museum is a nationally acclaimed institution that brings Concord’s rich and multifaceted history to life. Founded in 1886 and located in Concord, Massachusetts—a town central to the American Revolution and home to iconic authors and thinkers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Louisa May Alcott, and Henry David Thoreau—the Museum connects the past to the present, offering insights into the ideas, struggles, and values that continue to shape American life today.

Home to more than 45,000 objects, the Museum houses one of the country's most significant collections of American material culture and decorative arts. Among its most celebrated objects are one of the two Old North Church signal lanterns from the night of Paul Revere’s midnight ride, Emerson’s preserved study, and the world’s largest collection of objects related to Thoreau—including his desk, bed, and chair from Walden Pond. The collection spans 10,000 years and reflects the extraordinary diversity of Concord’s cultural, political, environmental, and intellectual history—from Indigenous items to contemporary decorative arts. You can read more about the Museum’s collections [here](#).

The Museum’s impressive collection anchors [immersive exhibitions](#) and [dynamic educational programs](#) that explore Concord’s pivotal role in shaping American democracy, literature, antislavery activism, and innovations in education and agriculture. The Museum’s approach to history is object-based, inclusive, and deeply engaging. Through authentic historical objects and interactive experiences, it sparks curiosity and deepens understanding for more than 45,000 visitors annually. Public programs and special

exhibitions invite audiences to explore Concord's complex and evolving past through multiple perspectives, ensuring that underrepresented voices and narratives are heard and honored. The Museum also stewards indigenous items, which are cared for and interpreted in collaboration with community partners.

The Concord Museum's core values—being welcoming, inspirational, excellent, and grounded in integrity—guide every aspect of its work, from curatorial practice to community partnerships. In 2024, the Museum earned reaccreditation from the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), a distinction held by only three percent of museums nationwide. As the reaccreditation team noted, "The Concord Museum radiates its mission as a North Star in the constellation of heritage assets that characterize this [Concord] community." With a strong institutional foundation and a forward-looking vision, the Museum continues to inspire visitors, collectors, scholars, educators, and community members to learn from the past to shape a more informed, inclusive, and engaged future.

Momentum and Opportunity

The Concord Museum is entering a new chapter shaped by a decade of strategic investment, curatorial excellence, and deep community engagement. With major capital projects completed, national recognition earned, and a landmark anniversary underway, the Museum is poised to deepen its impact and broaden its reach.

At the heart of this transformation is a deep commitment to education. From September through June, school groups visit nearly every weekday, making student learning a daily presence in the Museum's galleries and classrooms. Through strong partnerships with educators, the Museum helps fill a growing gap in social studies curricula, using object-based learning to prepare the next generation of engaged citizens. Its highly subsidized programs ensure access for all students, with thousands participating each year from under-resourced communities.

The Concord Museum's educational mission is anchored by the 12,900-square-foot Rasmussen Education Center, completed in 2018 through the successful Campaign for the Concord Museum, which raised \$13 million. This purpose-built facility includes flexible classrooms, a community Lyceum, and a History Learning Center designed for hands-on, inquiry-driven learning. In addition to robust school programs, the Museum offers professional development for educators and engaging family programming. The Paul Revere's Ride Fund, which marked its tenth anniversary in 2024, plays a vital role by supporting transportation and programming for students across Massachusetts.

Building on this momentum, the Museum launched the New Museum Experience campaign, raising \$3 million by 2020. In 2021, all permanent galleries were reimaged to feature immersive storytelling, inclusive interpretation, and state-of-the-art environmental controls that protect one of the nation's most significant collections of early American history. Recent exhibitions—including *Interwoven*, *Portrait Mode*,

What Makes History, and *Whose Revolution*—have showcased newly conserved objects and explored themes of representation, memory, and identity.

Renovations also enhanced the Museum’s physical footprint, including the addition of a welcoming patio space and architectural features that reflect Concord’s historic character while supporting modern visitor needs. The building’s design fosters community gathering and complements the immersive experience offered inside.

In 2023, the Museum developed a new five-year strategic plan (2024–2028) to guide its next chapter of growth and impact. As part of this forward-looking vision, the Museum undertook a rebranding initiative that included a refreshed visual identity, updated messaging, and a redesigned website. It also launched the Contemporary Leaders program—a patron group for supporters under 55 that cultivates the next generation of philanthropic and civic leadership. Together, these efforts reflect the Museum’s evolving role as a dynamic civic and cultural leader—locally rooted and nationally recognized.

