



President
Minneapolis College of Art and Design
Minneapolis, MN

THE SEARCH

The Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD), a leading independent college of art and design, seeks a collaborative and strategic president to lead in this pivotal moment. Deeply committed to access, MCAD offers an innovative curriculum across a multitude of programs that prepares all students to find both personal and professional purpose as creative leaders.

With deep roots in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, MCAD offers four-year undergraduate degrees, an MFA degree, online master's degrees, and pre- and post-college continuing education. The innovative curriculum allows students to build career skills alongside their technical and professional skills as artists and designers and offers programs across design, fine arts, media arts, and creative entrepreneurship. Approximately 800 students from 45 states call MCAD home, where undergraduates live on campus in their first two years. Roughly 100 faculty, renowned for their ingenuity, expertise, and commitment to teaching, are the bedrock of an MCAD education. Students, faculty, and staff identify strongly as members of an MCAD community wherein the residents feel deeply connected to one another, invested in their collective success and proud of the assembled creative talent and leadership.

The president will join the community in a significant moment. The last chapter has seen significant work on both the curriculum and institutional infrastructure. Enrollment is growing. Connectivity with the community surrounding the college has deepened. It is an institution poised to take the next step in its progression. Yet the last chapter has not been without challenge. The impact on budget and staffing levels

resulting from the pandemic is still felt on campus. The next president must grow revenue and strengthen the resources and support available to students. They will foster strategic decision-making and promote coalescence around a vision; evince a deep commitment to student, faculty, and staff well-being; and be a tireless champion of MCAD in the community, growing philanthropic support. They are a gifted communicator, collaborative by nature, and able to drive ideation through implementation to impact.

MCAD has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist in this recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications can be directed to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

MCAD was founded as the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts by the Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts in 1886. Characterized from early days by innovative curriculum, the school was renamed the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) in 1970, reflecting its highly regarded bachelor of fine arts degree.

The MCAD of today is a vibrant community of artists and designers nearly 800 students strong (700 undergraduate students; 35 MFA students; and 48 professional students), from 45 states and 15 countries. It's an institution that values transformational ideas and actions, collaborative community, empathetic leadership, embracing multifaceted and complex identities, and experiential learning. Fundamental to the MCAD experience is that students are educated not just as world-class artists and designers but as future leaders in an ever-evolving world, able to navigate change and transform society with equity, empathy, and imagination. It is where students find their personal and professional purpose as creative and cultural leaders.

Programs

The MCAD mission states, "Minneapolis College of Art and Design provides a transformative education for creative students of all backgrounds to work, collaborate, and lead with confidence." For undergraduate students, a first-year experience course provides all students with an immediate platform for success, helping students develop a sense of community, providing tools for navigating the institution, and providing access to faculty. A liberal arts program, embedded in the curriculum, provides students with a grounding in the humanities and sciences and with the essential problem-solving and critical-thinking skills that all artists need. The flexible and broad curriculum (one need not declare a major in the first year of study), close mentorship, and interdisciplinary course of study prepare students to be accomplished makers and scholars; equity-minded problem solvers; critical, conceptual thinkers; inclusive and collaborative partners; creative storytellers; and engaged citizens within a global context.

MCAD offers a variety of undergraduate majors, an on-campus MFA, three online Masters, and continuing education courses for pre-college students and lifelong learners. At the undergraduate level, 43% of declared students are studying a major in Design, 18% in Fine Arts, and 32% in Media Arts. The Bachelor

of Fine Arts (BFA) offers majors in Animation, Comic Art, Fine Arts (with concentrations in Drawing and Painting, Sculpture and Expanded Media, and Print Paper Book Arts), Graphic Design, Illustration, Media Arts (with concentrations in Art and Technology, Filmmaking, and Photography), and Product and Furniture Design.

Students choose MCAD for its strong BFA programs, and their quality is frequently noted. *Art and Object* has named MCAD a top-five art school in the Midwest. The publication *I.D.* calls MCAD a top-ten design school in the world. Other rankings identify programs in illustration and graphic design as among the best in the nation, and in a rarity for visual arts colleges, The Princeton Review has included MCAD on its annual list of best Midwestern colleges for more than ten years.

All programs provide first-rate studio space for students to create their work, and starting sophomore year, students are guaranteed individual studio space. Such spaces include a top-notch print-making facility that covers everything from screen printing to stone lithography, drawing and painting studios flooded with natural light, a sculpture lab that allows students to embrace both historical and contemporary approaches to the medium, space for traditional practices in woodworking and bronze casting, and the M/Lab, a 13,000 square foot media lab of top industry standard.

