

# COWEE SCHOOL ARTS & HERITAGE CENTER

Franklin, North Carolina | Macon County  
51 Cowee School Drive • [coweeschool.org](http://coweeschool.org)

---

## POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

# Executive Director

**Schedule & Location:** This is a full-time, on-site position based in Franklin, North Carolina.  
**Salary:** \$50,000–\$65,000 based on experience, with growth tied to fundraising performance  
**Benefits:** Paid Leave, Paid Federal Holidays, Professional Development Support  
**Reports To:** Board of Directors  
**Application Deadline:** Open until filled

---

## About Cowee School Arts & Heritage Center

The Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center is housed in the historic Cowee School in Franklin, North Carolina's West's Mill Historic District, is dedicated to preserving, celebrating, and sharing the rich cultural and natural heritage of the Southern Appalachians and Cherokee people. The Civilian Conservation Corps had a camp on the site during the Great Depression in the 1930s. Cowee School was built of local stone by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and was opened as a school in 1943, serving thousands until 2012, when members from the community and local government worked together to preserve the building and transformed the school into an arts and heritage center. Today, the Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center continues its mission through a rich array of programming: a Summer Concert Series, a cultural Speaker Series, a Makers Series, art and dance classes, festivals, and educational outreach. It also hosts a weekly Farmer's Market, maintains a Community Garden and commissary kitchen, and provides studio space to a wide community of resident artists and makers, from potters and weavers to podcasters and yoga instructors. The Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center also offers outdoor education and experiences along with rotating exhibitions featuring regional and guest artists.

---

## Position Summary

The Executive Director provides visionary and operational leadership for the Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director is responsible for the organization's mission fulfillment, financial health, community engagement, fundraising, and day-to-day operations. This is an exciting opportunity for a passionate, experienced leader to steward a beloved community institution through its next chapter of growth and impact.

---

---

## Key Responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership

- Implement the organization's strategic vision in partnership with the Board of Directors.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson and ambassador for the Center in the community, with media, and with partner organizations.
- Foster a welcoming, inclusive organizational culture aligned with the Center's mission.

### Fundraising & Resource Development

- Lead all development activities including grant writing, major donor cultivation, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising events.
- Identify and pursue new funding streams to ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Maintain and grow relationships with existing donors, foundations, and government funders.

### Operations & Administration

- Oversee day-to-day operations including staff supervision, budgeting, and facilities management of the historic Cowee School building.
- Develop and manage the annual budget in partnership with the Board; ensure sound financial practices and reporting.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and organizational policies.

### Programs, Events & Community Engagement

- Develop and oversee cultural, educational, and heritage programming that serves the diverse community of Macon County .
- Build partnerships with local schools, Cherokee people, county government, tourism organizations, and regional arts and heritage institutions.
- Engage volunteers and community members as active participants in the Center's work.
- Conduct collaborative relationships with resident artists, tenant organizations, and community partners housed at the Center.

### Preservation & Collections

- Oversee the stewardship of the Center's historical collections, archives, and artifacts.
- Ensure the preservation and maintenance of the Cowee School facility as a historic landmark.
- Pursue opportunities to expand and interpret the Center's collections and exhibits.

### Marketing & Communications

- Oversee communications strategies that raise the profile and visibility of the Center locally, regionally, and beyond.
- Serve as spokesperson and media representative for the organization.
- Ensure a consistent and compelling brand presence across digital, social, and print channels.

---

## Qualifications & Experience

### Required

- Bachelor's degree in nonprofit management, fine arts, art education, history, public administration, or a related field (or equivalent experience).
- Minimum 3–5 years of progressive leadership experience in a nonprofit, cultural, or heritage organization.
- Demonstrated success in fundraising, grant writing, and donor relations.
- Valid driver's license.
- Strong financial management skills, including budget development and oversight.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Passion for Appalachian heritage, history, and community.
- Willingness to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends for events and programs

### Preferred

- Familiarity with the communities and history of Macon County and Western North Carolina.
- Experience working with diverse communities, including Indigenous and rural populations.
- Knowledge of state and federal heritage funding sources (NEH, IMLS, NC Arts Council, etc.).

---

## How to Apply

Please include the following in an email to [\*\*contact@coweeschool.org\*\*](mailto:contact@coweeschool.org)

- a cover letter
- Resume or curriculum vitae
- three professional references

The subject line should read: *Executive Director Application – [Your Name]*.

---

*Cowee School Arts & Heritage Center is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.*

[coweeschool.org](http://coweeschool.org) • [contact@coweeschool.org](mailto:contact@coweeschool.org) • 828.369.4080