As the nation commemorates the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, the Concord Museum is playing a central role in shaping public understanding of this pivotal moment. Programming began in August 2024 with a community gathering and continues through 2026 with three major exhibitions, a published catalog, expanded educational resources, and the creation of a native plant garden that reflects Concord’s natural and cultural heritage. A highlight of this work was Patriots’ Day 2025, which welcomed over 5,000 visitors—a powerful demonstration of the Museum’s ability to engage the public in meaningful reflection on the Revolution’s legacy and relevance today.

Complementing these public-facing initiatives, the Concord Museum Forums have evolved into a nationally recognized platform for civic dialogue and historical reflection. As a cornerstone of the Museum’s 250th anniversary programming, the series brings together leading historians, award-winning authors, artists, and public thinkers to examine the enduring relevance of Concord’s revolutionary and intellectual legacy. Hosted in the Churchill and Janet Franklin Lyceum and livestreamed globally, the Forums continue to expand in scope and reach, engaging audiences with timely conversations that connect Concord’s past to pressing issues of today. Recent speakers include Doris Kearns Goodwin, Governor Charlie Baker, Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa, Drew Gilpin Faust, Cass Sunstein, Mary Beth Norton, and Tiya Miles.

In 2024, the Museum secured a transformative \$5 million gift from an anonymous donor—the largest in its history. This gift established an endowed curatorship honoring longtime Curator David Wood, funded a permanent collections endowment, and enabled critical upgrades to IT and collections management systems. These upgrades include the implementation of a new collections database, enhanced cybersecurity infrastructure, digitization of key holdings, expanded digital access for researchers and educators, and the adoption of a new CRM system to support donor relations and audience engagement. The Museum maintains a publicly accessible collections database and is actively reviewing legacy records to ensure historical accuracy and alignment with institutional values.

The Museum has also implemented a Collections Development Plan to refine and enhance its holdings and better reflect Concord's full historical tapestry—including Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and other underrepresented narratives. Collaborations with local Indigenous communities, including installations like *Nummehquantamūmun* and *Chemacheg Menuhki: Paddle Strong*, are central to this work. Public programs have grown to include family celebrations for Juneteenth, Indigenous Peoples' Day, and MLK Day of Service.

With a growing endowment, national recognition, and a vibrant slate of ongoing and special exhibitions, educational initiatives, and public programs, the Concord Museum is well-positioned to shape the next era of historical interpretation and civic engagement—locally, regionally, and nationally.

Financial Overview

The Concord Museum anticipates a total operating budget for FY2026 (October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026) of approximately \$3.45 million. This plan is based on achievement of total "in-year" revenues of approximately \$2.9 million, pre-funded expenses of approximately \$365,000, and careful cash management of a small operating deficit of less than \$200K.

Individual giving (including the Museum's Annual Fund, major gifts, and giving for special events) has been and is expected to continue to be the largest source of in-year support, projected for FY2026 at roughly \$1.3 million or approximately 44% of total in-year revenues. Earned income (admissions, group tours, memberships, public programs, and curriculum-aligned educational program fees) is expected to generate an additional \$630,000 (22% of planned in-year revenues). The Museum also draws annually a prescribed percentage of its endowment (5%-5.5%), providing approximately \$660,000 for FY2026 (23% of total in-year revenues). Dedicated revenues raised in prior years (pre-funded expenses), annual contributions from the Museum Guild, and certain additional in-year revenue streams support the remainder of the operating budget.

In recent years, the Museum has secured grants and awards to support its programming and preservation efforts, particularly in preparation for the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. These have included funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Decorative Arts Trust, the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism, Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, the 'Quin House Impact Fund, and the Americana Foundation.

The institution's endowment currently stands at approximately \$14 million, having doubled over five years from gifts and careful stewardship by the Investment Committee. The endowment is managed with a focus on long-term sustainability and institutional resilience.

As the Museum continues to grow in scale, reach, and ambition, the resources required to sustain and expand its work have increased significantly. Expanded philanthropic support is essential to meet the

demands of delivering high-quality, inclusive programming; maintaining historic and modern facilities; and investing in staff through fair compensation and expanded departmental capacity.

Governance and Staff Leadership

The Concord Museum has a multi-tiered governance structure and a dedicated professional staff, all working in concert to advance its mission of connecting people to Concord's rich and multifaceted history.

The Board of Governors, comprising approximately 26 members, provides strategic oversight and fiduciary leadership. Working closely with the Executive Director, the Board helps shape the Museum's vision, operations, and long-term planning.

