



# TOM O'CONNOR

## CONSULTING GROUP

**Northern Stage  
Managing Director**

Position Profile

July 2022

## Managing Director Position Profile



### About the Opportunity

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The Managing Director leads Northern Stage as a co-equal with Producing Artistic Director, Carol Dunne. Northern Stage, in its 25th year of programming, is a dynamic LORT-D professional theater with a budget of \$4 million in White River Junction, Vermont. The theater resides near Dartmouth College at the crossroads of Vermont and New Hampshire and serves a passionate theater-going community with a mission to “Change lives, one story at a time.” The Managing Director will oversee the company’s financial, administrative, and business operations.

The Managing Director reports directly to the Board of Directors, as does the Producing Artistic Director. Direct reports to the Managing Director include the General Manager, Director of Development, Director of Sales and Marketing and the Special Projects Manager. The Producing Artistic Director and Managing Director work closely on all marketing and development strategies, with the Producing Artistic Director setting the branding and artistic vision for marketing strategy. The Executive Leadership partners are also responsible for leading the company forward in its equity, access and inclusion goals.

### About Northern Stage

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*Northern Stage acknowledges the Wabanaki Confederacy on whose ancestral lands the theater stands, paying respect to all Native American and First Nation tribes, their ancestors, history, and our shared future.*

Northern Stage is a regional non-profit LORT-D professional theater company located in White River Junction, VT with a mission to change lives, one story at a time. Northern Stage actively engages audiences with world-class productions and extensive educational and outreach programs and serves more than 50,000 community members each year. Founded in 1997 by Brooke Ciardelli, Northern Stage has since become the preeminent year-round theater company in the region, offering professional productions of world premieres, classics, and musicals.

With a commitment to the development of new work for the American theater, Northern Stage launched New Works Now in 2014. The program has been extraordinarily successful with world premieres continuing to our main stage, Off-Broadway, and beyond. A robust educational program focuses on professional training in a nurturing and supportive

environment for students of all ages. Offerings include student acting ensembles, a summer musical theater intensive, and an expansive theater-in-the-schools residency program, and an Experiential Term in collaboration with the Dartmouth College Department of Theater.

Northern Stage is also the originator of the BOLD Theater Women's Leadership Circle, led by Northern Stage Producing Artistic Director Carol Dunne, and supported by the Helen Gurley Brown Foundation. BOLD offers major support of artistic initiatives focused on women artists and creates a formal mentorship program to train and prepare future women artistic directors to lead, create, innovate, and deepen the impact of theater on the American culture.

Northern Stage is committed to finding out the depth and breadth of the impact theater can have on the world and believes that it is through the work of becoming an anti-racist organization, committed to equity, justice, access and inclusion that they can best achieve their goals.

[Read more about Northern Stage's history, and its commitments to their mission and values.](#)

## About White River Junction & the Upper Valley

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White River Junction, Vermont, is a bustling downtown, rich with history and culture. Located on the Vermont-New Hampshire border within easy access to I-91 and I-89 and less than an hour from Montpelier, White River Junction welcomes visitors for a great weekend getaway or a day trip. White River Junction is less than a five-hour drive to New York City. It sits exactly halfway between Boston and Montreal at the intersection of Interstate 89 and Interstate 91, making it a two-and-a-half-hour drive to each of these dynamic cities.

White River Junction offers something for everyone - world renowned science centers, theaters, restaurants, cartoon school, scenic and historic attractions, charming inns, camping, stunning hiking, and biking trails along with beautiful lakes and rivers for swimming and canoeing, mixed with an engaging and off-beat creative economy. The region is known as the Upper Valley and is home to Dartmouth College.

[More information about visiting White River Junction.](#)

[White River Junction through the eyes of the local Center for Cartoon Studies](#)

[The Arts of the Upper Valley](#)

[Explore the towns of the Upper Valley](#)

[More links to Upper Valley information and resources](#)

# Job Description

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Northern Stage's Managing Director will be a "yes. . . and" leader, supporting this unique company with patience and fairness. They will be a strong leader of Anti-Racism and passionately continue the diversification of the company. They will put the company and the audiences first, making decisions that serve the greater good. They will support risk-taking and the knowledge that visionary art leads a world class institution. They will have a good sense of humor, a strong belief in the power of theater to change lives, and an attitude of flexibility in supporting a company that aspires to do great things. They will be resilient and able to overcome obstacles with the knowledge that Northern Stage can and must continue to thrive at a time when the theater industry has been deeply challenged.

**The Managing Director's primary responsibilities will be in the following areas:**

## Organizational Leadership & Strategic Vision

- Together with the Producing Artistic Director create a world class theater company in a setting that intriguingly combines rural, educational and cultural assets
- Lead the development of an annual budget (including the development of an annual salary/staffing/housing plan) based on sound revenue projections. Manage the budget using accurate and efficient financial management tools and techniques. Control expenditures, create forecasting models and scenario plans, and maintain consistent financial analysis of the organization.
- Work with the Producing Artistic Director to support the development of an artistic plan for Northern Stage that includes the annual mainstage season, an outdoor summer season, the development of new plays and musicals, Off-Broadway residencies and workshops, a broad education program and other programming.
- Support the Producing Artistic Director's leadership of programs for the Helen Gurley Brown Foundation with financial oversight and administrative leadership

## Culture & Community

- Work with the Producing Artistic Director and the company to achieve Anti-Racist goals and implement strong Anti-Racist support systems.
- Manage office staff in a positive and nurturing way, practicing radical mentorship and encouraging a healthy work-life balance.
- With the Producing Artistic Director, take an active role as an advocate in the community, and with the Producing Artistic Director, serve as the public face of the company.
- With the Producing Artistic Director, take an active role as a key representative of the organization on the national stage, with the League of Resident Theaters, Theater Communications Group, and other national and international networks and persons.

