

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

POSITION: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

LOCATION: Oshawa, Ontario. Onsite position with some hybrid flexibility

REPORTS TO: Board of Directors

DIRECT REPORTS: Director of Finance; Senior Curator; Development Lead; Learning and Engagement Lead

WEBSITE: <https://rmg.on.ca/>



THE ORGANIZATION

Located in downtown Oshawa, The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (RMG) is the largest public art gallery in Durham Region. The RMG holds Canada's largest collection of works by Painters Eleven, including Jack Bush, Alexandra Luke, J.W.G. (Jock) Macdonald, and Harold Town. Its collection of more than 4,700 works connects the continuing story of Canadian abstraction with contemporary artistic practices and public learning.

Our vision is that art cultivates caring communities. Our mission is to build relationships with diverse artists and communities to present collections, exhibitions, and programs. Care, artists, equity, accessibility, collaboration, and accountability guide our work.

An artist-centred and community-oriented public gallery, the RMG brings people together through art and strengthens its role as a welcoming cultural destination, a place for lifelong learning, and a partner in community wellbeing. The RMG is a registered charity and an Ontario non-profit corporation governed by an independent Board of Directors.

THE POSITION

The RMG seeks a visionary and resourceful CEO who can see what this gallery can become, build shared confidence in that future, and secure the resources to achieve it. As the gallery approaches its 60th anniversary in 2027, the next CEO will lead an important phase of audience growth, program development, fundraising, and long-term planning.

Central to this work is a strong, productive relationship with the City of Oshawa, whose investment supports nearly half of the RMG's operations. The CEO will strengthen relationships with municipal staff and the Mayor and Council taking office in 2027, while building new relationships with other municipalities across Durham Region. Political acumen, sound judgment, and demonstrated success in building relationships with elected officials and public-sector partners are essential strengths for this role.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO provides strategic and operational leadership across the organization. They will connect artistic ambition and community needs with staff capacity, financial resources, and a changing funding environment. Priorities include increasing attendance and repeat visitation, expanding adult education and evidence-informed art wellness programming, strengthening fundraising events, and building a more diversified and dependable revenue base.

This role requires a leader who is closely engaged with the work of a small, multidisciplinary team. The CEO must understand the contribution and pressures of each gallery function, coach staff, resolve barriers, and coordinate delivery while respecting professional expertise and delegated authority. They will unite curatorial, learning, development, communications, visitor services, and operations around shared priorities and measurable results.

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An effective public advocate and active fundraiser, the CEO will deepen the RMG's community and funding relationships and advance the national visibility of its collection. They will translate the gallery's public value into compelling investment opportunities for governments, foundations, businesses, and individual supporters, while safeguarding artistic integrity and public access.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- Lead the RMG's vision, mission, and strategic priorities in partnership with staff and the Board, translating direction into costed annual plans, quarterly objectives, clear responsibilities, and achievable milestones.
- Strengthen the RMG's relationship with the City of Oshawa as its principal municipal funder and a key civic partner, building trust with municipal staff, the Mayor, and Council through regular engagement, clear reporting, and a compelling account of the gallery's public value.
- Build relationships with other municipalities across Durham Region, identifying shared priorities and opportunities for regional participation, partnerships, and investment. Exercise political acumen and sound judgment in navigating municipal priorities, public accountability, and changing government leadership.
- Build a shared vision for growth that connects artist support, collection access, learning, community wellbeing, attendance, and financial resilience.
- Assess opportunities against public benefit, demand, funding, staff capacity, and infrastructure; make clear recommendations about what to launch, sustain, scale, redesign, or defer.
- Review existing and potential revenue streams, including commercial partnerships, restaurant and food vendor arrangements, rentals, and other earned-income opportunities, to strengthen financial returns, visitor experience, and alignment with the RMG's mission.
- Guide anniversary activity and future strategic planning through meaningful engagement with artists, staff, under represented partners, audiences, community organizations, donors, funders, and the Board.
- Serve as a visible advocate for the RMG's artistic, educational, civic, and economic contribution, strengthening provincial and national partnerships and sector visibility.
- Assess long-term space and capital needs through evidence, financial modelling, and Board-authorized feasibility work before making project or campaign commitments.