The Board of Trustees, with more than 50 members, supports the Museum through fundraising, advocacy, and community engagement, serving as ambassadors for the Museum's mission.

The Guild of Volunteers, with 10 Guild Board members and dozens of active volunteers, plays a critical role in public programming and visitor engagement. This group organizes beloved community events such as the annual Garden Tour, the Holiday House Tour, and Family Trees, offering meaningful ways for residents to participate in the life of the Museum.

Key roles reporting directly to the Executive Director include the Deputy Director and Director of Engagement; the Director of Finance; the Facilities Manager; the Curator; the Director of Education and Visitor Experience; the Director of Marketing, Communications, and Media Relations; the Senior Advancement Officer; the Collections Director and Registrar; and the Curator and Director of Exhibitions.

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Concord Museum seeks a strategic, collaborative, inclusive, and imaginative leader to serve as its next Executive Director. This is a unique opportunity to lead a nationally recognized, place-based institution at a moment of extraordinary momentum—marked by capital investments, curatorial innovation, expanded educational and public programming, and growing national visibility.

The Executive Director will advance the Museum's mission, ensure its financial sustainability, steward its collections and programs, and deepen its role as a civic and cultural anchor. They will work closely with the Board of Governors, Trustees, staff, volunteers, and community partners to ensure that the Museum remains fiscally sound, programmatically vibrant, inclusive in its storytelling and engagement, and increasingly visible to broader audiences. The next leader will also focus on attracting first-time and returning visitors and strengthening the Museum's presence as a destination for learning, reflection, and community connection.

KEY PRIORITIES

Strategic Leadership

The next Executive Director will guide the continued implementation of the Museum's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan, which centers on five core objectives: commemorating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution; enhancing visitor experiences; deepening cultural engagement and inclusive storytelling; strengthening financial sustainability; and stewarding the collection through conservation, digitization, and expanded access.

While meaningful progress has been made in several areas, others—fundraising and audience growth, in particular—require renewed focus. The next leader will be ready to revisit and reshape the Museum's strategy as needed to sustain momentum across these initiatives, creatively leverage institutional strengths, and help the Museum tell Concord's story in ways that resonate with regional and national audiences.

There is also an opportunity to begin early planning for the town of Concord's 400th anniversary in 2035—a once-in-a-generation chance to elevate the Museum's role as a civic and cultural anchor.

Mission-Driven Fundraising and Strategic Philanthropy

The Executive Director will serve as the Museum's chief fundraiser and external ambassador, leading a comprehensive development strategy that reflects the Concord Museum's educational and civic mission. A strong candidate will bring a demonstrated track record of securing leadership and principal gifts, with success in cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major donors. A confident and strategic fundraiser, the Executive Director will be skilled at connecting donor interests to the Museum's long-term vision and impact, and unafraid to make the ask.

With reduced federal funding and a shifting philanthropic landscape, the next leader must be adept at nurturing existing donor relationships while expanding the Museum's reach to new audiences. They will invest in strengthening the Museum's development infrastructure, ensuring the fundraising team is strategically resourced and positioned for long-term success.

The Executive Director will galvanize and deepen Governor and Trustee engagement in fundraising, equipping them to serve as effective ambassadors and partners in donor cultivation. They will also foster a culture of philanthropy across the institution—encouraging active participation in fundraising efforts and reinforcing the importance of donor stewardship at every level.

Inclusive Interpretation and Institutional Culture

The Executive Director will champion the Museum's commitment to inclusive storytelling and continue to build an internal culture rooted in equity, belonging, and continuous learning. They will ensure that exhibitions, collections, and programs reflect the full diversity of Concord's history and communities.

Internally, the next leader will advance efforts to diversify staff, Governors, and Trustee leadership, embedding inclusive values across all aspects of the organization. This work is ongoing and essential to the Museum's relevance and integrity.

Programmatic and Curatorial Leadership

The Executive Director will champion the continued excellence and strategic expansion of the Museum's educational programs, public events, and exhibitions. This includes increasing visibility, strengthening internal capacity, and securing resources to support both programming and the collection, such as new acquisitions, conservation efforts, and exhibition planning.

There is a meaningful opportunity to grow earned revenue by attracting broader audiences, increasing participation, and refining pricing strategies. The next leader will also explore creative ways to leverage the Museum's existing assets—including the museum shop, facility rentals, and group tours—to enhance the visitor experience and financial sustainability.

