

The Renaissance Society
Associate Director of Development
Chicago, IL

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About The Renaissance Society

The Renaissance Society (the Ren) at the University of Chicago has been at the forefront of presenting contemporary art exhibitions, events, and publications from around the world since its founding over 100 years ago. What began in 1915 with a group of University of Chicago faculty members has grown into a globally acclaimed platform of risk-taking, boundary-pushing contemporary art.

Today, the Ren is an independent (501c3), non-collecting museum that combines a flexible, experimental ethos with focused, rigorous inquiry. The Ren aims to create the best possible conditions for art and artists, and the commitment to supporting ambitious artistic expression frequently takes the form of newly commissioned exhibitions.

With a total budget of nearly \$2 million, the Ren's regular events include artist talks, lectures, concerts, and readings, which present opportunities for further discovery and discussion, while its publications offer critical reflection on and documentation of the exhibitions. The RenBen, the Ren's annual gala, has been reshaped in recent years from a traditional model, which included an art auction, to being an artist-led and designed experience that will transform each year.

In the years to come, the Ren will continue to build upon its legacy of providing a rich, accessible, and interdisciplinary context for engaging with contemporary art.

For more information on The Renaissance Society, please visit www.renaissancesociety.org.

The Opportunity

The Ren, one of Chicago's most beloved and globally recognized contemporary art institutions, seeks a dynamic individual to oversee its fundraising efforts. Reporting to and partnering with the Executive Director, the Associate Director of Development will serve as a key collaborator and partner to colleagues as well as the Board of Directors.

This is an associate-level position, ideal for candidates seeking ascendant professional growth and new opportunities in a relationship-driven environment. The Associate Director will primarily focus on major gifts, stewardship, and strategy while working in

collaboration with an experienced Senior Manager whose portfolio includes special projects such as galas, membership, events, and earned income.

This position will develop a diversified fundraising portfolio comprised of individual philanthropists, leading foundations and institutional funders, and high-profile fundraising events. The successful candidate will have a proven track record in fundraising and arts administration, an understanding and appreciation of contemporary art, and the ability to work creatively and collaboratively with colleagues across roles and teams.

The Associate Director of Development be a part of building the Ren's vision and participate in implementing funding strategies and campaigns to support the Ren's long and short-term aspirations, including a broad-based funding program to support the Ren's ongoing programs as well as new projects and initiatives.

The successful candidate will have an entrepreneurial spirit, the flexibility to adapt as organizations evolve, and the ability to manage multiple priorities. They will be a proactive problem solver and collaborator who can recognize and seize opportunities as they arise.

Key responsibilities include:

- Working with senior leadership, developing and managing a plan for achieving annual fundraising goals for the organization's operations contributions from individuals, events, campaigns, and other partnerships.
- Assuming a hands-on, creative role to strengthen the Ren's major gifts pipeline and membership program (specifically the Patron segment), focusing on the identification, cultivation, stewardship, solicitation, and acknowledgement of individual donors.
- Working together with Board members, particularly the Development Committee, to manage and maximize their fundraising efforts.
- Partnering with the Executive Director and Board leadership, as appropriate, to help identify and recruit new Board members.
- Participating in arts-inspired travel and excursions for Board members to engage with and tour art studios, collections, galleries, and museums. This program is managed by the Senior Manager of Development.
- Creating and implementing a strategy for donor and prospect engagement and cultivation, in partnership with the Senior Manager of Development.
- Launching special campaigns to support new initiatives, including forthcoming capital projects, and taking an active leadership role in targeted fundraising efforts.
- Offering support to the Senior Development Manager in their work to plan numerous events, including the annual gala, helping to ensure that they are creative, well-planned, efficiently executed, and cost-effective, with strategies for follow-through and solicitation.

