

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS FOR THE ARTS

EXECUTIVE SEARCH • PLANNING • ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

POSITION PROFILE

Director

Flint School of Performing Arts A division of the Flint Institute of Music

OPPORTUNITY

FIM Flint School of Performing Arts (FSPA) is one of the largest community schools of the arts in the country. The school serves roughly 3,500 students of all ages each year on an annual budget of about \$2.5 million, with an endowment that covers close to half of operating expenses. FSPA seeks its next Director to lead the school and extend its reach in new directions.

Emboldened by FIM's solid financial and operational footing, the Director will have the opportunity to position performing arts training as an essential component to youth development and lifelong learning, and to promote FSPA with a fresh voice as an accessible, inclusive and transformative resource for Flint and the surrounding region. A professional that has leadership experience in a high-functioning arts education environment will thrive at FSPA, as well as those who are able to connect institutions to their surrounding community, partner gracefully with faculty and administration, uphold pedagogical and performance standards, develop philanthropic and earned revenue and support the goals of FSPA's parent organization, the **Flint Institute of Music (FIM)**. This position reports directly to Rodney Lontine, President and CEO of FIM.

BACKGROUND

With origins and philanthropic investment dating back to 1913, the [Flint Institute of Music](#) (FIM) today comprises five constituent parts: the [Capitol Theatre](#), [Whiting Auditorium](#), the [Flint Symphony Orchestra](#), the [Flint Repertory Theatre](#) and the [Flint School of Performing Arts](#). FIM is situated in the [Flint Cultural Center](#), an active arts campus and culture neighborhood that also includes the [Flint Institute of Arts](#)—one of the largest art museums in Michigan—as well as the [Sloan Museum of Discovery / Longway Planetarium](#), the [Gloria Coles Flint Public Library](#) and the [Flint Cultural Center Academy](#), a public charter school established in 2019. Together, these cultural and educational organizations engage over 1 million visits of adults and children each year on campus and through programs in the surrounding area.

Against this backdrop, FSPA serves as a thriving home for music, dance and theatre training in Flint and Genesee County offering courses for all ages and skill levels. FSPA's training and performances take place in the Dort Music Center (including the MacArthur Recital Hall, a 260-seat

professional-grade venue), in the Whiting Auditorium (2,043 seats) and elsewhere on the campus. FSPA operates one of the region's only music therapy programs staffed by board-certified music therapists, and partners with more than 20 community organizations.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT, ASSETS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Flint Institute of Music. FSPA is uniquely positioned to engage creatively with the significant resources of FIM, including its physical campus, its robust and varied programming, and its dedicated Board and staff. A new Director will have the opportunity to harness these significant assets and contribute to FIM's important mission: "Flint Institute of Music awakens and nurtures the creative lives of children, youth and adults. We strive to be a trusted guide through the richly diverse world of the performing arts, and a cornerstone of community connection, wellness, and pride."

A planned leadership transition at FSPA. FSPA's longtime leader, Davin Pierson Torre, [announced her retirement in 2025](#) and will conclude her position in August 2026. With more than 50 years of involvement in FSPA, including 31 years as its director, she leaves an enduring legacy of growth in enrollment, partnerships, pedagogical development and learning opportunities (local, national and international) and of promoting access to FSPA's programs through scholarships. To set up her successor for success, **FIM has engaged an interim director** to oversee the School beginning in August 2026 and continuing into 2027, including an intentional hand off to the new permanent Director.

Solid financial grounding. FSPA operates on an annual budget of approximately \$2.5 million and has run an operating surplus in recent years. An endowment restricted to FSPA supports around one half of FSPA's annual operating expenses, with tuition, contributions, grants and millage providing the remainder. The Director plays an active role in fundraising and marketing in cooperation with a centralized External Relations operation overseen by FIM.

A high quality learning and performing environment. The people and facilities at FSPA contribute to a robust learning environment with high standards. The School employs around 75 part-time faculty who have embraced a student-centered pedagogical approach; the new Director will have the opportunity to continue to cultivate faculty recruitment, engagement, and retention efforts. Relationships with other divisions of FIM bring musicians, dancers and actors of renown to offer master classes for FSPA students. FIM maintains FSPA's facilities to a high standard. FSPA oversees performance operations for over 200 annual presentations at the level one would expect from a top music conservatory.

