



Executive Director
Curtis Memorial Library
Brunswick, Maine

THE SEARCH

The Curtis Memorial Library is searching for an engaging leader to serve as its next Executive Director. The next Executive Director will lead a highly respected, community-centered organization at an exciting moment in its evolution. Guided by the 2024–2029 Strategic Plan, the Executive Director will advance a mission focused on open access to information, community building, resilience, and operational excellence. Curtis is deeply committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and sustainability, and the Executive Director will play a central role in ensuring the library remains a welcoming and accessible resource for all who live in Brunswick, Harpswell, and the surrounding region.

This is a compelling opportunity to steward a beloved public institution with a long history of excellence and strong community support. Curtis is known for its warm, inclusive environment, modernized facilities, and culture of innovation, ranging from robust digital resources to nationally recognized sustainability initiatives such as the Library of Things and the Repair Café. The Executive Director will partner with dedicated staff, volunteers, and community stakeholders to build on these strengths, expand partnerships, and ensure that Curtis continues to serve as a vital civic hub.

The role also carries meaningful strategic and operational responsibilities, including championing intellectual freedom, overseeing a diverse funding model, supporting a mission-driven team, and ensuring thoughtful stewardship of the library's facilities and resources. As public libraries adapt to changing community needs, the Executive Director will guide Curtis in balancing tradition with innovation, enhancing program offerings, strengthening sustainability work, and maintaining exceptional service. The ideal candidate will bring vision, operational acumen, and a deep commitment to public libraries, positioning Curtis Memorial Library for continued success in the years ahead.

ABOUT THE CURTIS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Curtis Memorial Library (the Library or Curtis) is a cornerstone of the Brunswick community, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life by fostering community, connections, creativity, information, and ideas. As a trusted and free resource, the library plays a vital role in supporting literacy, civic engagement, sustainability, and social justice while adapting to the evolving needs of the community.

Founded in 1883, the Brunswick Public Library Association is a 501(c)(3) organization that operates Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick, Maine. Governed by a Board of Directors, the library is an independent, community-centered institution that formally serves the towns of Brunswick and Harpswell. With a mission to enhance quality of life through community, connection, creativity, information, and ideas, Curtis Memorial Library plays a central civic and cultural role in the region. Its most recent strategic plan was completed in 2024, reflecting a forward-looking commitment to responsive, inclusive service and strong community partnerships, including its long-standing relationship with Cornerstones of Science, founded at the library in 1999.

Housed in a historic yet modernized 44,000-square-foot facility on Pleasant Street, the library blends architectural legacy with contemporary resources. Originally constructed in 1904 through a gift from William J. Curtis, the building was significantly expanded and renovated in 1999 with broad public and private support. Today, Curtis Memorial Library offers robust technology infrastructure, extensive digital collections, and flexible meeting and program spaces. A staff of 34 (including 16 full-time employees and 10 with advanced library degrees), supported by more than 150 volunteers, sustains seven-day-a-week operations and a wide range of programs and services. This includes meeting the community where they are with the operation of Maine's first EV-bookmobile. The library's diversified funding model, which combines municipal support with philanthropy, grants, endowment income, and Friends of the Library contributions, underscores both its financial resilience and deep community investment. By the numbers, in FY 2025, the Library had an operating income of over 2.1 million dollars, and restricted income of just over 800 thousand dollars. Those funds are made possible, in part, by the work of the Curtis Friends who run [Twice Told Tales](#), a bookstore that benefits the Curtis Memorial Library. Those volunteers collectively donated over 13 thousand hours of their time last year.

The Library is committed to being an outstanding public library that both listens to community needs and leads with new ideas to improve quality of life. It emphasizes inclusion, safety, and a welcoming environment for patrons, staff, and volunteers. Customer service is central to the Library's mission, valuing kindness, respect, honesty, ethical behavior, transparency, and a solutions-oriented approach to problems interwoven into the culture of the organization. In 2025, over 260 thousand patrons utilized the library, borrowing over 486 thousand items, all a credit to the Library's incredible staff and volunteers.