Creative Entrepreneurship is MCAD's sole Bachelor of Science Major (representing seven percent of first-year students). Recognizing that the growth of jobs in sustainability and mission-driven businesses calls for creative, adaptable, collaborative, innovative, and action-oriented leaders, the program gives students hands-on experience to develop their creative and entrepreneurial skills. Grounded in experiential learning, students will develop proficiency in marketable skills such as business ideation and development, design thinking, project management, and forecasting while working with real-world clients and global issues. MCAD also offers a dual degree program wherein Creative Entrepreneurship is partnered with an MA in Sustainable Design. At the undergraduate level, MCAD is the only regional art and design college to offer programmatic work on entrepreneurship and the first in the nation to offer a concentration in climate entrepreneurship.

The MFA program is a rigorous four-semester program in which students are invited to be strongly self-directed and highly self-motivated, charting their path with a chosen mentor. Students explore social, cultural, and professional needs stretching across creative practices. Students are encouraged and supported in exploring wide-ranging processes and histories via rigorous studio practice, individual mentorship, and intense interdisciplinary discourse.

MCAD offers three innovative online master's programs at the intersection of the creative and professional. The Master of Arts in Creative Leadership is an accelerated fifteen-month online program, bracketed by two week-long residencies in Minneapolis – for individuals who seek the knowledge and skills to navigate changes in their careers, organizations, and communities. The Master of Arts in Graphic and Web Design is designed for working professionals as a flexible online program. The Master of Arts in

Sustainable Design is a fully online program that engages across disciplines and industries to drive creative design solutions.

MCAD is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. It is a member of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design and the Minnesota Private College Council.

MCAD graduates unleash the full power of art and design. More than 75% of alumni report working in a field closely related to their training at MCAD. Graduates regularly find employment in one of the several corporations headquartered in the Twin Cities, such as Target Corporation and Best Buy; local creative agencies, such as KNOCK and Mono; and local arts organizations, such as the Walker Art Center and the Minneapolis Institute of Art. MCAD graduates have been included in prominent exhibitions such as the Whitney Biennial and are routinely awarded Minnesota State Arts Board grants or recognition by arts funders, including the McKnight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, the Bush Foundation, the Visual Arts Fund of the Andy Warhol Foundation, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, and the Guggenheim Fellowship. MCAD graduates have also been recognized for their work in film, music, and television with Emmy, Grammy, and Oscar awards and nominations. MCAD alumni participate in the life of the college through an Alumni Board and by serving as trustees, faculty, visiting artists and designers to studios and classrooms, and hosts to student interns in their businesses.

People

The lifeblood of MCAD is a dynamic and dedicated faculty comprised of artists, designers, and scholars. Made up of 38 full-time and 120 adjunct faculty, they are unified in a deep commitment to teaching. Both full-time and part-time faculty are unionized, and faculty are separately represented in governance by a faculty senate. A talented and diverse staff matches the faculty in their dedication. Often artists themselves, the expertise and technical prowess staff bring daily to campus are essential ingredients in MCAD's ability to meet its mission.

MCAD is committed to affordability. More than 97% of students receive financial aid, and more than 40% are Pell Grant eligible. The institution awards more than \$11 million in grants and scholarships annually. MCAD is proud to offer tuition below the national art college average. Among undergraduates, 24% are the first in their family to attend college. While most MCAD students come from the Upper Midwest, the college recruits nationally and internationally, attracting approximately 40% of its students from outside the region, with 45 states and 15 countries represented on average each year. Five percent are international students, and the average MCAD student is 21 years old. Thirty-six percent of students are from underrepresented populations in the U.S. From its founding, MCAD has been committed to educating women, and today 64% of students identify as women, 30% identify as men, and six percent identify as non-binary.

Place

MCAD has engaged in a plan to modernize the campus for a sustainable and innovative future. The institution has worked to revitalize physical infrastructure and tackled maintenance needs. More notably, MCAD has made major investments in student housing, acquiring a new building and refreshing others. For the first time, MCAD is now able to offer housing to all first- and second-year students in apartment-style (not dorm) living, which has proven attractive to students and had a positive impact on enrollment and community on campus.

MCAD has an operating budget of \$28 million and an endowment of \$43 million. While the acute period of Covid-19 saw depressed enrollment, the last years have seen stable and steady growth each year in a return to pre-pandemic levels. Capital projects have been carefully managed without taking on significant debt. MCAD has shown itself capable of steady fundraising of between \$1.5 and \$2 million annually.

Located in the Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis, MCAD boasts a tremendous location. A rich, multi-cultural community, Whittier is home to the Minneapolis Institute of Art, The Children's Theater Company, historic record shops, and more, and has been an arts hub for over 100 years. The highly regarded Eat Street, home to thirteen blocks of international restaurants, coffee shops, and markets on Nicollet Avenue is a popular hub for the larger Twin Cities. MCAD is deeply engaged with its neighbors and is an active player in the Whittier Alliance Neighborhood Organization, offering support and campus resources for the collective benefit of the community.

