

# WHITNEY

## CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART New York, New York

### THE SEARCH

The Whitney Museum of American Art (the Whitney, the Museum) seeks a strategic, innovative, entrepreneurial, and results-oriented Chief Advancement Officer (CAO). The CAO will join the Whitney at a time of unique opportunity and impact following the Museum's successful and transformative expansion in 2015, and the recent appointment, in 2023, of Scott Rothkopf as the Alice Pratt Brown Director - a dynamic new leader with a focus on aligning the Whitney's founding mission with ambitious programmatic, audience, and community goals. With values-led initiatives defining the trajectory of the Whitney and its engagement with its various audiences and stakeholders, the CAO will lead all aspects of institutional advancement, translating this vision into new modes of donor engagement and compelling fundraising opportunities, while building a culture of philanthropy that is inclusive of the Whitney's diverse audiences and constituencies.

Reporting to the director, the CAO will lead the Museum's comprehensive institutional advancement initiatives and fundraising strategy. This will include stewarding and growing the Whitney's significant individual giving programs, expanding corporate partnerships and sponsorships via strategic relationships, developing support from foundations, and managing a related program of special events to support brand building, benefit fulfillment, and donor cultivation. With the Whitney's commitment to expanding audience access, increasing impact, and prioritizing inclusion, the next CAO will bring creativity and innovation to these advancement functions by establishing a structured, proactive, best-practice organization to support the Museum's ambitious and progressive goals. The CAO role is suited to candidates from a variety of professional backgrounds and experiences including outside of the museum and not-for-profit sectors. Most importantly, the successful candidate will have a proven track record of strategic thinking, data-driven decision making, responsibility for revenue growth, and the ability to lead teams to successful return-driven outcomes.

As a member of the Museum's senior leadership team, the Management Council, the CAO will be a key partner contributing to the strategies and direction of museum decisions and priorities. The CAO will work closely with, and help shape the development of, the Museum's Board of Trustees and other key patrons and constituents to advance strategic, long-term relationships for the financial health and sustainability of the institution in the context of a recently revised vision statement and upcoming strategic plan. The CAO will serve as a change agent and holistic architect, leading and setting the policy, strategy, and

execution of the work in the advancement department, including individual and institutional philanthropy, special events, and stewardship programs. The CAO will inspire and lead by example, demonstrating the highest standards of cultivation, stewardship, and staff management. In addition to collaboration with the Management Council, the CAO will be a close, collaborative partner with colleagues in the curatorial, education, conservation, publications, and exhibitions management departments, as well as with the finance, legal, human resources, trustee affairs, and other administrative offices. Additionally, the CAO will work closely with the membership, annual fund, business systems, communications, and marketing teams to ensure a seamless and strategic focus on the Museum's most critical constituencies.

The Whitney seeks a CAO who can capably build on the strengths of the Museum and who is excited and inspired by the singular opportunities in front of the Whitney today. The CAO must have an appreciation for the key opportunities and challenges relevant to cultural art institutions, from changing demographics to matters of audience access, technology, sustainability, and allocation of resources. This individual will possess a minimum of 10 years of experience in positions of increasing responsibility within advancement and demonstrated experience leading complex fundraising programs and campaigns. The CAO should possess strong strategic planning, managerial, and motivational skills; a keen understanding of fundraising best practices; business and marketing savvy; and a track record of personal success in donor cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship at major and principal gift levels.

This role is an exceptional opportunity for a high-performing individual to partner with a visionary director early in his tenure to further develop an advancement program in support of the Whitney through the implementation of proven methodologies as well as the application of innovative and enterprising strategies.

The Whitney Museum of American Art has retained Jack Gorman of the national executive search firm, Isaacson, Miller, to assist in this important recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

## THE WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

As the preeminent institution devoted to the art of the United States, the [Whitney Museum of American Art](#) presents the full range of twentieth-century and contemporary American art, with a special focus on works by living artists. The Whitney is dedicated to collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting American art, and its [collection](#)—arguably the finest holdings of twentieth-century American art in the world—is the Museum's key resource. The Museum's flagship exhibition, the [Biennial](#), is the country's leading survey of the most recent developments in American art.

The Whitney was founded in 1930 by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who believed that artists were essential to defining, challenging, and expanding culture. Mrs. Whitney saw that American artists with new ideas had trouble exhibiting or selling their work, and she began purchasing and showing their art,

eventually becoming the leading patron of American art until she died in 1942. Mrs. Whitney established the museum to focus exclusively on the art and artists of the United States.

Innovation has been a hallmark of the Whitney since its beginnings, including presenting and exploring new artistic mediums such as video and performance arts; acquiring works within the year they were created from relatively unknown artists; and opening branch museums in other parts of New York City and the surrounding area which served as training grounds for curators and increased community access to the collection. Although the last of the branches closed in 2008, the Museum continues to expansively pursue opportunities to increase access to its collection and programs.