Accessibility and inclusion. One of FSPA's most notable assets is its commitment to providing access to the School's offerings to participants across all socio-economic backgrounds and a wide geographical range. Now more than 30 years old, the School's Seeing Stars! Tuition Assistance Fund offers assistance to roughly half of all enrolled students, totaling approximately \$300,000 in 2025. Despite FSPA's robust enrollment, there is still an opportunity to expand awareness of the School's offerings and scholarship programs within Flint and throughout the State.

Programming. FSPA currently serves around 3,500 students of all ages and skill levels through the following initiatives:

- **Summer programs:** Individual music lessons for children and adults; music and dance classes for infants and parents; music and dance camps; music therapy; theatre camps; music theatre camps; theatre ensembles; ballet intensives; and music intensives.
- **Youth programs (during the academic year):** Music classes (individual and group lessons across most instruments and voice); instrumental and voice ensembles; music therapy services; dance classes (ballet, modern, pointe, composition, and conditioning from beginning to advanced levels); dance ensembles; theatre classes and theatre ensembles.
- **Adults:** Music (group piano, opera workshop, music therapy), dance (adult ballet, modern, pointe, composition and conditioning), theatre, and ensembles in music, dance and theatre.
- **Music therapy:** A professional, certified staff of music therapists use music to address a variety of health-related needs, including autism, Down syndrome, Tourette's, stroke recovery, Parkinson's Disease and Alzheimer's Disease, among others, in clinical partnership with organizations such as Voices for Children and the Genesee County Jail.
- **Tours and exchanges:** FSPA provides life-changing national and international touring programs every other year for advanced students in the Flint Youth Philharmonia, the Flint Youth Wind Ensemble, the Flint Youth Symphony Orchestra and the Flint Youth Ballet. In alternating years, FSPA welcomes youth touring ensembles from around the world.
- **Community Partnerships:** FSPA delivers a wide range of music, dance and theatre programming to 30 community partners. These include Sylvester Broome Empowerment Village (SBEV), Shelter of Flint, and the Flint Cultural Center Academy (FCCA), a public K-8 charter school intentionally situated on the cultural campus to give students direct immersion into visual and performing arts. The incoming Director will prioritize deepening and enriching these partnerships to ensure they continue to grow and reach their full potential.

Reporting and staff: The Director of FSPA reports to the President and CEO of FIM and gives voice to the work of FSPA across FIM, the Board of Trustees and the Flint community. Currently, the Director has an administrative staff of 13 and the following direct reports: administrative director, program director and seven department chairs (piano, voice, strings, winds/brass/percussion, dance, theatre, and music/creative arts therapy).

Leadership: Rodney Lontine has served as President and CEO of the Flint Institute of Music since 2016, leading FIM's five divisions and its presence across the Flint Cultural Center. Before Flint, he spent nearly two decades as Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of the Museum of Outdoor Arts in Colorado, a multi-million-dollar arts, education, and entertainment institution whose portfolio included Fiddler's Green Amphitheatre, an 18,000-capacity venue. Earlier in his career he co-founded Garrison Lontine Advertising, which grew into one of the region's largest agencies with offices in Denver,

Dallas, and Boston. A Colorado native and a painter, he holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration with a minor in Fine Arts from Western State Colorado University. He brings a deep record of executive leadership, fundraising, programming, and marketing to FIM.

FLINT, MICHIGAN

Flint, Michigan is the largest city in Genesee County, with an estimated population of approximately 80,000 (and 400,000 in the county region). Its five largest racial and ethnic groups are Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) (54%), White (Non-Hispanic) (33%), Mixed Race/Multiracial (Non-Hispanic) (7%), Hispanic or Latino (5%), and Asian (Non-Hispanic) (1%). (Source: censusreporter.org) The region has a resilient cultural landscape shaped by its legacy as a center of the American automotive industry and its ongoing revitalization. The city also has a growing live music and arts scene, supported by local galleries, festivals, and grassroots creative organizations. Flint is home to several higher education institutions, including University of Michigan–Flint, Kettering University, and Mott Community College, which contribute to the region's educational and economic development. Click here for more information: <https://www.exploreflintandgenesee.org/>

POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

FSPA's Director will lead this celebrated and impactful division of the Flint Institute of Music and be a voice for community performing arts education in the region. They will collaborate with FIM's leadership around FSPA's major organizational direction and directly supervise their administrative and educational direct reports in the day-to-day work of the School. A successful Director will nurture FSPA's strong assets and traditions while bringing their own voice to the role with empathy, diplomacy and a solid dedication to Flint. Meaningful experience in an arts education environment, experience leading teams and shepherding organizational direction, and developing resources and programs will be strong assets. The primary roles and responsibilities of the Director are these:

Academic & Program Oversight

Lead the design, implementation, and continuous improvement of arts education programs that honor FSPA's legacy while responding to the needs of the communities it serves; cultivate an inclusive, accessible, student-centered learning environment; and strengthen FSPA's community partnerships—including the FCCA—to ensure alignment with State of Michigan Standards, student needs, and FSPA's pedagogical philosophy.