As part of the Library's sustainability goals, it boasts an internationally recognized [Library of Things](#). More than 15 hundred items make up this collection and include: a ukulele, a lobster pot, backyard games, a pressure washer, sewing machines, and a mushroom inoculation kit, to name a few. Curtis has been written about in the New York Times and featured on the Today Show for this incredible initiative.

Extending its tangible support of the community, the Library has a Repair Café where local experts volunteer to repair patrons' household items to extend their use and keep them out of landfills.

The Library is first and foremost a community organization. There is a balance at the Library between cherishing the traditions and looking towards the future that has kept it moving forward with exceptional community support. The Curtis Memorial Library encourages ideas from staff, patrons, volunteers, and community members, and prioritizes creating an environment where all contributions are considered and where staff and volunteers are supported to do their best work.

BRUNSWICK, MAINE

Located in the heart of Midcoast Maine, [Brunswick](#) offers an exceptional quality of life that blends historic New England character with the intellectual energy of a thriving college town. Home to Bowdoin College, the community benefits from world-class cultural assets, including museums, galleries, performance venues, and a lively arts scene. A vibrant Maine Street anchors the town, offering a diverse mix of local restaurants, independent shops, and year-round community events. Residents enjoy convenient transportation options, including Amtrak Downeaster service to Portland and Boston, paired with the natural beauty of a coastal landscape defined by the Androscoggin River and more than sixty miles of shoreline.

Brunswick also stands out as a hub of innovation and economic growth. The redevelopment of the former Naval Air Station into Brunswick Landing has transformed the town into a center for aerospace, renewable energy, technology, and advanced manufacturing. Strong public schools, a community committed to land conservation, and easy access to outdoor recreation contribute to a balanced and fulfilling lifestyle. Whether exploring the Riverwalk, participating in local festivals, or engaging with the town's rich cultural offerings, Brunswick provides a welcoming, forward-thinking environment, an ideal setting for professionals seeking both career opportunity and an exceptional place to call home.

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director will lead the Library in implementing its 2024–2029 Strategic Plan, which focuses on four cornerstone strategies: advocating for reading and open access to information; creating community; developing tools and skills for resilience in times of change; and ensuring excellence in internal operations and external services. The Library is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and sustainability, striving to provide a welcoming and accessible space for all. To that end, the Executive Director will have a willingness to actively engage community and municipal stakeholders to ensure the library remains a safe, welcoming, and open space for the public.

The ideal candidate will be a visionary leader with a passion for libraries as essential public goods, a commitment to diversity and inclusion, and the ability to guide the Library in its mission to be a beacon of learning, connection, and innovation in a rapidly changing world.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Leading a Beloved, High-Performing Community Institution

The next Executive Director will inherit a library with extraordinary community loyalty and a track record of excellence. Curtis Memorial Library is widely recognized as a cornerstone of civic life in Brunswick and Harpswell. Its reputation for warmth, inclusion, and outstanding service has created a powerful foundation for future leadership. The next Executive Director will step into an institution that is trusted, valued, and primed for continued growth.

This role presents the opportunity to guide an organization that blends historic charm with modern design and functionality. The 44,000-square-foot facility, modernized in 1999 and thoughtfully maintained since, offers flexible programming and meeting spaces, a robust technology infrastructure, and a culture of continuous improvement. This is readily showcased by the ongoing lobby renovation that is underway in an effort to expand and modernize the library's central hub. The incoming leader will find a mission-driven team that is ready to collaborate, innovate, and expand the library's role as a welcoming public commons.

Advancing Strategic Priorities and Championing Intellectual Freedom

With the [2024–2029 Strategic Plan](#) in place, the Executive Director will have a clear roadmap for advancing core priorities: promoting reading and open access to information, building community connections, developing tools for resilience, and ensuring operational excellence. This framework provides both structure and inspiration, offering a platform for a leader who brings vision and a deep belief in libraries as essential public goods.