In 2015, the Whitney moved from the [Breuer Building](#) on the Upper East Side to the newly constructed [Renzo Piano](#) designed building in the Meatpacking District. The new building increased both indoor and outdoor exhibition space and centers the Museum firmly in one of the city's leading creative communities. Shortly after the move, the Whitney embarked on a strategic planning process and, in 2017, published a strategic plan, which recognized its position of strength with respect to the collection, facilities, finances, board, and staff and laid out a vision and aspirations for the future to ensure the Whitney continues to be innovative and relevant to artists and to local, national, and international audiences.

The Whitney is in strong fiscal health to meet its current program, staffing, and facilities needs. For the year ended June 30, 2023, the Museum's operating revenues and expenses were \$73.4 million and \$67.5 million, respectively. Net assets were \$847 million, and the value of the endowment was \$411 million. With respect to philanthropy, contributions from all sources were \$46 million including membership revenue (from both individuals and corporates) was \$9 million; the associated administrative costs were \$3.7 million and \$3.5 million, respectively. Its current staff size is approximately 450 full- and part-time employees.

### **Scott Rothkopf**

Alice Pratt Brown Director

Scott Rothkopf was appointed the Alice Pratt Brown Director of the Whitney Museum in November 2023, following 14 years at the Whitney. Rothkopf first joined the Whitney as a curator in 2009 and was promoted to Curator and Associate Director of Programs in 2012. Following the opening of the new building in 2015, he was appointed Deputy Director for Programs and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator. He became Senior Deputy Director in 2018, a role which included oversight of multiple teams, including publications, exhibitions, and collection management, as well as broad responsibility for Museum-wide strategic planning, as a member of the senior management and policy-making team.

In his time at the Whitney, Rothkopf has curated groundbreaking exhibitions including *Jeff Koons: A Retrospective* (2014), the largest single-artist exhibition in the Whitney's history and the final show in the museum's Marcel Breuer-designed Madison Avenue space. Rothkopf also co-curated *Jasper Johns: Mind/Mirror* (2021), the most comprehensive retrospective ever devoted to the artist's work – a show

conceived as one whole but displayed in two distinct parts simultaneously at the Whitney and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

As Chief Curator, Rothkopf hired and developed a diverse team of talented curators, and created an exhibition program that continues to feature field-defining innovation across a range of priorities including as an emerging center of excellence in support of Latinx and Indigenous artists.

Notably, in his first months as Director, Rothkopf has demonstrated his values-led vision for the Whitney. With generous philanthropic support, Rothkopf has conceived of and launched the Whitney's most comprehensive ever free admissions programs with Free Friday Nights (5-10 pm) and Free Second Sundays (all day) to lower barriers to access for all and to expand and diversify the museum's audiences.

In addition to his curatorial work at the Whitney, Rothkopf has served as a guest curator at the Harvard University Art Museums; published widely on the work of contemporary artists; written for and served as editor for *Artforum International* and *Yourself in the World*; and has been a guest critic, lecturer, and panelist at numerous institutions, including the Dallas Museum of Art, Harvard University, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the National Gallery of Canada, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Stanford University, and the Yale School of Art. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation.

Rothkopf earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees in the history of art and architecture from Harvard University.

## **CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER**

The Chief Advancement Officer will be responsible for the planning, management, and success of the comprehensive fundraising efforts to support the Museum's ambitious values-driven priorities for the next chapter of the Whitney's history. The CAO will also be a key member of the Management Council, which leads important strategic, financial, operational, and programmatic decision-making for the Museum.

The advancement office will play a key role in advancing the Whitney's strategic and institutional priorities and building long-term relationships for the financial health of the organization. To this end, the CAO will oversee individual and institutional fundraising and stewardship efforts; establish best practices, systems, and infrastructure; and lead with a strategic, inclusive, and enterprising approach to engage the next generation of patrons, donors, and leaders.

Within the following broad categories, the Chief Advancement Officer will provide:

### *Strategic Vision and Leadership*

- Assess the Whitney's fundraising potential from both new and existing sources, as well as the effectiveness of the advancement organization and programs; craft a multi-year strategy to develop a modern culture of philanthropy; and substantially and sustainably increase philanthropic support and endowment growth in keeping with its mission and goals.
- Serve as an active member of the Management Council; participate in the strategic planning process; provide counsel regarding the fundability of identified priorities and initiatives as well as new ideas; and effectively operationalize opportunities with the most promise. Build strong, collaborative professional relationships with colleagues across the institution and foster a strong team orientation.
- Based on the Museum's strategic plan and goals, lead the planning, preparation, and implementation of a new plan for advancement, which will ensure an optimally deployed staff and an effective, efficient infrastructure that will support an increase in fundraising performance and sustain continued organizational growth.
- In conjunction with the Director and Management Council, develop clear, consistent, cohesive, and compelling messaging that conveys the uniqueness, strengths, and aspirations of the Whitney, and which articulates the case for philanthropic support of funding priorities.
- Evaluate, strengthen, and enhance the major gift pipeline, including the existing Patron Groups and annual fund programming; and develop and implement new innovative programs to identify and acquire prospective donors, increase donor retention, and upgrade and renew existing donors.