Programming & Relationship Development

- Work with the Senior Curator and gallery teams to advance artistic excellence, fair artist compensation, equitable opportunities, and a coherent relationship between exhibitions, collections, interpretation, and public programming.
- Provide executive oversight of collection stewardship, acquisitions, conservation, storage, loans, and public access, supported by curatorial expertise and appropriate policies.

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- Lead a coordinated audience-development approach that increases attendance, repeat visitation, and participation among adults, young adults, students, and communities not yet engaged with the RMG.
- Support staff to develop adult learning connected to exhibitions and the collection, artist professional development, and accessible opportunities for independent and intergenerational learning.
- Advance evidence-informed art wellness programming, including Wellness Wednesdays, through appropriate community, education, and health partnerships, qualified facilitators, and clear non-clinical scope.
- Deepen reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities and equity-deserving groups; incorporate their perspectives through respectful processes and accountable commitments.
- Align marketing, outreach, visitor services, and programming to improve discovery, welcome, accessibility, and engagement; use audience data and feedback to refine the experience.
- Evaluate programs and public events for participation, public benefit, cost, revenue contribution, and staff workload; scale successful approaches when resources support them.

Financial Management

- Work with the Director of Finance to prepare and monitor annual budgets, multi-year forecasts, cash flow, and accurate, timely financial reporting for the Board; ensure the Board understands significant risks, variances, and financial decisions.
- Connect each major priority to a realistic staffing model, full delivery cost, and funding pathway; match recurring commitments to dependable resources.
- Oversee financial controls, restricted funds, reserves, insurance, and financial risk management to protect the gallery's assets and meet its charitable, contractual, and regulatory obligations.
- Work with the Director of Finance, Board Treasurer, and the gallery's investment advisor to oversee the investment portfolio, monitor performance, fees, risk, and liquidity, and ensure investment practices and withdrawals align with Board-approved policies, donor restrictions, and the gallery's long-term needs.
- Oversee the annual external audit and required financial filings in collaboration with the Director of Finance; support Board review of audited statements and ensure audit recommendations are addressed.
- Use timely financial and performance information to identify pressures, recommend corrective action, and allocate resources to the gallery's most important outcomes.
- Evaluate existing and potential revenue streams, commercial agreements, and major expenditures for financial return, operational feasibility, and alignment with the RMG's mission.
- Ensure growth plans account for collection care, facilities, accessibility, environmental sustainability, and future operating and capital costs.

People, Culture & Operations

- Lead a workplace grounded in care, accountability, belonging, and clear expectations; address concerns and conflict promptly and fairly.
- Provide regular coaching, direction, and practical problem-solving support to direct reports, and maintain an informed understanding of responsibilities and dependencies across all gallery roles.
- Build coordinated workplans and strong communication across departments; clarify decisions, remove delivery barriers, and sustain manageable workloads as priorities evolve.
- Support equitable recruitment, onboarding, performance development, retention, professional learning, succession planning, and continuity of essential functions.
- Ensure employment practices, workplace health and safety, accessibility, and organizational policies meet applicable requirements, drawing on specialist advice when needed.
- Work with finance and operations staff to oversee building maintenance, security, emergency readiness, and business continuity; act as the principal executive liaison with the City of Oshawa on facility and capital matters.
- Use staff feedback and workload evidence to improve organizational systems and follow through on agreed actions.

Fund Development

- Lead revenue development with the Development Lead, Board, and relevant staff, setting achievable targets, shared responsibilities, and a coordinated prospect and stewardship plan.
- Personally cultivate, solicit, and steward donors, sponsors, foundations, and government partners; equip Board members to contribute through introductions, advocacy, and fundraising.
- Develop a compelling case for support that connects the RMG's artistic and public priorities with funder objectives and philanthropic interests without compromising its mission or curatorial independence.
- Monitor changes in grant programs, eligibility, public investment priorities, foundation interests, corporate sponsorship, and individual giving; adapt funding strategies and position the gallery for emerging opportunities.
- Lead core operating funding relationships, including the City of Oshawa, Ontario Arts Council, and Canada Council for the Arts; oversee strong applications, reporting, and stewardship across the grant portfolio.
- Grow annual giving, major gifts, sponsorships, foundation support, and multi-year commitments, with attention to unrestricted operating revenue and donor retention.
- Develop fundraising events that build relationships and deliver meaningful net proceeds; assess sponsorship, costs, staff effort, and follow-up as part of event planning.
- Grow appropriate earned revenue through venue rentals, adult programs, memberships, retail, publications, and collection-related opportunities while maintaining accessible public participation.
- Monitor revenue mix, prospect progress, donor retention, grant outcomes, and net fundraising returns; adjust approaches to strengthen long-term resilience.

