



SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, THE JOHN AND MABLE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART
[FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY](#)
SARASOTA, FLORIDA



The Ringling

THE JOHN & MABLE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART
STATE ART MUSEUM OF FLORIDA | FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Florida State University and The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in the search for a Senior Director of Development.

The Senior Director of Development will lead and manage all fundraising operations for The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, which is a part of FSU's nationally recognized Arts collective, which also includes the Colleges of Music, Fine Arts, and Motion Picture Arts; Opening Nights; and the FSU "Flying High" Circus. This senior leadership role is responsible for securing private support at the major and principal gift levels, while cultivating relationships with individual, foundation, and corporate donors across many different constituencies. The Senior Director will work closely with the Executive Director at The Ringling, and the Associate Vice President for Advancement, Colleges, Schools and Units to execute strategic fundraising initiatives that support The Ringling's mission and long-term goals. Currently in the Leadership Gift (silent) phase of a \$1B+ comprehensive fundraising campaign, which The Ringling is a key part of tied to the "Arts Excellence" university-wide campaign priority, the priorities of The Ringling and FSU are already resonating with transformational philanthropists.

This future-thinking visionary will help shape the next chapter of philanthropic growth and impact at The Ringling through effective donor strategies across all levels of giving while further strengthening the relationship between The Ringling and FSU. They are an experienced fundraiser with a background in museum or cultural institution development, and they will possess the negotiation skills and organizational and political savvy to thrive in complex environments such as universities or large nonprofits. Playing a key role in advancing The Ringling's mission and expanding its community of supporters to include Sarasota-based FSU alumni and current FSU parents, this is a unique opportunity to contribute to a legacy of excellence while helping to build a vibrant and sustainable future for The Ringling through additional philanthropic investments.

The ideal candidate will be a collaborative and trustworthy team player who models integrity, compassion, and a commitment to cross-functional collaboration and is comfortable working in a dynamic environment where adaptability and flexibility are necessary. They will have demonstrated success in major and principal gift fundraising, building robust membership programs and donor pipeline, and have a deep understanding of how membership serves as a strategic gateway to donor engagement and major and principal gift development and cultivation. As an effective leader and people manager, they will be dedicated to motivating and developing staff, aligning individual strengths with broader fundraising goals and initiatives, and mapping to a donor-centric approach to their fundraising work and management style.

ABOUT FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Florida State University (FSU) is one of the nation's premier public research universities, distinguished by its academic excellence, affordability, and commitment to innovation. Founded in 1851 and located in Tallahassee, the capital of Florida, FSU offers nearly 300-degree programs across undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and professional levels. With more than 45,000 students representing all 67 Florida counties and over 130 countries, the university provides a rich academic community. FSU boasts a 17:1 student-to-faculty ratio and numerous nationally ranked programs, making it a leader in disciplines ranging from criminology and education to the arts and sciences. The university consistently ranks among the Top 25 public universities in the U.S. and holds the highest credit ratings of any public university in the state.

FSU is recognized for its strong liberal arts foundation and interdisciplinary approach to learning. The university's faculty includes Fulbright Scholars, Guggenheim Fellows, members of the National Academies, and award-winning artists and researchers. Students engage in high-impact research, creative inquiry, and service learning, cultivating the skills and knowledge necessary to make a global impact. FSU's influence extends well beyond campus through its dedication to public service, discovery, and lifelong learning.

ABOUT THE JOHN AND MABLE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART

In 2000, Florida State University assumed governance of [The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art](#), establishing a strategic partnership that has significantly elevated both institutions. Located in Sarasota, The Ringling serves as the official State Art Museum of Florida and stands among the largest and most comprehensive university-affiliated arts centers in the nation. Its 66-acre bayfront campus features the Museum of Art, the Circus Museum, the Ca' d'Zan historic mansion, and the Historic Asolo Theater. Under FSU's stewardship, The Ringling has experienced a period of extraordinary growth and revitalization, including the addition of several major facilities such as the Tibbals Learning Center, the Ulla R. and Arthur F. Searing Wing, the Kotler-Coville Glass Pavilion, and the Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Center for Asian Art.

