

Executive Director
The Richard Pousette-Dart Foundation
Suffern, New York

THE SEARCH

The Richard Pousette-Dart Foundation (the Foundation) seeks a visionary, entrepreneurial, and collaborative leader to serve as its next Executive Director. Today, the Foundation stands at an inflection point. Growing scholarly recognition, evolving financial resources, changing dynamics within the art market, and increasing institutional opportunities require a leader who can think beyond traditional collections management and scholarship. The next Executive Director will be charged with developing strategies that preserve the Foundation's resources, expand its influence, responsibly steward its assets, and position Richard Pousette-Dart's work for sustained cultural relevance in a rapidly changing artistic landscape. They will recognize that preserving a pivotal historical legacy requires not only safeguarding the past but actively shaping the conditions that allow that legacy to thrive in the future.

Since 2014, the Foundation has become an active research and grantmaking organization while preserving the historical Richard Pousette-Dart House and Studio in Suffern, New York. This year, the family of Richard Pousette-Dart has announced it will gift all of the artist's work from the estate of Evelyn Pousette-Dart to the Foundation. The substantial bequest will dramatically increase the Foundation's collection of important paintings, works on paper, sculpture, photography, and notebooks that represent Richard Pousette-Dart's life's work. The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to strengthen its organizational infrastructure, deepen scholarly engagement, expand visibility, cultivate philanthropic support, and position the Foundation as a leading resource for artists, researchers, educators, institutions, collectors, and the broader public.

The successful candidate will be a leader with strong communication skills who will be a forceful advocate for the contributions of Richard Pousette-Dart, who appreciates the power of artistic inquiry, and who is energized by the chance to shape the future of a mission-driven institution at an important moment of growth. This is not a business-as-usual leadership role. It is an opportunity to guide a distinctive artist-endowed foundation as it defines how an artistic legacy can have a meaningful impact in the twenty-first century.

The Richard Pousette-Dart Foundation has retained Isaacson, Miller, an international executive search firm, to assist with this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE RICHARD POUSETTE-DART LEGACY

Richard Warren Pousette-Dart (1916–1992) occupies a singular position within American art. As the youngest member of the first generation of the New York School, he was among the founding and most

innovative artists associated with Abstract Expressionism who continued to pursue a highly independent creative path throughout his career.

Resisting prevailing artistic movements and trends, Pousette-Dart developed a distinctive visual language rooted in symbolism, spirituality, and the pursuit of universal meaning through abstraction. His work encompasses painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, and printmaking, unified by an expressive use of gesture, form, and color. Over a career spanning five decades, Pousette-Dart created a rich vocabulary of biomorphic and totemic forms that became recurring themes throughout his artistic practice. His commitment to creative independence and experimentation established him as a powerful and influential voice within twentieth-century American art.

His work has been featured in major exhibitions at institutions, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Drawing Center, Kettle's Yard at the University of Cambridge, the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, and the Museum Frieder Burda.

Pousette-Dart's artistic influence extends beyond his own work. His life and career intersected with multiple generations of artists, poets, musicians, and thinkers whose ideas continue to shape contemporary artistic discourse. The preservation, interpretation, and communication of this legacy remain central to the Foundation's mission.

THE RICHARD POUSETTE-DART FOUNDATION

The Richard Pousette-Dart Foundation is an artist-endowed, private, non-operating foundation established to advance understanding of Richard Pousette-Dart's contributions as a visual artist, promote research and scholarship, support educational initiatives, foster intellectual exchange, and preserve important artistic and archival resources.

The Foundation maintains research collections and archival materials relating not only to Richard Pousette-Dart but also to his parents, Nathaniel Pousette-Dart—an artist, writer, and art director—and Flora Louise Pousette-Dart, a poet. These collections provide valuable insight into an important creative family and constitute a significant resource for scholars and researchers. The Foundation additionally supports the conservation of works by Richard Pousette-Dart held in public collections and promotes educational programming that recognizes artmaking as a vehicle for personal growth, creative development, and cultural transformation.

A centerpiece of the Foundation's stewardship responsibilities has been the Richard Pousette-Dart House and Studio in Suffern, New York. Listed on both the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places, the property preserves one of the few remaining studios associated with a first-generation Abstract Expressionist artist. The site currently serves as the Foundation's headquarters and research center. Presently, the Board is exploring options for a New York City space.

