



PRESIDENT OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Otis College of Art and Design seeks a chief executive to promote artistic excellence for students and faculty, strengthen the school financially and advance brand awareness.

POSITION TITLE: President
REPORTS TO: Board of Trustees

INTRODUCTION

[Otis College of Art and Design](#) seeks an inspiring and collaborative President who is passionate about the visual arts and storytelling, to expand upon Otis College's mission of preparing and empowering next generation artists, designers, and writers.

The President will encourage and ensure the development of visual literacy, experimentation, creative and intellectual risk-taking, and the creation of transformative work by students and faculty. This President will be committed to upholding the highest standards of ethics, inclusiveness, integrity, governance and professionalism.

The President is an advocate for all aspects of art and design education and will be energized by Otis College of Art and Design's mission, history, students, faculty and cooperative possibilities. The President will bring the insights and abilities needed to leverage the College's resources in conjunction with the abundant opportunities and diversity present in Los Angeles. Equally, the President will facilitate the learning and creation of art and design, the production of scholarship, development of the professions, and the extension of Otis' reach and positive impact on the disciplines, and society as a whole.

ABOUT OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Otis College of Art and Design is a leading private art and design college, known and respected for its outstanding students, alumni, faculty, staff, and its creative, collaborative, and agile culture. The College has a history of experimentation and innovation in art and design education.

Established in 1918 as Los Angeles' first professional school of the arts, Otis College of Art and Design is a national leader in academic excellence and professional preparation of artists and designers.

The College serves nearly 1,200 students, awarding Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degrees in [Architecture/Landscape/Interiors](#), [Communication Arts](#) (that includes Graphic Design and Illustration), [Digital Media](#), [Fashion Design](#), [Fine Arts](#), [Product Design](#), and [Toy Design](#); and Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degrees in [Fine Arts](#), [Graphic Design](#), and [Writing](#). Numerous Areas of Emphasis within majors, minors and core programs such as Foundation, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Creative Action further support the College's mission to prepare students to enrich the world through their creativity, skill, and vision. Otis College Extension offers certificate programs as well as personal and professional development courses.

The College's reputation attracts students from over 35 states and from countries all over the world, including China, Mexico, Iran, South Korea, Vietnam, Canada, and more. Thirty-two percent of the Fall 2018 entering class came to Otis from another country—making Otis College one of the most diverse art and design colleges in the United States. In fact, Otis ranked in the top 1% of all colleges and universities in the nation in diversity by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Taught by a community of renowned and accomplished faculty committed to student success, Otis has trained generations of artists who have been in the vanguard of cultural and entrepreneurial life. The College's alumni are well represented at leading museums and prestigious collecting institutions throughout the world: the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Guggenheim Museum in New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles; the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and many others. Otis-educated designers shape the visual world and their impact is felt from the products people use to the built environments they live in, and from the clothes people wear to the toys that influence children's development through play.

Otis students are passionate and highly motivated. They care deeply about academic success and about success beyond graduation. Ninety percent of students are employed or in graduate school within one year of their Otis education. Since 1918 Otis graduates have made individual, positive, and lasting marks on the world. Alumni are cultural leaders who can be found working around the world in companies like Disney and Pixar, Mattel, Sony Pictures, Nike and The Gap. Imagine the Oscar ceremonies without its golden statuette, *The Sound of Music* without its costumes, *The Lord of the Rings* without its visual effects, Avatar without its trademark blue alien skin, or the Getty without its famed garden, and you will have a sense of the world without the College's alumni.

Otis College of Art and Design, a private, nonprofit institution of higher learning, is accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). Otis is a member of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD).

The five-acre Elaine and Bram Goldsmith Campus on the Westside of Los Angeles houses nearly all of Otis' programs, along with the Ben Maltz Gallery, the Millard Sheets Library, and state-of-the-art labs and shops. The Goldsmith Campus is anchored by Ahmanson Hall—the converted 1963 futurist IBM Aerospace building, famous for its computer punch card window design—and the neo-modernist Galef Center for Fine Arts. Situated in the Westchester neighborhood, with

the Graduate Fine Arts Studio in Culver City, Otis College of Art and Design is a critical focal point for art and design education in Los Angeles, the creative capital of the 21st century with an economy that exceeds \$1 trillion. Since 2007, the college has commissioned the *Otis Report on the Creative Economy*, an invaluable tool to assess the tremendous economic impact and influence of the area's creative sector on the economy.

