



www.Skirball.org

VICE PRESIDENT, DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL PROGRAMS

THE ORGANIZATION

The Skirball Cultural Center (the Skirball) is dedicated to exploring the connections between 4,000 years of Jewish heritage and the vitality of American democratic ideals. It welcomes and seeks to inspire people of every ethnic and cultural identity in American life. Guided by our respective memories and experiences, together we aspire to build a society in which all of us can feel at home. The Skirball achieves its mission through educational programs that explore the literary, visual, and performing arts from around the world; the display and interpretation of its permanent collections and changing exhibitions; an interactive family destination inspired by the Noah's Ark story; and outreach to the community. More than 600,000 people representing diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds visit the Skirball each year, including 80,000 children and teachers from public, private, and parochial schools.

As visionary and founder of the Skirball Cultural Center, Dr. Uri D. Herscher has led the Skirball since its inception in the early 1980s. He was officially named Founding President and Chief Executive Officer when the institution opened to the public in April 1996. Dr. Herscher has led the Skirball Cultural Center through decades of growth and transformation, overseeing multiple expansions of its campus and programs, broadening its impact, and establishing it as the largest Jewish cultural institution in the nation. Today, it expresses its mission through the following core values, as the Skirball:

- Exists as an American Jewish institution to illuminate values that are fundamental to Jewish life and heritage and represent the highest ideals of American democracy.
- Provides a context for Jewish identity that honors heritage and embraces the evolving nature of identity in a multicultural, democratic society.
- Promotes values of equality, justice, freedom, hospitality, respect for human dignity, and community well-being.
- Creates an environment of welcome and safety that encourages respectful connections between people.
- Uses the arts and cultural history to inspire the desire to make a difference in the world.

Over the past thirty years, the Skirball has built a strong fiscal infrastructure to support the organization's continued growth and long-term financial health. Along with the sustained support of a broad donor base and committed Board of Trustees, the Skirball's leadership has established a business model that generates diversified sources of earned income that undergird the organization's ongoing operations, exhibitions, and programs. Throughout its history, the Skirball has operated debt-free. With approximately 190 full-time employees, 200 part-time workers, and over 150 volunteers, the Skirball's annual operating budget exceeds \$19 million.

Located in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains on L.A.'s Westside, the Skirball's fifteen-acre site was chosen for its central location. The campus was built in four construction phases over thirty years, overseen by world-renowned architect and urban designer Moshe Safdie. Safdie designed the indoor spaces—including the museum galleries, conference centers and classrooms, and multipurpose auditoriums—and the outdoor spaces to integrate the buildings with the natural beauty of the site. The completed campus, comprising approximately 560,000 sq. ft. of programmatic space, is home to such signature experiences as the museum's permanent exhibitions, *Visions and Values: Jewish Life from Antiquity to America* and Noah's Ark at the Skirball™, seven to

ten changing exhibitions annually — such as the critically hailed *Bill Graham and the Rock & Roll Revolution*, currently on view — school and teacher programs, adult education classes, and a comprehensive slate of public programs and visitor amenities.

Cultural programming at the Skirball has encompassed the best in world music, thought-provoking readings and talks, compelling film series, innovative theater and dance performances (many of them site-specific), artists in residence, and specialized outreach programs for seniors and families. The Skirball's annual offerings such as its Sunset Concerts, Family Amphitheater Performances, the Skirball Puppet Festival, and the Hanukkah Family Festival are highly popular L.A. events. Cultural programs are developed in consultation with fellow programmatic teams at the Skirball, as well as colleagues in communications and marketing, to ensure that the programs reflect and align with the organization's mission and values, maintain and engage its growing membership base, and meet audience development goals. In fiscal year 2014-15, the Cultural Program department was supported by an operating budget of approximately \$850,000, including program, staffing, and marketing costs.

COMMUNITY

Los Angeles is the largest city in California and the second-largest urban area in the nation. Locals and visitors enjoy a subtropical-Mediterranean climate with plenty of sunshine and little rain. With an average high temperature of 75° F and 292 days of sun annually, Southern California's climate has often been described as "perfect." The diverse, multiethnic population of Los Angeles today distinguishes the city as a cultural hub of the Pacific Rim and a truly global city. In fact, Los Angeles is one of only two U.S. cities without a majority population. People from 140 countries, speaking approximately 86 differently languages, currently call Los Angeles home.

Los Angeles is well known as the entertainment capital of the world, and, simultaneously, has become an international cultural mecca, boasting more than 2,800 arts organizations and 150,000 working artists in the County of Los Angeles, creating the largest concentration of arts and cultural activity in the United States. In addition to the Skirball, major museum operations in L.A. include: The Getty, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, the Hammer Museum at UCLA, The Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens, the Museum of Contemporary Art-Los Angeles, The Autry National Center of the American West, and The Broad, which will open to the public in September.

Despite its reputation for traffic congestion, the mean travel time for commuters in Los Angeles is shorter than other major U.S. cities including Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York City. Major expansions of the light rail and subway system are currently underway with new lines connecting downtown to Santa Monica (opening early 2016), Westwood/UCLA (under construction), and Crenshaw/LAX neighborhoods (under construction). The region is served by five international airports with nonstop connections to major cities worldwide.

