

We're Hiring!
Chief of Staff

ABOUT CULTURESOURCE

CultureSource is a Detroit-based membership association that supports the vitality and sustainability of the Southeast Michigan creative community. Around 170 arts and culture nonprofits comprise our membership and we also use our expertise to serve artists, policymakers, and philanthropists striving to have creative and cultural expression benefit the public across the seven-county region.

Our work involves facilitating convenings and networking activities, managing funding/grantmaking initiatives, collecting data, and sharing knowledge.

Recently, we have intensified focus on growing our relevance and capacity, in part, through establishing an organizational culture of experimentation and adaptation. Our **progress since 2017** makes us proud:

- Our **annual budget** has nearly **quadrupled**, from \$584,000 to \$2,300,000.
- Our **membership** has nearly **doubled**, from 92 to 170 organizations.
- Our resource intermediary work managing **funding programs** grew from \$45,000 to nearly \$1,000,000 — including a new regranting partnership with the Warhol Foundation and an expanded multi-county regranting relationship with our state arts council.
- We launched a **new research agenda** with three long-term partners: 8 Bridges Workshop, WolfBrown, and the Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation Lab at Indiana University.
- We launched **new major programmatic efforts** related to tech and arts (with Gilbert Family Foundation), racial equity (with the Ford and Kresge foundations), and art in public spaces (with Mural Arts Philadelphia).
- We **acquired a national arts consulting nonprofit**, EmcArts.
- We got a **new visual identity and infrastructure**: CRM system, website/web host, cloud computing platform, and office space.

This growth has happened steadily with guidance from our 17-person board of directors, full of executives experienced in business development, and it is attributable to our 8-person team's evolving efforts to address member and partner needs and to our investments in strategy refinement. The Covid-19 pandemic also galvanized our motivation and increased our work output in support of sector relief, resiliency, and innovation in crisis.

In our new mode of relevance, our internal systems are gradually becoming challenged by the increasing complexity of our work. Simultaneously increasing are our staff's expectations for maximizing our benefit to our field colleagues.

Our lean organization is now craving and willing to invest in the additional capacity offered by a **chief of staff**, a new staff position for CultureSource.

Ideally, the chief of staff would unlock and facilitate use of resources, tools, and work strategies that elevate the quality and joy of our service. This person would also take the opportunities being generated by the executive director or pitched to CultureSource and shape them with focused and strategic attention as they move through the organization. Additionally, as a complement to the executive director and as a



day-to-day ally to the other team members, the chief of staff would offer a counter-balancing set of perspectives, peer coaching, and extra pair of hands.

POSITION PROFILE

"Counterbalance"

The chief of staff will co-think and co-plan with the executive director regarding organizational development and the addition or removal of structures to generate intentional or experimental office culture. While the executive director works as the lead voice in imagining and driving toward a vision for the organization, the chief of staff works as the lead voice in driving toward decisions and ever-better processes for working and ever more capacity for service. Stylistically, in this role, the chief of staff is likely to identify as analytical, be process-oriented, like data, and ask lots of and-then-what questions.

"Shaper"

As stated in one of our guiding principles, CultureSource is at its best when we work with partners and as connectors and instigators. We rely on partners to help us do our best work and do work greater than we could accomplish on our own. Being well calibrated to our internal and external environments, the chief of staff will help shape the relationships that we aspire to have with partners as they begin with or exist in our organization. This includes helping the executive director prepare for and follow up on meetings, strategizing alignment with potential partners, creating and monitoring project workflows that maximize relationships and maintain accountability, and making the case for new, expanded, or restructured partnerships. People we consider to be partners include, and are not limited to, vendors, donors, peer service organizations, and program presenters.

"Cruise Director"

From time to time, one-time projects emerge for CultureSource that do not easily fit within any single staff person's job responsibilities. In these instances, project management will fall to the chief of staff. This person will also oversee big, cross-functional, organization-wide initiatives, keeping an eye on deadlines, establishing clarity about next steps, nurturing momentum, and making space for a diverse range of internal and external voices to influence the work. The chief of staff's comfort with being an organizer may mean that on family vacations or outings with friends they are called the cruise director.

