



200 W Madison St, Fl 3
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 470-6325

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unitedstatesartists.org

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Communications Director

Description

The Communications Director is responsible for leading United States Artists' communications strategy — the design and implementation of its brand, storytelling, and public engagement. Reporting to the President and CEO, this role will strengthen how USA communicates its mission, amplifies artists' voices, and engages the general public in its work.

The Communications Director will evolve and steward the USA brand while leading integrated communications across media, digital platforms, publications, events, and strategic partnerships. This role will translate USA's investments in artists, research, policy, and artist infrastructure into compelling stories and communications that deepen public engagement and strengthen support for artists nationwide.

The ideal candidate will be a strategic and collaborative communications leader who is equally comfortable shaping long-term direction and managing day-to-day execution. They will help reimagine and then operationalize USA's communications strategy while building the systems, partnerships, and team capacity needed to support the organization's continued growth.

Success in this role means building a communications function that strengthens USA's visibility, deepens engagement with artists and partners, and advances the organization's long-term strategic goals.



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Essential Duties & Responsibilities

Communications Strategy, Brand & Organizational Leadership

- Lead the development, implementation, and continuous evolution of USA's integrated communications strategy, aligning communications with organizational priorities and long-term goals.
- Evolve and steward the USA brand, ensuring consistency of voice, messaging, visual identity, and public presence.
- Assess, strengthen, and operationalize communications systems, workflows, and team practices to support organizational growth.
- Identify opportunities to expand audience engagement, strengthen organizational visibility, and increase public understanding of USA's mission and impact.
- Explore and implement emerging communications technologies to improve communications workflows, content development, and organizational effectiveness.
- Build, mentor, and support a high-performing communications team while fostering collaboration, accountability, and professional growth.

Storytelling, Content & Audience Engagement

- Lead USA's editorial and content strategy across all communications channels.
- Shape and steward USA's brand and narrative through storytelling that elevates artists' voices, ideas, and lived experiences while strengthening public understanding of the policies, investments, and infrastructure that enable artists to thrive.
- Develop thought leadership content—including reports, speeches, opinion pieces, briefing materials, and executive communications—that advances USA's mission and contributes to national conversations about artists, culture, and creative work.



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- Oversee editorial calendars, newsletters, publications, multimedia, digital storytelling, and social media.
- Collaborate with program staff, fellows, and partners to identify compelling stories and public engagement opportunities.
- Develop communications strategies for convenings, artist talks, public programs, exhibitions, and digital events.
- Translate research, policy, and artist infrastructure initiatives into accessible, engaging public narratives.

Media Relations and External Communications

- Partner with the President & CEO and leadership team to develop strategic messaging around emerging issues affecting artists, including economic security, cultural policy, philanthropy, and artist infrastructure.
- Develop and execute proactive national and regional media strategies.
- Serve as the primary creative and strategic lead with communications agencies, PR firms, designers, photographers, videographers, and creative partners.
- Cultivate relationships with journalists, editors, producers, and media outlets.
- Lead crisis communications planning; and as necessary, implementation.
- Partner closely with Development team on fundraising communications, donor stewardship, grant reporting, and campaigns.
- Support the President & CEO and organizational leaders in developing strategic messaging, public presentations, media engagements, and thought leadership that advance USA's mission and national visibility.
- Serve as a member of USA's leadership team, contributing to overall strategy, cross-functional collaboration, and the continued growth and evolution of the organization.



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Ideal Characteristics

- Minimum 8–10 years of progressively responsible experience in communications, journalism, media, public affairs, arts administration, marketing, or a related field;
- Exceptional writing, editing, storytelling, and content development skills;
- Demonstrated experience managing integrated communications strategies across multiple platforms, and success leading communications strategy during periods of organizational growth and transition;
- Deep interest in artists, culture, and the role of creative work in society;
- Demonstrated experience building or evolving organizational brands and communications functions during periods of growth or transition.
- Strong understanding of integrated communications, digital platforms, audience engagement, visual storytelling, and emerging communications technologies.
- Experience working with public relations firms, media outlets, and external communications partners;
- Experience translating complex ideas, research, and policy issues into compelling public narratives;
- Experience communicating effectively across diverse cultural, linguistic, and accessibility contexts.
- Excellent project management and organizational skills;
- Experience supervising staff and managing consultants and vendors;
- Commitment to equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

Additional Skills

- Must be willing and able to travel for in-person events, meetings, and other work-related activities as needed.
- Familiarity and/or proficiency with Google Suite, Microsoft Office, Asana, Airtable, Dropbox, CMS systems and databases, and/or similar software and platforms.