### *Executive Support and Engagement*

- Guide and support the Director in his role as fundraiser, serving as an advisor and co-strategist in cultivating prospective donors, and soliciting transformative gifts. Similarly, guide and support curatorial staff and other senior leaders in fundraising-related activities, ensuring that their time spent is meaningful and productive.
- Provide the highest level of support to the Board of Trustees and other key volunteers for their philanthropic activities on behalf of the Whitney; ensure that their experience is meaningful and productive and connects them more fully with the Museum's mission and values.
- Leverage the Director, Management Council, and others to enhance the Whitney's existing relationships with local, national, and international communities to build reputational growth, and to engage new individuals and institutions in philanthropic support of the Museum.

### *Staff Management and Operational Oversight*

- Assess the current organizational structure and effectiveness of the Advancement team and adjust as necessary. Provide clear direction, priorities, and measurable institutional and strategic goals for development staff.

- Assess the current programs and their net contributions to the Museum, focusing both on operational costs and the related allocation of staff resources. Adjust existing programs and introduce new opportunities as appropriate.
- Ensure that all systems and processes, from data capture to gift acceptances and processing, maximize the use of available intelligence and also follow sound budgetary, legal, and accountancy practices.
- Plan and carefully manage the advancement budget, ensuring that resources are deployed efficiently and effectively in support of the Museum's fundraising goals and objectives, utilizing data analytics to project, measure, and report on progress relative to goals.

The Chief Advancement Officer will bring many of the following professional experiences and skills:

- A minimum of 10 years of progressive experience working with, and leading, high performing teams – agnostic of industry or sector.
- Strategic mindset and thoughtful understanding of how to build and grow a successful data-driven, revenue organization.
- Ability to identify and develop talent; success in aligning team efforts with institution-level strategic priorities and goals.
- Ability to engage, and build mutually valued philanthropic relationships with individuals, corporations, and institutions.
- A track record of success in cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major and principal gifts from individual and institutional donors; a high level of comfort and effectiveness working with high-net-worth individuals and organizational leaders.
- Superior written and oral communication skills with the ability to succinctly communicate a vision and process to senior leaders and other key audiences and constituents, utilizing data and metrics as appropriate as a foundation for advancement programs; impeccable attention to detail and superb follow-through.
- Proven management skills and the ability to establish a team- and goal-oriented environment that empowers staff through active communication and delegation and that builds confidence, promotes diversity of thought, and celebrates achievement.
- Exemplary interpersonal and listening skills; strong personal integrity, flexibility, charisma, and work ethic coupled with a sense of humor and perspective; a self-starter, comfortable with ambiguity and evolving demands.
- Outstanding emotional intelligence, demonstrated by successful collaborative problem-solving and institutional change management, resulting in an increase in contributed revenue.
- A diplomatic, collaborative demeanor; the political savvy to navigate a complex organization; the desire and ability to gain trust and build strong collaborative relationships with all members of an operation across a diverse organization.

- A champion of learning, education, and inclusion as well as demonstrated understanding of the nuances related to non-profit visual arts institutions; the ability to effectively articulate the Whitney's distinct vision, mission, and values to a diverse audience.
- A sharp eye for operational efficiency and optimal resource allocation, including a demonstrated understanding of budgets and financial planning.
- A bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

## COMPENSATION

The annual salary range for this position is \$300,000-\$350,000. Except for roles with a set rate of pay, the wage/salary of the finalist selected for this role will be set based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to departmental budgets, qualifications, experience, education, licenses, specialty, and training. The stated hiring rate/range represents WMAA's good faith and reasonable estimate of the rate/range of possible compensation at the time of posting.

## TO APPLY

Jack Gorman is leading this search with Elizabeth Neustaedter, Bryce Ervin, and Ryan Cheung. For more information or to submit a confidential nomination or inquiry, please visit:

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/whitney-museum-american-art/chief-advancement-officer>

*The Whitney collects, preserves, interprets, and exhibits American art in the broadest context. It values diversity in every aspect of its mission: starting with the art collection it builds and preserves, and extending to the histories it writes through exhibitions and programs, the audiences who engage with the Museum and provide context and meaning for everything it does, and the staff whose voices and experiences shape its work.*

*The Whitney is committed to creating a work environment where staff, interns, and volunteers of different races, ethnicities, ages, gender identities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic backgrounds, immigration status, and abilities feel not just welcome, but fully included and able to bring their own experiences and aspirations to their work.*