Operational and Governance Excellence

The Executive Director will ensure excellence across all aspects of the Museum's operations and governance, guiding the organization through its next phase of institutional growth and impact. They will join a forward-thinking staff team—small, collaborative, experts in their fields, and highly effective—where many individuals contribute across multiple areas.

In addition to supporting staff development and retention, the Executive Director will have the opportunity to strategically expand the team over time, adding capacity in key departments and roles.

Beyond internal operations, the Executive Director will enhance governance practices and partner with Governor and Trustee leadership to foster strong engagement, fundraising efforts, and effective stewardship. Establishing thoughtful approaches to board structure, participation, and resource development will be essential to aligning leadership with the Museum's strategic direction.

Visibility, Partnerships, and Community Engagement

The Executive Director will elevate the Museum's visibility and deepen relationships with local, regional, and national partners. Concord's rich historical legacy and the Museum's nationally significant collection offer a powerful platform for storytelling and engagement.

The next leader will broaden the Museum's reach and relevance through new partnerships with peer and aspirational institutions, engagement with historically untapped communities through collaborative initiatives, and positioning the Museum as a vital resource for public history and civic dialogue.

They will also serve as a compelling ambassador to donors, funders, and the public, representing the Museum externally with clarity, warmth, and conviction.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate brings intellectual depth, warmth, and a deep appreciation for history, material culture, museum education, and civic engagement. They may come from nonprofit leadership, museums, cultural institutions, the humanities, public history, K-12 or higher education, or similar backgrounds, but they must appreciate the core dynamics of museum work, including collections, curation, education, visitor experience, fundraising, and governance.

As a confident public speaker and visible ambassador, the next Executive Director will elevate the Museum's profile and embrace its reputation as an organization that consistently punches above its weight. They will understand how hospitality and audience engagement shape meaningful visitor experiences and build lasting community trust. In a small, resource-conscious institution, they will be hands-on and collaborative—ready to roll up their sleeves, work alongside staff, and lead by example.

They should bring a proven ability to secure philanthropic support, grow earned revenue, and manage budgets with discipline and strategic foresight, aligning financial resources with mission and long-term goals. Experience leading an institution to its next level of scale or impact—whether through expanded programming, deeper engagement, or increased visibility—is essential.

Demonstrated strength in organizational leadership, including staff development, operational management, and team-building, is critical. Comfort with technology and digital platforms is expected, as is a strong commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).

This person will inspire staff, Governors, Trustees, donors, and partners in their work, fostering a culture of care, excellence, and shared purpose. They are deeply community-rooted and attuned to broader cultural conversations. They should understand the power of place-based storytelling—grounded in Concord's unique historical and civic context—and how to connect that local narrative to broader national relevance.

Engagement in the civic and cultural life of Concord and Greater Boston is essential, along with a deep investment in place-based work and a willingness to become embedded in the Massachusetts museum landscape and national networks. Connections to complementary fields or communities—within or beyond the museum sector—are a plus.

CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS

Concord offers a distinctive blend of historical significance, cultural richness, and natural beauty. Known for its role in the American Revolution and as a center of 19th-century literary life, the town is home to a remarkable collection of historic house museums—including The Robbins House, Orchard House, The Wayside, The Old Manse, Thoreau Farm, and Bronson Alcott’s School of Philosophy—that offer insight into the writers, thinkers, and reformers who shaped American intellectual history.

Its commitment to the arts, education, and civic life is reflected in institutions such as the Concord Museum, the Thoreau Society, and the Umbrella Community Arts Center. Families are drawn to Concord for its excellent public and private schools, which are consistently ranked among the best in the state, and for its vibrant community life.

The area has an abundance of green space, including Walden Pond, along with a network of conservation lands and trails. It also has a walkable downtown and is surrounded by well-connected towns, making it easy to access and connect with the broader region.

COMPENSATION

The salary range for the Executive Director position is in the low \$200K range, commensurate with experience and qualifications. This is a full-time, on-site role that requires evening and weekend presence as part of the Museum’s public-facing leadership.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and resumes with letters of interest (2–4 pages) should be sent via the [Isaacson, Miller website](#).

Rebecca Swartz, Angelo Alexander, and Harley Bartles
Isaacson, Miller

Concord Museum provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, membership in the uniformed services, veteran status, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

If you require reasonable accommodation in completing an application, interviewing, or otherwise participating in the candidate selection process, please direct your inquiries to Harley Bartles, hbartles@imsearch.com.

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