Otis College of Art and Design students and faculty distinctively benefit from the college's location in Los Angeles, one of the world's most internationally diverse cities and the creative capital of the Pacific Rim. Los Angeles has a vibrant arts, design, entertainment, communication, theater and media community featuring hundreds of cultural centers, academic institutions, and creative and communication businesses. Innovation is one of the city's hallmarks and exemplified by Silicon Beach, home to over 500 start-ups that include media, entertainment and fashion companies. Otis College is a critical component of the creative fabric of this continually evolving city, and its alumni and faculty are key contributors to the creative economy in Los Angeles, and globally.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Board of Trustees seeks a President who will address the following opportunities and challenges:

Fundraise

Otis College seeks a President who will lead and steward fundraising strategies and activities from philanthropic, business, and other sources by providing leadership to Institutional Advancement, Communications and Marketing, division leaders, department chairs, faculty, and Trustees. The President will ensure the college has the financial resources necessary to continue to provide academic excellence including funds for scholarships, faculty and staff engagement, new technologies, real estate, infrastructure improvement, and endowment. The President must continually seek, cultivate, and secure reliable and predictable revenue streams independent of tuition to sustain the institution and its future growth. In the new President the College seeks leadership in recruitment of new members of the Board of Trustees and Board of Governors, promotion of alumni engagement and giving, and commitment to Institutional Advancement for fundraising activities such as grant writing and sponsorship proposals.

Promote and support a culture of Shared Governance

Otis College is seeking a President who deeply understands and is committed to the value and benefits of shared governance, understands how the inclusion of campus constituents improves an institution, and who systemically communicates and effectively participates in the College's system of shared governance.

Enhance communications to include all Otis constituents and foster a culture of trust and transparency

Otis College has had a tradition of a nimble, open, and non-hierarchical culture that had served the creative nature of the institution well. The institution seeks a President committed to facilitating and leading such a culture, who will sustain systems and processes on behalf of that commitment, and who will help build on those systems for even greater alignment and collaboration within the College and with its Boards.

Recruit and retain an outstanding, diverse, and inclusive faculty and staff and promote a culture of inclusion

Otis College seeks a President who is committed to the diversity, equity, and inclusion of all students, faculty, and staff. This will require working closely with the Provost, division leaders, department chairs, Human Resources, and other staff leaders to develop fitting and effective recruitment and retention strategies. The President will personally lead, promote, and assist, with the help of the Provost, Senior Team and other campus leaders, in developing a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Articulate a vision synthesized from engagement of all constituents that captures and respects the institution's unique history and culture with an eye to the future, and that is accepted by and inspires the campus community

The new President will arrive at a pivotal time for Otis; enrollment is rising, students are increasingly supported inside and outside the classroom, and alumni success is stellar. Increasing enrollment demands additional resources, including human resources and physical infrastructure, while upholding the institution's demand for excellence in a time of growing costs and student financial needs. The vision of how to meet these demands and define the future should come collectively from all campus constituents, with academic excellence and campus culture at the center. Otis seeks a President who, in fulfilling the College's deeply informed 2019-24 Working Strategic Plan, will gather and synthesize further input from all constituencies, personally contribute insight toward achieving institutional goals, articulate the institution's Vision for internal and external audiences, and garner support and clearly communicate that Vision to all.

Ensure academic excellence

Help attract and retain the highest quality faculty and staff. Encourage inter-disciplinary scholarship and other opportunities to improve interactions between programs, faculty, and staff. Foster with the Provost a culture of measurable academic excellence and sustain and bolster processes, systems, and metrics to ensure continuous academic improvement.

Improve the student experience

Otis College attracts a diverse student body including international students for whom English is not their first language. Thirty-six percent are Pell Grant eligible, members of diverse communities, and many are first generation college students. Like students at so many institutions of higher learning today, students bring more anxiety about how they fit into their institution, their academic success, and an uncertain future. Otis College seeks a President who will lead the institution in continuing to innovate in order to prepare for the unique academic, social, health, and career needs and concerns of today's college students. Otis College presently responds well to student academic and social needs. Systems need to be sustained and advanced for ongoing innovation to adequately respond to ever-changing student needs and to ensure that all students feel included in the Otis community.

Engage the community

The College seeks a President who will personally engage with and be accessible to the campus community and Trustees. The President will be a presence on campus and communicate Otis' vision, plans, and direction, and call out the institution's achievements as evidenced by the accomplishments of students, alumni, faculty, and staff. The President will foster an esprit de corps, pride, and sense of community among all constituents.