This dynamic relationship has positioned The Ringling not only as a world-class cultural and educational destination, but also as a vital extension of FSU's academic and philanthropic mission. It exemplifies the university's commitment to public engagement, arts education, and community enrichment. Today, The Ringling is a cornerstone of Florida State's arts programming and is part of the "Arts Excellence" priority within the university's \$1B+ comprehensive fundraising campaign. Welcoming hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, The Ringling offers a collaborative and inspiring environment grounded in core values of innovation, relevance, accountability, curiosity, collaboration, and integrity. It is a place where art, circus, architecture, and performance converge to inspire, educate, and entertain.

DIVISION OF UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

The Division of University Advancement plays a vital role in supporting Florida State University's mission of teaching, research, and public service by enhancing the university's reputation, securing private financial support, and strengthening its leadership in academics, research, service, and athletics. Through the Florida State University Foundation, the division advances FSU's academic priorities by organizing strategic fundraising efforts and managing donor funds with transparency and integrity. Its work is deeply rooted in fostering meaningful relationships with alumni, parents, and friends, sharing the university's story, and inspiring philanthropic investment in its future.

On July 1, 2024, Florida State University launched the Leadership Gift phase of a new, university-wide comprehensive fundraising campaign. In support of this ambitious initiative, the Division of University Advancement is actively expanding its team of development professionals across campus. This marks an exciting and pivotal moment for advancement professionals seeking to make a lasting impact while growing their careers within one of the nation's top public universities. The campaign's momentum and scope offer a rare opportunity to contribute from the ground up and help shape the university's next era of excellence and growth.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Fundraising Development

The Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art will

- serve as the Division of University Advancement's primary liaison with The Ringling for all Advancement-related work;
- work with the Executive Director of The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, colleagues and leadership within the Division of University Advancement, and The FSU John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art development team to identify, develop and execute strategic fundraising initiatives on behalf of The Ringling, the University and the Division of University Advancement;
- champion The Ringling's campaign fundraising priorities as part of FSU's new comprehensive campaign;
- develop, coordinate, and execute an annual fundraising and operating plan for The Ringling, implementing strategic cultivation strategies designed to meet an established monetary goal while mapping to a defined suite of metrics as an individual contributor (as set forth by the FSU Division of University Advancement);
- establish new relationships resulting in philanthropic investment for The Ringling and FSU, maintain existing relationships to generate new philanthropic investment for The Ringling and FSU, and provide prospect/donor-related assessments and feedback on a continual basis;
- identify, qualify, and sustain a donor prospect portfolio with individuals who have a giving capacity of \$100,000 or more, while concentrating on the development of major and principal gift prospects at the \$1,000,000 and higher level;
- secure gifts and pledges from a variety of constituencies to include Ringling prospects, major and principal gift-rated FSU alumni, parents and friends and other entities/individuals;
- exhibit and promote a comprehensive understanding of the philanthropic priorities of The Ringling as well as other Arts-related areas at FSU where overlap occurs (i.e., FSU School of Theatre within the College of Fine Arts given the FSU partnership with the Asolo Rep located on The Ringling's campus), effectively matching the specific interests of prospects to those specific needs in a campaign environment; and
- effectively communicate The Ringling's and FSU's mission and represent both organizations to external stakeholders, while articulating the special relationship between The Ringling and FSU.

Management

The Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art will

- supervise the Division of University Advancement Development team embedded at The Ringling as well as The Ringling's Gift Processing and Membership Services team, to include monitoring individual performance metrics, conducting regular check-in meetings, and providing ongoing coaching following a donor-centric approach;

- manage the Development team to identify, qualify, and solicit new Members and/or Annual Fund contributors to The Ringling while providing guidance around the development of cultivation strategies for major and principal gift prospects to ensure the solicitation and closure of major and principal gifts;
- serve as a member of The Ringling's executive management team and helps to shape the strategic direction of The Ringling through an Advancement-lens while also serving as a member of the Division of University Advancement's Sr. Director of Development cohort to ensure full alignment with FSU's fundraising practices and protocols.

Central Development Collaboration

The Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art will

- coordinate with central development colleagues and other cross-functional team members to identify prospects for The Ringling—especially as it relates to FSU alumni and parents who might have an interest in supporting The Ringling; and
- attend and actively participate in the monthly fundraiser meeting for all Development Officers within Division of University Advancement; must attend two fundraiser meetings in person per year;
- attend and actively participate in Division of University Advancement All Staff meetings; must attend two all-staff meetings in person per year;
- attend and actively participate in principal gift strategy sessions led by the Associate Vice President for Principal Gifts and Gift & Estate Planning;
- develop solicitation plans with other Development Officers throughout the Division of University Advancement for planned giving, real estate giving, corporate and foundation relations and principal gifts when a multi-interest prospect is identified and/or when a specific area of expertise is needed, such as a gift of real estate.