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director will serve as the Foundation's primary ambassador and spokesperson, articulating the continued importance of Richard Pousette-Dart's artistic vision and the Foundation's broader mission to diverse audiences. The Executive Director's responsibilities will extend well beyond the traditional functions of an archivist, curator, or collections steward. While scholarship and preservation remain central to the Foundation's mission, the Board seeks a leader capable of addressing complex organizational, financial, and strategic questions regarding the Foundation's future direction. The capable leader will oversee a dynamic portfolio of artistic, intellectual, financial, and real estate assets, as well as overseeing artwork sales, placements, and commercial partnerships to support its philanthropic and educational initiatives, and to develop thoughtful strategies to deploy its resources to support Board priorities, staff leadership, governance, partnership development, sustainability, and long-term impact.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Steward an extraordinary legacy across generations.

Guide the transition of Richard Pousette-Dart's artistic estate into a long-term institutional framework that ensures the preservation, relevance, and vitality of the artist's legacy beyond the founding generation of stewards. As the primary liaison to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will develop a productive partnership with Board members in service to the Foundation's mission. They will support the Board by advising its members on best practices and offering informed options it may consider to realize institutional objectives; planning and preparing for board and committee meetings; facilitating board discussions; ensuring compliance with governance policies and procedures; and facilitating the recruitment and development of effective staff and board and committee members when timely.

Develop a strategic framework for asset stewardship.

Create an integrated, results-oriented approach to managing the Foundation's artistic holdings, archives, intellectual property, historic property, and financial resources that takes into account the fundamentally personal nature of the legacy in play. Ensure that these assets are protected while also being leveraged appropriately to advance the Foundation's mission and sustainability.

Navigate a changing art market.

Assess and strengthen the Foundation's position within a rapidly evolving art market. Develop informed strategies regarding gallery representation, market partnerships, commercial and non-commercial exhibition opportunities, scholarship, and expanding public visibility while maintaining the integrity of the artist's legacy. Position the Foundation thoughtfully within evolving cultural ecosystems by understanding shifts in commercial and museum priorities, collecting patterns, scholarship, audience engagement, and philanthropy.

Define Richard Pousette-Dart's place within art history.

Expand scholarly understanding of Pousette-Dart's work and achievement and influence by supporting new research, exhibitions, publications, and institutional partnerships. Advance critical conversations about his relationship to Abstract Expressionism, postwar abstraction, Color Field painting, material experimentation, photography, sculpture, and broader histories of American modernism. Foster meaningful dialogue among artists, scholars, curators, collectors, and cultural leaders while ensuring that the Foundation remains a respected voice in conversations about artistic legacy, creative practice, and cultural stewardship.

Build organizational capacity.

Establish or enhance the leadership structure, staffing model, systems, and operational capabilities necessary to support a growing artist estate and foundation. Recruit, as needed, talented professionals who can contribute specialized expertise across multiple disciplines.

Strengthen financial sustainability.

Ensure long-term fiscal health in partnership with the Board that secures revenue streams and fundraising initiatives while implementing responsible financial planning practices that balance mission, preservation, and future growth.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While no single candidate will likely have all the ideal qualifications, the successful candidate will possess many of the following qualifications and qualities:

- Demonstrated appreciation of Richard Pousette-Dart's place within history and culture; a passion for the Pousette-Dart legacy and how their art and ideals remain relevant.
- Experience working with multi-disciplinary artists and the networks to match.
- Demonstrated success in developing and implementing a compelling organizational vision and growth strategy.
- Past success working with a board of directors and the ability to cultivate relationships that will ensure the board is deeply engaged in its fiduciary, stewardship, and strategic roles.
- Experience managing a complex budget associated with tangible and intangible assets.
- Successful record of nonprofit revenue development, including earned revenue and individual, institutional, and endowment fundraising.
- Demonstrated ability to recruit and cultivate top talent, develop leadership and organizational capacity, and organizational structure that fosters collaboration and innovation.

- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to act as a credible and compelling spokesperson, rally constituents, and build a brand and relationships regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- Leadership style that is consultative, consensus-seeking yet decisive; diplomatic and confident; self-reflective and self-aware.
- Ability to motivate others behind a vision, sharing the spotlight with family, partners and staff.
- Patience, perspective, and passion.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

The Executive Director position is a full-time, exempt, permanent position based in New York. Some domestic and international travel will be required.

The expected salary range for this position is \$200,000-\$250,000. A competitive compensation package will be offered commensurate with experience.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Materials submitted by October 30, 2026, will be assured full consideration. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, CVs with cover letters, and any requests for accommodations should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/richard-pousette-dart-foundation/executive-director> to the attention of Sarah James, Berlinda Mojica, and Christina Errico at Isaacson, Miller.

The Foundation encourages applications from individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by The Richard Pousette-Dart Foundation. 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 The Richard Pousette-Dart Foundation would supersede any conflicting information in this document.