Represent FSPA within FIM, the Flint Cultural Center, and the Community

Attend FIM Board and Program Committee meetings, regularly reporting to executive leadership and the Board; collaborate with FIM colleagues around mutual programming; represent the School at community events; build partnerships that further FSPA's mission; maintain regional, national, and international collaborations; and be visibly present at FSPA performances to facilitate the public-facing work of the school.

Financial & Operational Oversight

Develop and monitor the School's budget in coordination with FIM Finance staff and FSPA staff;

support accurate enrollment and program forecasting; assess and help further refine the School's administrative and operational workflows that keep the School running smoothly as it grows.

Faculty & Staff Leadership

Work with FIM HR to recruit, hire, and evaluate staff and faculty; supervise and evaluate administrative and program leaders; increase overall staff capacity and support faculty and staff's professional development in coordination with Department Chairs and other FSPA leadership.

Development & Marketing

Collaborate with FIM External Relations staff on the engagement, prospecting, and solicitation of individual, foundation, corporate, and other donors; further collaborate with FIM staff to drive awareness of the School, grow enrollment, and generate additional earned revenue. Serve as the central storyteller and information source for FSPA—capturing standout program updates, people-focused narratives, performance highlights, and event details—and delivering them promptly to the External Relations team to support targeted marketing and communications.

While no single individual will likely possess all of these qualifications in equal measure, FSPA is seeking the following characteristics and traits in its new Director:

- **Genuine relationship builder.** Connects authentically with students, families, faculty, donors, and civic partners; creates new opportunities for FSPA and its students within Genesee County, the state, and beyond.
- **Communicator and a listener.** Listens deeply and communicates with clarity and transparency, internally and externally.
- **Strong and demonstrated commitment to education.** Has a core belief in the power of arts education; helps create dynamic learning environments where students thrive. Experience in a community arts school or an arts education environment is a strong plus.
- **Skilled leader of people.** Builds a strong, empowered team and works as a true mentor and partner to faculty, staff, and collaborators. An advocate of equitable, accessible, and inclusive environments. Experience managing at least 3 direct reports preferred.
- **Creative organizational thinker.** Can leverage the wide assets of FIM and its people, in ways that position FSPA as a cornerstone for the whole organization's success. Experience in a nonprofit arts organization is a strong plus.
- **Financially fluent.** Understands budgets, cash flow, and the business model of a complex nonprofit performing arts organization. Experience managing budgets of more than \$1 million preferred.

- **Skilled revenue generator.** Brings proven ability to cultivate major donors, tell an organization's compelling story, and drive growth through unique and differentiated earned and contributed revenue streams.
- **A strategic thinker and an innovator.** Articulates a vision, builds consensus, fosters decisions, and successfully helps an organization take action.

COMPENSATION AND START DATE

The annual salary range for the Director starts at \$115,000; benefits include comprehensive medical, dental, and vision coverage and a retirement plan with an employer contribution.

Flint School of Performing Arts has engaged Management Consultants for the Arts to facilitate this important search; Thomas Pearson, Carlton Ford, and Christopher Mossey are leading the search. A search committee of FIM leadership led by Rodney Lontine hopes to make a final decision by Q4 of 2026, with the new Director beginning work in the first quarter of 2027.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates should submit the following items for consideration:

- A current resumé
- Cover letter (no more than 1 ½ pages) describing your background, your approach to leadership and what excites you about the FSPA opportunity
- Four professional references
- Salary expectation

All documents should be in .pdf format and have the candidate's name as part of the file name.

Submissions should be made through Management Consultants for the Arts' website at:
<https://mcaonline.com/searches/director-fspa>

Management Consultants for the Arts

www.MCAonline.com | Phone: 203-353-0722

Questions about this search may be submitted to info@MCAonline.com
With "FSPA Director Search" in the subject line.