"Offensive Coordinator"

The CultureSource staff is talented, with each team member constantly discovering greater depths of impact and opportunity in their work. The chief of staff will be an ally to the members of this team, helping them perform their jobs proactively and strategically as individuals and in cross-departmental configurations. Their highly available presence as a peer reviewer or provocateur will be grounded in their internalization of the executive director's vision. Key functions of work alongside team members will be breaking problems into component parts for interrogation or targeted action, as well as synthesizing various opportunities for staff growth into special staff learning retreats and experiences.

Beyond the duties above, the chief of staff will be a model team member by proactively looking for ways to support the organization and by taking responsibility for investing in their own growth: cultural competency, subject matter expertise, and creativity.

KEY METRICS

The executive director will regularly dialogue with the chief of staff about their work tasks, goals, achievements, and barriers to success. The conditions below describe an environment in which the chief of staff is thriving:



- Board, staff, and partners perceive that "things are running smoother," and mistakes and glitches often occur only as a result of innovation, experimentation, or bad luck.
- The executive director and chief of staff express feelings of compatibility, and they regularly debate and vocally question each other's thinking—though they also articulately express the alignment of their views about CultureSource's work.
- Systems are in place (and are used) to track our work, progress, and learnings. Similarly, new work practices and policies have been adopted, each with a process for ongoing refinement.
- The chief of staff's role and responsibilities expand as the organization more frequently capitalizes on opportunities externally and works smarter internally.
- The chief of staff has an ability to articulate how their annual and daily work is aligned with CultureSource's guiding principles and to list business development opportunities that have been realized or rejected.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The chief of staff position is a 40-hour per week role that reports to the executive director and works out of our Detroit office (Chroma, 2937 E. Grand Blvd), with regular travel throughout Southeast Michigan and occasional travel outside of the region to experience the work of creative people and for research and development. The target annual salary for the role is \$95,000.

Our work at CultureSource can be intense:

- Being a service organization, CultureSource offers help to members of our community in times of crisis, distress, confusion, or loss, as well as in times of opportunity.
- Working with people who have been oppressed by privilege is expressed in our guiding principles and is an essential dimension of our work. As such, we spend intentional time as a team naming, exploring, and understanding identities—whether in small project-specific groups or as a whole staff.
- Our work often lacks obvious actions and answers, in part because we try to engage emergence, be on the front edge of spotting trends, and work with creative expression. This means our progress and conversations are often nonlinear and involve extended probing and exploration.

Members of the CultureSource team are expected to be prepared for, be present throughout, and participate in each of the work environments and experiences described above, whether they are difficult, taxing, or emotionally heavy. CultureSource staff, in particular the executive director and ombudsperson, exist as allies and resources in how to navigate these situations.

CultureSource values difference and inclusion, and our hiring practices embody our stance as an equal opportunity employer. Beyond saying these things, we try to represent these beliefs throughout our foundational documents, in our programmatic and operations decisions, and in the dedication of individuals in our organization to working on their own personal cultural competency. We motivate candidates to apply who think this role is a stretch given their perceived professional capacity. We also hope that people who have felt oppressed by privilege in past professional situations consider applying.

There are no specific educational or work experience requirements for this role, though candidates will be expected to articulate a commitment to learning and education, art and creativity, and setting and achieving goals.

APPLYING

Interested candidates should email the following to wrush@culturesource.org with "Chief of Staff - [LAST NAME]" in the subject line:



- **Resume** detailing experiences, accomplishments, and personal/professional traits relevant to the CultureSource work environment and the chief of staff role outlined in this position profile
- A **brief statement** about the chief of staff position that expresses why you are interested in this role and that in its style and presentation, conveys your approach to beginning relationships, presenting information, and making a compelling case for engagement and support

Note: The candidacy of people who submit the materials above will be kept confidential from people outside of this hiring process. This search is launching in July 2022. We anticipate beginning candidate screenings in August 2022 and we will search patiently and continuously until we find a good fit. Consider the search open and ongoing until we have posted an announcement to the contrary on our website's staff page.