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Other Characteristics

The successful candidate will be a strategic and collaborative communications leader who is equally comfortable shaping long-term vision and managing day-to-day execution. They will bring creativity, sound judgment, and intellectual curiosity to strengthening USA's communications function while helping articulate the organization's evolving role in supporting artists nationwide.

An open-minded and curious leader, they will listen well, embrace collaboration, and build trust across teams and with external partners. Comfortable navigating ambiguity and change, they will balance creativity with pragmatism while helping USA refine and operationalize its communications ambitions.

They will be an effective manager and mentor who develops people as thoughtfully as they develop strategy, fostering a collaborative, inclusive culture that encourages innovation, accountability, flexibility, continuous learning, and professional growth. They will inspire high performance within a small, ambitious organization while serving as a thoughtful and persuasive communicator with the credibility and presence to represent USA publicly and advance its mission with clarity, insight, and enthusiasm.

About United States Artists

United States Artists (USA) plays a pivotal role in the nation's cultural ecosystem, advancing the well-being of artists through unrestricted funding and tailored professional services, amplifying artists' work, and improving conditions that support their essential roles in society.

United States Artists was founded in response to a 2003 Urban Institute study, which revealed that 96% of Americans valued art in their lives, while only 27% valued artists. Motivated by the study and in response to the NEA's severe budget cuts, four inspiring



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leaders of the Ford, Rockefeller, Rasmuson, and Prudential Foundations spearheaded the launch of an organization to illuminate the value of artists to American society and address their economic challenges.

Since our founding in 2005, we have awarded more than 1,000 artists and cultural practitioners with more than \$50 million of direct support, including the signature United States Artists Fellowship program and Initiatives partnerships. USA's nomination-based programs support artists and cultural practitioners across the United States and its territories with \$50,000 to \$100,000 unrestricted awards. Recipients are honored in all disciplines including Architecture & Design, Craft, Dance, Film, Media, Music, Theater & Performance, Traditional Arts, Visual Art, and Writing. In addition to unrestricted funding, each Fellow receives access to tailored services including financial planning, career consulting, and legal advice, among others.

In 2020, United States Artists began Initiatives, a program area that offers experience, capacity, and methodologies to donors and philanthropies who seek to support artists in specific, focused ways and require research, project design, and management to meet their goals of providing new resources for artists. Currently, USA partners with leading philanthropies to offer the Joyce Awards, Knight Arts + Tech Fellowship, Maxwell | Hanrahan Awards in Craft, The Rainin Arts Fellowship, Seed and Bloom: Detroit, and the Wagner Arts Fellowship.

Additionally, informed by an 18-month discovery phase that began in 2024, USA is working with field partners to implement programs that lay the foundation for a new integrated system of artist infrastructure support. This will involve two key programs: the Artists Capital Fund that aims to expand artists' access to non-extractive capital so that they can level irregular income flows, avoid predatory debt, and make investments in their creative work and communities; and the National Arts Policy Alliance (NAPA), focused on advancing policy work that supports



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creative and cultural workers building collective power through local organizing, national coordination, and cross-sector alliances. For more information about USA, please visit unitedstatesartists.org.

Compensation, Benefits and Location

This is a full-time leadership position, with a 4-day work week that includes 5-day work weeks for special events and quarterly board meetings. The starting salary range is \$90,000 to \$110,000, annually. The full compensation package includes medical, dental, and vision insurance coverage, with benefits eligibility after a 90-day introductory period. Additional benefits include: 120 vacation hours (12 days); 80 sick hours (8 days); flexible work scheduling; paid holidays; up to two week office closure annually in December; a 403b contribution, plus an additional match; professional development coverage; and telecommunications reimbursement.

United States Artists is headquartered in Chicago, IL. This is a hybrid position that works with a team that is largely remote, with current members based in Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia and other locations across the country. Due to the nature of this role, the individual can be located anywhere in the U.S., but needs to be able to start work by 9:00 AM Eastern Standard Time.

Application information

Interested and qualified candidates should send a cover letter and resume to jobs@unitedstatesartists.org. In the subject line of your emailed application, please write "USA Communications Director." This position will remain open until filled.

Equal Opportunity Employer

United States Artists is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination as an Equal Opportunity Employer. USA's policy is to maintain and promote nondiscrimination regarding race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry, marital status, gender, physical or mental



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disability unrelated to ability, sexual orientation, religion, political philosophy, unfavorable discharge from military service or age in all phases of employment practices and facilities in accordance with all applicable laws. The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job.