Board and Volunteer Management

The Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art will

- assist in the management of all volunteer boards associated with The Ringling;
- provide oversight of any campaign-related volunteer committees or the equivalent as part of the current campaign.

Administrative and Events

The Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art will

- assist in the facilitation of meetings, communications, informational exchanges and project/philanthropic coordination with senior staff of The Ringling, the faculty and faculty chairs utilizing Foundation and Ringling communications staff as needed;
- plan for and initiate direct activities with prospects that are designed to enhance the affiliation between the prospect, The Ringling and FSU;
- negotiate gift agreements;
- prepare and present proposals;
- prepare correspondence with prospects and document communications, solicitation activity and gift information in compliance with the Division of University Advancement's reporting guidelines;
- create, inspire, and maintain donor loyalty, interest and enthusiasm through stewardship communication and activities designed to express recognition, appreciation and the impact of their gift(s);

- implement stewardship plans that may include but should not be limited to letters, communication of unit or university initiatives, invitations to appropriate activities, meetings, events, student engagement or the facilitation of campus visits;
- protect confidential information; and
- perform other related duties as required and assigned.

MINIMUM COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Florida State University seeks a Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art with

- a Master's degree and four years of experience in a related advancement field, or a Bachelor's degree and six years of related experience;
- six years of experience in major and principal fundraising/development in a not-for-profit, arts, museum, university, or related setting, or a related advancement services field;
- a valid driver's license, and the ability and willingness to drive;
- an ability and willingness to travel (35%) and work flexible hours including evenings and weekends; and
- an ability to successfully complete a [criminal history background check](#).

PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Florida State University seeks a Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art with

- a passion for the arts and a commitment to the mission of Florida State University — to preserve, expand, and disseminate knowledge in the sciences, technology, arts, humanities, and professions, while embracing a philosophy of learning strongly rooted in the traditions of the liberal arts;
- impeccable communication skills, including effective and persuasive writing, public speaking and interpersonal skills;
- an ability to facilitate clear, consistent, and constructive communication between internal and external stakeholders of all levels;
- knowledge of the Sarasota/Manatee philanthropic community and the ability to recognize the impact of meaningful stewardship;
- progressive experience in seeking financial support for multi-million-dollar programs or initiatives;
- an ability to prioritize, organize and perform multiple work assignments in a fast-paced environment while successfully managing competing deadlines in a detail-oriented environment;
- proficient skill in Microsoft Office 365, including Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Word.

At least five years of supervisory experience is preferred for this role. Florida State University is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Senior Director of Development for The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art holds a key leadership position that bridges both campus and community. On a day-to-day basis, this role reports to Steven High, Executive Director of The Ringling, providing close alignment with The Ringling's strategic

vision and day-to-day operations. In addition, the Senior Director has a direct report relationship to Susan Glenn, Associate Vice President for Advancement, Colleges, Schools, and Units, who is based in Tallahassee and provides guidance within the broader structure of FSU's advancement enterprise. The Senior Director oversees a team that includes three professional fundraisers, two membership specialists, a grants administrator, and a data administrative support team. This individual works collaboratively across The Ringling and Florida State University to ensure fundraising strategies are aligned with the museum's mission and the broader priorities of the university.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$165,000 to \$180,000 annually. FSU offers a robust Total Rewards package. You can learn more about their compensation, benefits, wellness, recognition, and employee development programs [here](#). FSU also offers an [interactive tool](#) to calculate Total Compensation options based on potential salary, benefits and retirement contributions, earned leave, and other employment-related perks.

LOCATION

This position is in Sarasota, Florida. As daily engagement with colleagues across the university is critical to the success of this position, remote work is not offered for this role. Frequent travel (35%) and working occasional evenings and weekends to meet with alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and friends of FSU and The Ringling is required for this position.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Florida State University as well as the responsibilities and qualifications stated in the prospectus.***

To apply for this position, visit: [Senior Director of Development, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art](#).

To nominate a candidate, please contact [Don Hasseltine](#).

All inquiries will be held in confidence.