## Resource Development & Board Engagement

- Attend Board meetings and committee meetings as appropriate and as requested by the Chair of the Board. Act as a staff leader on Finance & Board Development Board Committees, as well as other ad-hoc committees (Strategic Framework, Communications, Housing) as appropriate.

- Supervise Northern Stage's development department, including strategy and direct prospect cultivation and solicitation for the capital campaign and annual development activities of the company.
- With the Development Director and the Special Projects Manager, oversee the fundraising for and design and implementation of workforce housing on Gates Street. This new 30-unit housing development will help to alleviate statewide housing shortages while improving the lives of the Northern Stage staff and artists.
- Provide overall leadership for the sales and marketing efforts of the organization, including audience development, media, sales, public relations, publications, growth strategies for all earned income, and institutional marketing.
- Oversee and guide facilities, equipment and/or furnishings maintenance, upkeep to ensure code compliance and adherence to safety standards as prescribed by OSHA and collective bargaining partners. Direct the work of the staff responsible for facilities, equipment and/or furnishings. Make decisions or recommendations regarding rentals, new purchases or replacements of existing facilities, equipment, or furnishings.
- With the Producing Artistic Director and Board representatives stimulate the development of a strategic plan that supports visionary work while building a sustainable financial future.
- Support the Producing Artistic Director who serves as the key negotiator for all contracts on behalf of Northern Stage, including those for production rights, tours and Off- Broadway transfers and any Northern Stage activities offsite, and in a supervisory role for individuals should department heads need support.

## Qualifications

### Skills and experience:

- The ability and desire to work in a collaborative partnership with a co-executive leader; has the ability to engage in productive problem solving as a team, while also being a decisive leader in areas of direct responsibility.
- Demonstrated leadership skills in fostering collaboration among teams to effectively and efficiently fulfill the theater's needs.
- Strong non-profit financial literacy, with ability to lead budget creation, understand forecasting models, and ensure accuracy of tracking and reporting.
- Has a strategic approach to fundraising to support the exciting and varied programs and offerings of Northern Stage.
- Experience and understanding of the position of an executive in a non-profit organization, reporting to a Board of Directors, and developing Board engagement.
- Knowledge of capital projects management and finance.
- Experience managing competing priorities in complex, often fast-paced settings.
- Strong and persuasive communication skills, with an authenticity in inspiring excitement across a range of constituents, from board and staff to audiences, volunteers and donors.
- A demonstrated commitment to anti-racism, and a dedication to staying abreast of best practices around creating equity and access and applying them to the work of running a theater.

### Qualities and Characteristics:

- A commitment to and love for theater and the ways it impacts its communities.
- Supports excellence in all aspects of work.
- Organized and attentive to deadlines and immediate needs of operations, but also maintains long-term focus to support the vision of the strategic plan.
- Understands that growth can be challenging and bring discomfort but can lead through those times with the larger goal in mind.
- Has an open and inquisitive mind that values differing perspectives.
- Brings diplomatic ability to building relationships with many different kinds of people in multiple stakeholder groups: staff, artists, donors, and the community in which the theater lives.
- Believes in the strength of collaboration and is adept in and committed to resolving conflicts that can arise in collaborative groups.

**Not sure you meet 100% of our qualifications?** Research shows that men apply for jobs when they fulfill an average of 60% of the criteria. Yet, women and other people who are systematically marginalized tend only to apply if they meet every requirement. **If you believe that you could excel in this role, we encourage you to apply.**

We are dedicated to considering a broad array of candidates, including those with diverse workplace experiences and backgrounds. So, whether you're returning to work after a gap in employment, simply looking to transition, or taking the next step in your career path, we will be glad to have you on our radar.

Northern Stage believes that the most important and impactful art is made when we consider and commit to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access both on and off of our stage. We highly encourage folks who are Black, Native, or Indigenous, People of Color, Queer or Trans, Poor, or Working Class, Disabled, Young, Elderly, and/or who speak English as a second language to apply.

Please use your cover letter to tell us about what you hope to bring to this role, and how your background and experience responds to the desired skills and qualities.

## **Compensation**

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Annual salary of \$110,000 - 125,000, with a competitive benefits package, including relocation assistance.

## Application Instructions

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The search for the Managing Director is being conducted on behalf of Northern Stage by Tom O'Connor Consulting Group, a New York-based executive search and consulting firm specializing in the arts and culture industries. Cynthia Fuhrman, Vice President/Executive Search, and Jordan Sanford, Director of Search Operations and Community, are leading the search process, reporting to a board appointed search committee.

To apply, visit the [online application](#) and submit your materials. Your cover letter should include relevant experience, including any direct experience you've had with similar roles and institutions. No phone calls, please.