

Public Programs Manager Job Description

Literary Arts seeks an enthusiastic, well-organized individual to support our public programs, which includes but is not limited to Portland Arts & Lectures (PA&L) and Special Events (SE), Portland Book Festival (PBF), The Archive Project (TAP), and ancillary organizational projects. This position reports to the Senior Artistic Director and plays a key role in the daily operations of an established and dynamic literary nonprofit organization, offering wide-ranging experiences to a candidate seeking a career in arts administration and/or event management. Event work will require approximately 1–3 evenings per month, always with substantial advance notice.

The Public Programs Manager actively participates in ongoing efforts to further an organizational culture that supports and reinforces the equity, diversity, and inclusion goals of Literary Arts.

Core Areas of Responsibility

Portland Book Festival (40%)

- Manage the partner venues, third-party vendors, and organizations which provide active support in the lead-up to and day of PBF. This includes research, gathering financial estimates, payment processing, the coordination of partner staff, communications, and day-of logistical coordination.
- Curate PBF pop-up programming, including inviting readers (in collaboration with Senior Artistic Director), creating schedule, outreach to community groups, and coordination with Portland Art Museum.
- Orchestrate the hiring and management of two seasonal festival event interns.
- Collaborate with the venue and third-party security teams in overall festival safety planning.
- General support to the Senior Artistic Director for PBF, including communication with authors and publicists, copywriting, maintaining, and updating websites, and more as needed.
- Support the Volunteer Manager with venue-specific timelines and information necessary for volunteer scheduling and training. Serve as the primary liaison between the venues and Volunteer Manager to prepare the 200+ volunteers.
- Process payments for venues and third-party vendors.

Portland Arts & Lectures and Special Events (30%)

- Manage presenting authors' logistics and itinerary, beginning from the Senior Artistic Director's hand-off introduction to the event itinerary's coordination with inter-departmental teams, venues, and third-party vendors.
- Lead production support and planning, including coordination with venues and third-party vendors.
- Copy writing as assigned, including presenting author bios for the print program and digital assets.
- Day-of oversight of technical production elements.
- Process payments for venues and third-party vendors.

The Archive Project (10%)

- Support the Public Programs Coordinator to ensure event programs and materials align with project dates and production timelines.
- Collaborate in the processing and editing of recorded events.
- Assist with file maintenance and continue rights request project and organization.
- Serve as back-up for releasing and posting weekly show and podcast to Public Programs Coordinator when required.
- As needed, attend events with partner organizations to record.

Other/General (20%)

- Administrative support to the Senior Artistic Director.
- Organize and coordinate occasional projects and in-house events for ancillary organizational projects.
- Represent Public Programs departmental interests and needs within the organization's committees and working groups.
- Event and customer service support via phone, email, and in-person as needed.
- Other duties as assigned by the Senior Artistic Director.

Qualifications

We will consider any combination of relevant work experience, volunteering, education, and transferable skills as qualifying. Please be clear and specific about how your background is relevant.

Minimum Qualifications

- 5+ years' experience working on public event production/management.
- Ability to interact positively with people of diverse backgrounds.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal.
- Exceptional organizing and project management skills and attention to detail.
- Strong time management skills, including the ability to set and meet deadlines, manage multiple tasks, and show flexibility with tasks.
- Demonstrated decision-making clarity when in a high-pressure environment.
- Familiarity with contemporary literature and authors.
- Fluency with Mac and Microsoft business applications, particularly Microsoft Excel and Word. Familiarity with WordPress, Adobe Acrobat, and Adobe Audition a plus but not required.

Desired Qualifications

- Commitment to literature and its place in our society.
- Desire to communicate and collaborate with your team and cross-departmentally.
- Comfortable in an environment that acknowledges, encourages, and celebrates differences.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Demonstrated ability to appropriately manage highly confidential information.
- Creative problem-solving aptitude.
- Commitment to the mission of Literary Arts.

Experience

Literary Arts acknowledges and celebrates all types of learning: academic, career, and on-the-job training, as well as volunteer and military service. Literary Arts' goal is to hire and retain individuals who have demonstrated success performing the essential duties of the position and/or who possess the qualities to learn new skills quickly. Experience working with people from diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds is strongly recommended for this role.

Job Conditions

The office layout is open concept, with five common spaces used for meetings, events, and workshops. Approximately 70% of the workday is spent at an unshared computer workstation. The rest of the time is spent in meetings, events, and performing tasks around the office.

This role requires evening work at events approximately 1–3 evenings per month. As of summer 2026, employees are generally expected to work in the office Monday through Thursday, with the option to work from home on Fridays.

This position requires use of a MacBook computer, copier/printer, postage machine, and other standard office equipment. Literary Arts provides an adjustable office chair and a sit/stand adjustable desk.

This role requires concentrated periods of computer keyboarding throughout the workweek. Extended periods of sitting are also required for meetings. Some lifting of boxes will be requested. Work is performed in a fast-paced and deadline-driven environment with frequent interruptions and reorganizing of priorities.

Compensation & Benefits

Salary: \$66,000–\$72,000/year, commensurate with experience.

Literary Arts provides a comprehensive benefits package including employer-paid health, dental, and vision insurance; 401(k) with employer match; short- and long-term disability insurance; three weeks paid vacation (increasing to five weeks after five years); three personal days; and approximately 12 paid holidays. As a registered nonprofit, Literary Arts qualifies for Public Service Loan Forgiveness.



About Literary Arts

Literary Arts is a community-based nonprofit arts organization located in Portland, Oregon, with a 40-year history of serving the state's readers and writers. Our programs include [Portland Arts & Lectures](#), one of the country's largest lecture series; [Oregon Book Awards & Fellowships](#), which celebrates Oregon's writers and independent publishers; the [Portland Book Festival](#); and [Writers in the Schools](#), which hires professional writers to teach semester-long creative writing workshops in Portland's public high schools. Literary Arts' new headquarters—The Susan Hammer Center, located in Portland's historical Central Eastside—features an independent bookstore, a podcast studio, staff offices, and community spaces.

To Apply

Send a resume and cover letter that tells us why this position is right for you to applications@literary-arts.org with the subject line "Public Programs Manager - [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME]." Please include all attachments in a single PDF. Applications that do not follow these guidelines will not be considered. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis; for best consideration, submit by **August 20, 2026**.

We encourage BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color), members of the LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities, and other communities historically underrepresented in arts administration to apply. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. No single candidate will offer every desired skill and characteristic — we take a holistic view of candidates and welcome applications from a wide range of experiences and backgrounds.