At the same time, public libraries sit at the center of national conversations about intellectual freedom and equitable access. Curtis is committed to protecting these principles, and the Executive Director will need to serve as a confident advocate by articulating the library's values, equipping staff with the tools to navigate challenging interactions, and engaging the community with transparency and empathy. This requires diplomacy, clarity, and the ability to build consensus across a diverse patron base.

Expanding Community Engagement, Partnerships, and Program Innovation

Curtis has a rich history of community partnership and engagement, and the next Executive Director will be well-positioned to expand this work. The Library already convenes a wide range of programs from literacy initiatives to intergenerational learning and maintains strong ties with schools, the Towns of Brunswick and Harpswell, and local civic and municipal organizations. With its accessible spaces and culture of idea generation, the Library is uniquely equipped to deepen its role as a convener and collaborator.

New opportunities exist to extend the Library's reach, including through outreach services like Maine's first EV-bookmobile, increased collaboration with educational partners, and expanded programming that responds to emerging community needs. The Executive Director will play a central role in shaping these strategies, ensuring that Curtis continues to meet patrons where they are and serves as a vibrant, responsive public square.

Strengthening Sustainability Leadership and Stewarding Innovative Services

Curtis stands apart nationally for its commitment to sustainability. Its internationally recognized Library of Things, now more than 1,500 items strong, has been recognized internationally, positioning the institution as a model of environmental innovation. The Repair Café and other zero-waste initiatives further reflect the library's dedication to circularity and creative problem-solving. The next Executive Director will have a unique opportunity to build on this momentum and elevate Curtis as a thought leader in sustainable library practices.

As environmental pressures and community expectations continue to rise, the Executive Director will guide the integration of sustainability into building operations, programming, community education, and long-term planning. This includes ensuring resilience in the face of climate change, advancing equitable access to sustainable tools and resources, and identifying new opportunities for grants and philanthropic investment in this area.

Ensuring Operational Excellence, Financial Stewardship, and Organizational Capacity

With a complex operation supported by municipal funds, philanthropy, grants, endowment income, and the work of the Curtis Friends, the Executive Director must oversee a multifaceted financial model. The income and growing endowment reflect both strong community support and the need for disciplined financial management. The next leader will steward these resources while cultivating donor relationships, expanding revenue streams, and sustaining a resilient budget strategy.

Internally, the Executive Director will ensure smooth operations across staffing, facilities, technology, and customer service. Maintaining seven-day-a-week operations in a high-demand environment requires thoughtful leadership, investment in staff development, and a commitment to fostering a healthy, inclusive, solutions-oriented workplace culture. The role also involves ongoing facility care and forward-looking infrastructure planning to support a growing set of programs and services. Balancing these needs with strategic discipline will be essential to supporting Curtis's continued excellence.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Curtis Memorial Library seeks an engaging leader to provide vision and leadership in a time of transformation in the public library space, who is passionate about serving the community and inspired by Curtis' mission, history, and trajectory. Although no one person will embody all the qualities enumerated below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal characteristics:

- A Master of Library Science degree from an ALA-accredited library school;
- A minimum of seven years of progressive responsibility and leadership experience in library management, preferably in a public library setting;
- A genuine passion for the mission of the Curtis Memorial Library, understanding the pivotal role the Library plays in the local and broad community;
- Leadership experience supporting and serving a diverse, passionate, and energized team;
- A high level of financial acumen and budget oversight experience;
- Strategic thought and vision to respect Curtis' history while taking it into the future;
- Commitment to diverse community programming;
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion that prioritizes an understanding of the evolving demographics of the city of Brunswick;
- Experience cultivating and stewarding donor relations to further the mission of non-profit organizations;
- Willingness to engage with local government and police to ensure the library remains safe and accessible to public;
- Leadership that embraces new roles for the library in the community and welcomes broadening the impact of the modern public library;
- A desire to understand and contribute to the community of Brunswick; and
- A strong commitment to intellectual freedom and public service.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/curtis-memorial-library/executive-director>

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