Communicate the brand promise

Otis College seeks a President who will engage the communities inside and outside of Otis to create and sustain an awareness of the importance of Otis to the world of art and design and as a contributor to the City of Los Angeles. The President will engage with civic, business, educational, alumni and cultural leaders, be a presence in Los Angeles, and attend relevant institutions and events globally. With the help of Communications and Marketing the President will promote the Otis brand promise, value proposition, and institutional attributes for wider and deeper recognition and distinction.

Analyze business functions

Otis College seeks a President who has the experience and ability to carefully analyze the business functions of the College, identify assets and programs that are less central to the core mission and help align new programs to the mission for the benefit of students. The President will be hands-on in the budgeting process, and with the assistance of the Provost and Vice President of Financial Services, will identify fiscal inefficiencies and potential opportunities such as new non-tuition revenue sources. Otis College seeks a President who will make well-informed yet sometimes difficult decisions for the benefit of the institution and ensure continued financial health while remaining true to Otis College's academic excellence, history, culture, and aspirations.

POSITION SCOPE

The President reports to the Board of Trustees, serves as the Chief Executive Officer for Otis College of Art and Design, manages a \$42 million budget, has 13 direct reports and an employee count of approximately 960 that includes full-time and part-time faculty, staff, and student workers, and overall responsibility for the college and its student population of approximately 1,200.

The President provides inspired, consultative leadership and oversight for all aspects of the college, including academics, finance, marketing, and revenue generation, planning, student affairs, enrollment, advancement, human resources and other key areas. The Provost, vice presidents, and other staff members report to the President. The President works closely with the Provost, vice presidents (the Senior Leadership Team), and other staff members and department heads to ensure that the strategic direction and policies of the College are aligned with its mission.

The President works with the Board of Trustees in establishing policies to guide the institution. As the Chief Executive Officer, the President has principal responsibility for the planning, development, implementation, assessment, and improvement of all programs and policies. With input from all affected constituencies, the President articulates the College's vision, garners support from relevant constituencies, and passionately and persistently communicates that vision internally and externally. The President, with the Board of Trustees, Provost, and other applicable constituents leads the ongoing work identified within the Working Strategic Plan, and re-engages, as needed, the Plan's goals, objectives, and strategies for Plan and continuous institutional improvement.

The successful candidate inspires and activates Otis College's institutional, intellectual, creative, and community resources to ensure realization of the mission and vision throughout the institution, and with the enthusiastic support of the community at large.

Recognizing the educational and financial challenges of the 21st century, the President will:

- Serve as a compelling spokesperson for Otis College of Art and Design within the college and to the greater community. Build and leverage outside community, cultural, academic, media, business, civic, philanthropic, and alumni relationships to benefit the College. Ensure that Otis College's brand promise and vision is widely and effectively communicated. Support an impactful communications and marketing division that leads to greater brand awareness and rankings.
- Expand the College's resources through philanthropy and sponsorships by taking a prominent role in the cultivation and solicitation of donors, as well as providing leadership to capital and other campaigns. Enhance and lead a robust ongoing and consistent development/advancement program and ensure a capital reserve to fund programs, endowment, scholarships, people and other resources.
- Be the chief advocate on behalf of the College to relevant institutions, organizations, media, and businesses and all other relevant global sources of influence. Attend and represent the College at relevant conferences, events, and other appearances, including AICAD consortium convenings. Expand upon the College's circle of influence and global impact.
- Address and meet the challenges facing higher education while enhancing Otis' commitment to its 100-year-old educational tradition of art and design education. Facilitate pedagogy at the nexuses of scholarship, creativity, and professional practice.
- Assist admissions in enhancing current outreach programs to attract potential students and help in refining admissions and financial aid guidelines.
- Be opportunistic in exploring partnerships, real estate opportunities, and other opportunities that will provide and enhance institutional stability and growth.
- Oversee the allocation of expenditure and resources. Improve, develop, and maintain processes and procedures to ensure best-in-class financial management, controls, and reporting, as well as operational efficiencies and oversight processes.
- Lead efforts to enhance and/or implement the Working Strategic Plan.

- Support and develop the College's cohesive leadership team, including hiring a permanent Provost and integrating that individual into a high-functioning leadership team.
- Grow and strengthen Otis' diverse community and culture of inclusiveness.
- Continually and measurably elevate the stature and ranking of the Otis's undergraduate and graduate programs, drive student enrollment, and financially strengthen Otis as it pursues its mission.
- Inspire and unite faculty, students, and administration behind a common vision and mission that includes art, design, and liberal arts and sciences, and continue to build strong bonds between these disciplines.
- Develop and implement best practices in all facets of the College.
- Lead, develop, and cultivate the hiring of diverse world-class faculty and staff. Communicate relevant performance metrics to faculty, staff, and administration.