Board Relations

- Maintain an effective partnership with the Board and Chair, respecting the distinction between governance and management.
- Provide concise, timely reports on strategy, finances, people, attendance, program impact, revenue development, and organizational risks, with clear options and recommendations.
- Keep the Chair informed of significant issues and support Board decisions on priorities, resource commitments, and long-term planning.
- Support Board recruitment, orientation, committee effectiveness, and succession planning with Board leadership.
- Activate Board members as informed ambassadors and supporters of the RMG's growth and public purpose.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

- At least five years of progressive leadership experience in an arts, cultural, charitable, or comparable public-serving organization, with responsibility for people, budgets, and organizational results.
- Demonstrated ability to translate a compelling vision into coordinated plans, funded priorities, and measurable outcomes within a resource-constrained organization.
- A record of securing contributed revenue, cultivating donors and sponsors, developing grant strategies, and strengthening earned income; experience personally advancing fundraising relationships.
- Strong financial literacy, including budgeting, forecasting, financial controls, and assessment of program and growth opportunities.
- Demonstrated success coaching a multidisciplinary team, supporting individual roles, improving collaboration, and leading organizational change with clear accountability.
- Experience growing audiences, participation, or community engagement through programming, partnerships, marketing, and improvements to public experience.
- A strong understanding of public art galleries, contemporary art, collection stewardship, artist relationships, and the public responsibilities of a charitable cultural institution.
- Ability to support adult learning and art wellness development through staff expertise, evidence, evaluation, and appropriate partnerships.
- Exceptional communication, relationship-building, advocacy, and negotiation skills across community, government, philanthropic, and cultural settings.
- Experience working with a Board of Directors and supporting effective governance, risk oversight, and strategic planning.
- Demonstrated commitment to equity, accessibility, anti-racism, and respectful relationships with Indigenous communities, supported by examples of practice.
- Post-secondary education in visual arts, art history, museum studies, cultural leadership, business, community leadership, or a related field, or an equivalent combination of education and relevant experience.
- Knowledge of Canadian abstract art and Canadian art history is an asset. Experience with cultural property processes, capital feasibility, planned giving, or partnerships across arts, education, and health would also be an asset.

CANDIDATE ATTRIBUTES

- A visionary leader who can articulate a persuasive future for the gallery and make disciplined choices to achieve it.
- A considerate and engaged coach who listens closely, understands operational realities, and supports staff to succeed.
- A resourceful and entrepreneurial thinker who connects opportunity with revenue, capacity, and public purpose.
- A confident fundraiser and public advocate who builds trust and turns relationships into sustained support.
- A decisive, accountable collaborator who can work through conflict, communicate trade-offs, and maintain momentum.
- A curious and adaptable leader committed to artists, lifelong learning, community wellbeing, and the RMG's role in Durham Region

COMPENSATION

The position offers an annual base salary ranging from \$112,000 to \$130,000, plus health benefits, paid vacation, and paid personal and sick days. The RMG also offers a reduced four-day workweek during July and August. Salary placement will reflect relevant experience and qualifications.

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit a cover letter and résumé by November 1st at midnight: [Application Form](#)

The RMG welcomes applications from people with diverse backgrounds and experiences, including Indigenous peoples, Black and racialized people, persons with disabilities, and people of all gender identities and sexual orientations. We value the skills and perspectives that enable us to serve diverse artists and communities.

The RMG is committed to an accessible and equitable recruitment process. Accommodation is available on request throughout the application, assessment, and selection process. Please contact Rose Rockbrune, rrockbrune@rmg.on.ca, to discuss the support you require.

We thank all applicants for their interest. Candidates selected to advance will be contacted, and interviewed candidates will receive an update on the status of the hiring decision. If you have any questions throughout the process, please contact RMG board Chair Aileen Fletcher, rmgchair@gmail.com

To ensure the smoothest process we aim to be transparent and communicative throughout the hiring process. Interviews will be conducted virtually the week of November 16th, second interviews may be on site at the RMG on November 23rd or 24th. We aim to welcome the new CEO to the RMG before February 1st, 2027. The RMG is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2027, we look forward to doing so with a passionate and dedicated new leader.