Ranked as the second-safest big city in America, Los Angeles offers an excellent quality of life. In 2014, the median home sales price in Los Angeles County was \$450,000. Los Angeles is served by approximately eighty hospitals across the county, including such internationally recognized institutions as Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, UCLA Medical Center, and Keck Medical Center of USC. The Los Angeles region is rich in education opportunities from early child care to graduate school. Within the greater L.A. area there are more than 3,000 public and private schools. The Los Angeles Unified School District educates more than 662,000 children in the city of Los Angeles and surrounding neighborhoods with 1,124 schools throughout the district, which is the largest in California and the second largest in the U.S. Los Angeles is home to such renowned universities as UCLA, USC, Loyola Marymount, and Pepperdine University.

Sources: www.lacountyarts.org, www.discoverlosangeles.com, www.latimes.com, www.usnews.com, www.metro.net, www.laedc.org

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the Executive Vice President, the Vice President (VP), Director of Cultural Programs leads the Skirball's public programs, ensuring that they fulfill the institution's mission, enhance its public image and

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visibility, and embrace Los Angeles' diverse audiences and constituencies. The VP, Director of Cultural Programs will be an innovative and visionary leader in cultural programming, working collaboratively as part of the senior management team to interpret and reflect the Skirball's core values through its public programs. S/he will solidify and strengthen the Skirball's position in the Los Angeles cultural marketplace, working to build consensus on the strategic direction, goals, and outcomes for a broad and diverse portfolio of public programs.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The VP, Director of Cultural Programs provides strategic leadership to the content and format of public programs; guiding the development, consideration, selection, and success of a full array of performing, literary, and media arts aligned with the Skirball's mission. The VP, Director of Cultural Programs works in partnership with museum, education, communications and marketing, and operations colleagues; and the position supervises a department of four professionals that includes an associate director, two program coordinators, and an administrative assistant.

The core responsibilities of the position include, but are not limited to, the following:

Cultural Programming

- Shape program offerings to achieve the goals of high audience engagement, community building, cross-generational exchanges, and cross-cultural respect and appreciation.
- Develop new program initiatives to further the Skirball's mission.
- Establish and maintain an effective network of professional contacts to ensure the Skirball's ability to attract and present world-class speakers, artists, and performers; and build and maintain relationships with cultural partners and presenters locally and nationally.
- Oversee all aspects of public program presentation, from research and exploratory contacts through negotiation, booking, promotion, ticketing, set-ups, audience flow, pre- and post-announcements, troubleshooting, and event debriefs.
- Ensure smooth coordination between public programs, guest services, operations, hospitality, and the Skirball's other departments.
- Collaborate with the communications and marketing department to develop comprehensive and specific promotional strategies and materials.

Administration and Oversight

- Manage the department's human and fiscal resources to meet departmental and larger institutional goals.
- Maintain accountability for all vendor and contract negotiation, for program expenses and revenue growth, and for compliance with the Skirball's administrative and fiscal policies and procedures.
- Contribute to strategic discussions about mission, goals, and programmatic initiatives as a member of the senior management team; work across departments to build long- and short-term plans.
- Support institutional development activities including identifying, cultivating, and soliciting donors; developing funding strategies; and preparing grant proposals related to public programs.
- Promote an understanding of and appreciation for the Skirball's philosophy, goals, and activities of the organization.

TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The VP, Director of Cultural Programs will demonstrate a deep appreciation for the Skirball's mission and the ability to build momentum around the vision and ideals that have established it as one of the world's most dynamic Jewish cultural institutions. S/he will possess an aesthetic and cultural sensibility appropriate for an institution rooted in Jewish values that embraces the pluralism, inclusivity, and cross-cultural exchange that the institution considers fundamental to American democratic life. S/he will exhibit a commitment to pursuing intellectual growth—both in terms of his/her own personal and professional development, as well as in mentorship of staff. The VP, Director of Cultural Programs will have: a clear focus on the Skirball's role in serving its members and diverse audience, a vision for programming that will stand out in the Los Angeles cultural arena, and a strong interest in effective and sustainable audience development. S/he will have a well-

rounded set of competencies that distinguish him or her from others in the field as a tactful, tenacious, and intellectually curious leader with the ability to set and attain goals through teamwork.

The Skirball looks for leaders of character who can inspire others, build trust, and demonstrate responsibility and accountability for personal actions and professional decisions. As an organization the Skirball places a high value on teamwork and the interpersonal skills that result in building rapport with others, both internally and externally. The ability to treat others fairly, express respect despite differences, and value the diversity of a multi-cultural community are all qualities expected of Skirball staff.

QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will have a minimum of ten years of senior management experience in creating, developing, and implementing a broad and diverse portfolio of effective cultural programming. Qualified applicants will have a Bachelor's degree, advanced degree preferred, or equivalent experience in the performing arts and non-profit management. A demonstrated, successful track record of developing and sustaining effective working relationships with artists, agents, managers, tour promoters, artistic directors of cultural venues, media contacts, donors, and staff is essential. Outstanding written and verbal communication skills are also required, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with diverse community stakeholders.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salary is commensurate with knowledge, skills, and experience. The Skirball places a high priority on the well being of its staff. It offers a comprehensive employee benefits program including 100% employer-paid health/vision/dental insurance, subsidized employee spouse and dependent coverage, retirement contributions, and vacation, sick, personal and holiday leave.

APPLICATIONS AND INQUIRIES

Please send a letter and résumé (electronic submissions preferred) outlining demonstrable accomplishments and a verifiable track record of results to:

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***The Skirball Cultural Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE).
Qualified applicants are considered for employment without regard to age, religion, sex, national origin,
sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status.***