PROFILE

The President of Otis College of Art and Design is an inspiring, collaborative, and hands-on leader who is a proponent for the arts and arts education and the impact of art and design across disciplines, professions, and society. The President is a listener and planner who carefully considers institutional needs and the consequences of change, and who practices and encourages scenario planning while being unafraid to gather input around, suggest, and, if appropriate, to take creative and intellectual risks on behalf of institutional soundness and sustainability. The President is committed to upholding the highest standards of ethics, integrity, inclusiveness, and professionalism. The President is a compelling and moving spokesperson to broad constituencies including students, alumni, college leaders, faculty, staff, and arts, cultural, business, civic, education, and philanthropic communities. This leader brings a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion regarding underrepresented groups and that commitment is incorporated into the President's leadership, management style, and philosophy.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The ideal candidate will have the following range of experiences and qualifications:

- Previous senior leadership and management responsibilities in an institution such as an arts-focused university, college, or other arts institution or academic institution known for innovation, quality education, and advancing practices across different design and artistic disciplines, or leadership of a complex creative industries enterprise.
- A track record of successful fundraising and or revenue generation. Experience in developing and managing fiscal plans, financial models, and operating budgets.
- Experience or knowledge of the changing ecosystem of higher education, evolving academic standards in the context of accelerating change/accountability and a track record of measurably elevating the academic stature of institutions is desired.
- An understanding of and deep appreciation for the world inhabited by students, college faculty, staff, artists, designers, scholars, teachers, and practitioners; a record of

achievement that is well-regarded in the field; experience working in collaboration with diverse teams of individuals representing different disciplines, needs, and perspectives; a demonstrated ability to forge mutually respectful relationships; and current or past experience as a faculty member or teaching experience preferred.

- Experience and a track record of success in attracting, recruiting, developing, retaining and leading a diverse group of top talent who work in alignment with the overall mission of an institution or business, and an ability to shape an organization to attract top talent.
- An understanding of academic standards and shared governance, and a demonstrated ability to manage the operational and financial aspects of a 1,200 student strong college with understanding of education program revenue and expense models would be a distinct advantage.
- The ability to work successfully with donors, community leaders, artists, educators, faculty, administrators, and boards to incite interest in and strengthen the institution; measurable and successful results in raising funds and in identifying, cultivating, and soliciting donors and other sources of revenue is mandatory.
- An understanding of the tools required to encourage and collaboratively manage institutional development, including development of strategic plans, identification and implementation of best practices, implementation of incentive and reward programs, an understanding of the impact that group and peer feedback has on teamwork and job satisfaction.
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills and the ability to manage by influence, including the means to address issues and manage crisis in non-confrontational, collegial, and non-polarizing ways.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate should be:

- A leader. The President has gravitas and holds a room. Ever sensitive and empathetic to the needs of people with different backgrounds, ethnicities, interests, and aptitudes, with an infectious sense of mission, good humor, and a sense of perspective, this President is able to develop, drive, and decisively execute a vision and plans with the support of multiple constituencies.
- A listener comfortable receiving input from many sources and able to analyze and synthesize disparate information into sound, well-organized plans; a person able to garner necessary support and reshape ambiguous situations so that concrete and copacetic action can be taken; a leader with the demonstrated ability to develop and convert new opportunities into initiatives and/or offerings that strengthen the student experience and advance Otis' educational mission.
- A charismatic communicator able to impactfully deliver a message and build enthusiasm for Otis among internal and external constituencies; a person able to advance Otis College of Art and Design's reputation among prospective students and global academic, professional, and cultural communities.

- A decisive individual with a belief in the mission of Otis College of Art and Design, and a commitment to continuous, measurable improvements to Otis's fiscal health, its academic programs, faculty, staff, student achievement, infrastructure, and reputation.
- A person focused on improving the overall rating of the college as measured by third parties, and via respect accorded to Otis College by experts in the field.
- An energetic "doer" with a willingness to work hands-on in developing and executing a variety of activities to strengthen Otis and support the work of faculty, staff, and other colleagues while always maintaining an intense focus on students, shared governance, advancing knowledge and innovation, diversity, and social justice.

Otis College of Art and Design is an Equal Opportunity Employer and committed to diversity in hiring.

For more information, applications or nominations please contact:

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