Minneapolis/Saint Paul is a vibrant hub of creativity, rich with visual and performing arts institutions, including the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, with which MCAD shares its campus. Only four cities in the United States are home to more Fortune 500 company headquarters. Across medicine, retail, technology, food, and advertising, the Twin Cities attracts top talent. The cities are characterized by the qualities often listed in articles about "best places to live," such as an unmatched park and trail system that connects the neighborhoods of the Twin Cities, running along creeks, rivers, and lakes.

THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The president of MCAD will lead the institution in its evolution as a distinctive and dynamic arts institution, championing artistic, academic, and creative excellence and working to recruit, retain, and develop talented and diverse students, faculty, and staff. As chief executive, the president is responsible for the overall management of institutional operations and the direction of the institution. As an institutional leader, the president drives strategy and strengthens community. As the principal representative of MCAD, they maintain relationships with a diverse array of constituents, represent MCAD externally, and serve as the chief fundraiser for the institution.

The college is governed by a 25-member board of trustees to whom the president reports and who represent the business, education, philanthropic, and arts communities of the Twin Cities and MCAD alumni. Each trustee serves on one or more committees that report back to the full board. The president is an ex-officio member of the board.

The Executive Leadership Council (ELC) serves as the president's cabinet and is a highly-effective body. It is the senior leadership of the college and consists of the vice presidents for academic affairs, communications and marketing strategy, enrollment management, finance (CFO), institutional advancement, student affairs, and a senior advisor & director of board relations. This is a vital and experienced team with a wealth of institutional knowledge in the core areas of the school and established coherence that allows them to work collaboratively to advance the school's mission.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE PRESIDENT

MCAD seeks a superb leader who can build, guide, and inspire. The president will foster enthusiasm, nourish a shared sense of community, and work collaboratively and transparently. Key to the president's success will be partnerships with the Board of Trustees; the various governance groups and committees of MCAD; faculty, staff, and students; and a collegial Executive Leadership Council.

The president will:

Galvanize the institution

The college finds itself in a position of strength, with an ambitious articulated strategic direction. To maintain a competitive edge in this time of instability and evolution across higher education, MCAD aims to carry momentum forward and act decisively. It will further hone its distinctive identity and more clearly articulate the competitive advantage and purpose of an MCAD education. It will continue strategically building and shaping programs that meet this identity and this progressive moment in art and design. At the helm of such an enterprise, the president will be a willing and able agent of sustainable change within higher education's dynamic landscape. The incoming president will join, lead, and shape this conversation and seek engagement from the community, helping to drive strategy while generating buy-in. Critically, they will ensure that vision becomes a reality, that plans are effectively implemented, and that their impact is realized for students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Be part of an engaged community

MCAD seeks a leader who will be an invested community member, embracing, complimenting, and growing the collective and supportive culture on campus. MCAD is a living community in which many feel a sense of ownership and a deep sense of investment. Personal interactions and attention to them are valued. The president will bring a demonstrated willingness to learn, consult, and incorporate feedback

and insights. No healthy organization is devoid of conflict, but the president must show up, speak authentically, engage with empathy, identify shared values and common ground, respect differences, and promote a culture of open and constructive dialogue that serves the school's mission. They will work alongside students, faculty, and staff for the betterment of all and to meet the MCAD mission and strategic goals. Recognizing that art and design are often community engaged, the president will make it a priority to be present and approachable on campus at events across all programs and engaged in the rhythms of an art and design school during the day.

Expand the financial base

MCAD has substantial budgetary, physical, and human assets that allow it to operate from a position of strength. Yet, as an art and design education institution committed to access, expenses are significant. The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic pushed MCAD to operate efficiently, and there is limited ability to move further in that direction. Though immediate past years have necessitated restraint, the institution has, at the same time, made continued investments in the future. The president must ensure that a robust operational enterprise, able to meet the needs of students and faculty in realizing the mission of MCAD, and strategic investment in the future of the college, can happen simultaneously. Doing so will require significant skills in and attention to enrollment and retention strategies, smart programmatic growth, and a substantial commitment to expanding the financial resources of MCAD.

Most essentially, the president will be the fundraiser-in-chief for MCAD. The institution has shown an ability to secure philanthropic support. However, there remain significant avenues of potential support yet to be fully realized, and there is room for growth. The president must be an ambitious and tireless ambassador for MCAD. They will guide a conversation that enables a clear vision and value proposition for MCAD to be shared and that grows connection with the art and design industry locally, nationally, and globally, providing opportunities for students. With the partnership of the Board and a dedicated development team, the president will seize the opportunity to build relationships and attract increased gifts and grants. The president must be a gifted relationship builder, engaging ambassador, and compelling storyteller who will present MCAD as an attractive resource and priority investment.

