



We're Hiring! Research Fellow

ABOUT CULTURESOURCE

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

Our work involves facilitating convenings and networking activities, managing funding and 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 in the last five years makes us proud and has happened steadily with guidance from our seventeen-person board of directors, full of executives experienced in business development. It is also attributable to our nine-person team's evolving efforts to address member and partner needs and to our investments in strategy refinement. (*Visit culturesource.org/about-culturesource for details about our core beliefs and foundational ideas too.*)

THE POSITION

As a core service, CultureSource collects and shares insights about Metro Detroit's arts and culture sector. We do this by giving arts leaders information to make data-driven decisions, by producing needs and opportunity assessments for sector investors, and by creating profiles of artists and other culture workers that increase the salience of their community benefit.

In doing this work, two of our closest partners have been the applied research and evaluation consulting firms [8 Bridges Workshop](#) (St. Paul, Minn.) and [WolfBrown](#) (Detroit). We are also part of a National Endowment for the Arts Research Lab, which as a program yields empirical insights about the arts for the benefit of arts and non-arts sectors, and serve as the partner to Indiana University in their [Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation Lab](#).

Our research focuses on knowledge that impacts and shapes current operational, programmatic, advocacy, and funding practices, including the recent and ongoing work below:

- Two capitalization needs assessments of Southeast Michigan arts and culture nonprofits
- Two studies exploring the state of infrastructure for digital administrative, artistic, and audience-building work in the arts
- Profiles of culture workers of color and their influence on creativity in Metro Detroit
- Facilitated focus groups with executive leaders and with artists in Metro Detroit
- Mixed-methods research on nonprofit governance and art economies in Detroit and Southeast Michigan
- Plus, constant dialogue with practitioners about their experiences and ideas

The direct relationship between the amount of research we do and requests for us to do more contributed to our decision to hire a [research fellow](#). As we are looking to develop local talent in processes of listening, analysis, synthesis, and reporting, this research fellow role will have administrative

2/27/2023



responsibilities and receive structured mentorship. We specifically would like to develop talent underrepresented in the professional field of cultural sector research and consulting.

The research fellow is primarily responsible for the activities that involve data, coordination, messaging, and learning as outlined below:

Coordination

As much of our research is done with consultants, the research fellow will lead in coordinating internal and external resources to plan and implement studies and generally execute our research agenda, which is in development. This includes meeting preparation and follow-up, research study logistics and contracting, organizing participants, and managing processes of producing and receiving deliverables. The research fellow will also keep the broader CultureSource team engaged and informed of progress, as appropriate.

Collecting and Sharing Data

CultureSource will occasionally have the capacity to conduct our own research, and in those cases, the research fellow will lead those efforts, designing and implementing studies that have been framed and scoped in collaboration with the director of community and culture. As a nexus of information, the research fellow will also be the first point of contact for stakeholders seeking data. In this circumstance, the fellow is likely to perform literature reviews, connect learners with experts, and maintain a log of inquiries that guide CultureSource's future allocation of resources.

Messaging

Our interest in having our research be practical as opposed to theoretical means that the research fellow will spend time with other CultureSource colleagues preparing findings for public use. With the director of community and culture, the research fellow will generate stories that can be shared with sector stakeholders, members, and programmatic and funding partners. With the director of communications, the research fellow will plan the dissemination of our findings, promote the insights and final reports from our peers' research, as well as plan strategies for broadcasting CultureSource's usefulness and resources.

Mentorship

Learning and professional development are core expectations of this role; as such, the research fellow will receive mentorship from the team at WolfBrown, including involvement in WolfBrown projects and access to principal Alan Brown for guidance and questions.

QUALITIES & CHARACTERISTICS

Ideal candidates likely have career interests in research, evaluation, or consulting. They may or may not have experience with research, though will have a strong desire to learn more than they currently know.

Organizing people around artistic or cultural activities is a familiar practice to candidates, and across that work, they have an insatiable curiosity about how things work, what is happening below the surface, or the consequences of the experience.

Ideal candidates aim to communicate precisely and with clear intent and consistency. As an innate or learned practice, they consider representation and inclusion in their work choices and are able to adapt communications across situations and audiences.

Being a statistics whiz is not required, though the ideal candidate is demonstrably skilled at math and meticulous. This care also means that the candidate is skilled at organizing information, including in spreadsheets.



Work in this role at times will feel solitary, so ideal candidates are comfortable with independent work. When doing team work, though, they have the interpersonal skills that allow them to be present and engaged, admit a mistake to a colleague or convey an appreciation to them, endure through imperfection, and see (and be energized by) a group's long-term progress.

Given the small-yet-mighty size of the CultureSource team and our interconnectedness, it is important that our research fellow possess work preferences, skills, and qualities that complement and diversify what currently exists on our team. This dimension of candidacy will be explored in the search during staff-candidate meetings.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The research fellow position is a 40-hour per week role that reports to the director of community and culture, 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 \$60,000.

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 "Research Fellow - [LAST NAME]" in the subject line:

- **Resume** detailing experiences, accomplishments, and personal/professional traits relevant to the CultureSource work environment and the research fellow role outlined in this position profile



- A **brief statement** about the research fellow position that expresses why you are interested in this role and what you hope to learn through it, and that in its style and presentation, conveys your approach to organizing information and supporting reader comprehension

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 February 2023. We anticipate beginning candidate screenings in April 2023 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We appreciate recommendations and value the varied perspectives of our partners.

If you are not interested in applying for this position but know someone you believe would be a good fit for this role, please feel free to email us at the address above with that name (and certainly encourage them to apply). As you know, in life, many of us need a nudge, advocate, or mentor to make a change or bold move. You could be that for someone here. Thanks.