Increase enrollment and grow the MCAD brand

Too often, MCAD is referred to as a "hidden gem." As is the case for many small private colleges across the country today, there is a set of trends in student enrollment that MCAD must confront. The next president will work closely with leadership to support recruitment, enrollment, and retention strategies and resources. They will engage in an ongoing articulation and reinforcement of the value of an art and design education and the unique value proposition MCAD offers in all of the college's activities and communications with its varied audiences. Maintaining energetic, relevant, and authentic messaging and outreach will continue to be a high priority for both the recruitment and advancement agendas of MCAD. The president will be an engaged member of the local community and an active arts and community leader throughout the Twin Cities.

Strengthen diversity, equity, inclusion, and access at MCAD

At MCAD, many individuals feel seen and accepted, able to access an authentic education for the first time. The next president must ensure that the commitment to a culture of empathy and inclusion remains a steadfast and foundational aspect of MCAD. Through their engagement and leadership, the president will work to provide a structural and resource-rich environment that supports the institution's commitment to reduce barriers and create accessible inclusive spaces; to focus on DEIA across all operational decisions, provide more financial aid, offer flexible learning options (like hybrid class instruction), enhance academic advising, and reduce food and housing insecurities; to prioritize the well-being of faculty, students, and staff by increasing access to holistic physical- and mental-health resources; and to authentic recruitment and retention of a diverse student, faculty, and staff body and investment in them so they have the resources to do their best work.

Lead a best-in-class organization

As the chief executive, the president presides over a complex organization, responsible to diverse constituents, in an environment of limited resources and a rapidly evolving landscape. The president will set a culture of excellence, ambition, and strategic coordination that is pervasive throughout the institution to ensure that MCAD is an environment where new and best practices prevail academically, artistically, operationally, and financially. Most importantly, the president will develop and retain high-performing leaders, teams, and individuals throughout the MCAD structure, with outlets for professional development and advancement and attention paid to morale.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

MCAD welcomes candidates who are original and creative thinkers, superb strategists, and passionate believers in the power of art and design as a force for social good. The successful candidate will bring many of the following qualifications, skills, and experiences to the role:

- A deep and enthusiastic understanding of, and commitment to, MCAD's mission and various disciplines; strong leadership asserting MCAD's indispensable role in the future of art and design education.
- A bridge builder with a record of inspirational and accessible leadership; a genuine enthusiasm and ability to serve as a visible and compelling advocate for and embodiment of MCAD to a variety of audiences.
- The financial acumen necessary to fulfill short- and long-term financial obligations, efficiently and effectively allocate resources, anticipate future funding needs, and guide an institution in a fiscally responsible way, through periods of both uncertainty and stability.
- A proven record of strategic and effective leadership and administrative management in a complex environment; a record of successful partnership with a board and equally effective support and management of a senior leadership team.

- Experience working collaboratively with faculty and staff and helping both to achieve productive, meaningful outcomes in their work.
- Expertise in working with a team to lead successful fundraising efforts and campaigns; representing MCAD compellingly to prospects and donors; developing strategies to support ambitious philanthropic goals; and energizing alumni and other stakeholders to support and champion the institution.
- Excellent communication skills with the ability to energize and inspire faculty, students, staff, parents, alumni, trustees, and external stakeholders, and to persuade audiences locally, nationally, and internationally to believe in MCAD's future; a collaborative, inclusive, transparent, and good-humored leadership style with a willingness to consult and listen; the highest standards of ethics and integrity.
- A deep and proven commitment to diversity and inclusion; experience working with and engaging diverse faculty, students, staff, and communities; and the capacity to create a harmonious, safe, and supportive environment that welcomes and respects all people, including but not limited to those who represent all racial, ethnic, religious, gender, gender-presentation, sexuality, geographic, cultural, ability, and socioeconomic groups.
- An earned terminal degree is preferred.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

Salary range: \$375,000- \$450,000

Location: Residing within daily commutable distance of campus is essential.

Benefits: The position is eligible for a comprehensive benefits package which includes medical, dental, vision, HSA, FSA, and 403(b) retirement plans, commuter benefits, and employer paid basic life insurance policy, short term and long-term disability coverage.

TO APPLY

Confidential inquiries, nominations, and/or resumes with cover letters may be directed electronically to:

Ben Tobin, Partner
Sheryl Ash, Partner
Andy Marshall, Managing Associate
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/minneapolis-college-art-and-design/president>

MCAD is an equal opportunity employer and educator.