- Bringing to the Development Office best practices in individual and institutional giving, based on prior experience.
- Providing general, hands-on operational oversight of the Ren's fundraising office, including all aspects of the grant process administration, and maintaining the donor database, Little Green Light. Collaborating with the Senior Manager of Development on implementing, managing, and improving administrative functions.
- Managing outside consultants on an as needed basis, particularly for events and grantwriting.
- Working collaboratively with colleagues around related initiatives, including marketing and public relations, to find synergies whenever possible and ensure the continuation of a holistic approach to engaging and communicating with patrons.
- Representing the Ren at a myriad of local arts events and engaging with the local arts community.
- In addition, the Associate Director will help strengthen the Ren's success in institutional giving, particularly its corporate pipeline, in partnership with the Senior Manager, Deputy Director, and Executive Director and Chief Curator.

Candidate Profile

While no one candidate will possess every quality outlined for this position, strong candidates will bring many of the following professional qualifications and personal attributes:

Breadth of Expertise in Development

A proven front-line fundraiser with a strong track record, this individual will have the ability to continually elevate the patron experience by growing resources for the Ren's future programs. Results-driven, they will have a proven understanding of a wide range of fundraising channels, including soliciting individuals, foundations, and corporations. As an integral member of the team, this leader will be a thoughtful and collaborative partner to the Executive Director, Senior Manager of Development, colleagues, and Board members.

Engaging Relationship Builder and Communicator

This individual will bring an ability to build rapport with a wide range of supporters to successfully convey the Ren's mission and objectives. They will have a motivating approach to building collaboration and buy-in and generating support from stakeholders. Internally, they will be able to develop strong working relationships and will be a proactive, open communicator at all times.

Collaborative and Inclusive

This individual will have a proven record of converting strategy into effective execution. Intellectually curious, they will strive to listen to and learn from multiple voices in an environment before making decisions. Leaning into strategic thinking, a metrics-based approach, and an operational skillset where necessary, this individual will be able to drive towards development goals while maintaining a focus on details and follow-through. As a

collaborator with senior leadership at the Ren, this individual will have the ability to set priorities decisively, engage others in shared responsibilities, allocate resources to ensure results, and celebrate successes with colleagues.

Ambition Balanced with Care

This individual will be a partner in thoughtful efforts to increase the Ren’s present reach. As an ambitious yet thoughtful fundraiser, this individual will be essential to the continued growth of the Ren’s fundraising function to achieve ambitious goals in a changing philanthropic environment, with added focus on major gifts. This individual will make it their mission to strengthen the capacity and success of the development team through a continued focus goal setting balanced with collaboration, and where appropriate, delegation.

Passion for the Mission of the Ren

If not already a contemporary art lover, this leader will have an openness to embracing and deepening their engagement in this space. They will also bring an appreciation for the Ren’s legacy while continually innovating alongside colleagues and Board to help expand its visibility and reach. In addition, this individual will have an eye consistently focused on emerging fundraising trends in the arts and how to best adapt the Ren’s efforts in a rapidly changing environment. Moreover, they will be an individual of unquestioned integrity, ethics, and values, paired with strong emotional intelligence — someone who can be trusted without reservation.

Preferred Qualifications

- Breadth of experience across multiple revenue streams in addition to individual donors, events, and memberships, including foundations, corporations, sponsorships, and partnerships.
- Ability to diversify funders and fundraising activities in partnership with colleagues and board members to strategically grow a membership base.

Compensation & Benefits

Salary for the role is currently anticipated to range from \$110,000 to \$120,000, commensurate with experience and with the opportunity for future growth. The Renaissance Society offers medical, dental, vision, life, and 403b benefits.

This is a full-time position based in Chicago with the option to work remotely two days per week.

Contact

Koya Partners, the executive search firm that specializes in mission-driven search, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Chartise Clark of Koya Partners is leading this search. Please submit a compelling cover letter and resume by [filling out our Talent Profile](#). All inquiries will remain confidential.

Koya Partners is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals living with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual living with a disability and need assistance expressing interest online, please email NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

The Renaissance Society is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people of color, persons with disabilities, women, and LGBTQ+ applicants.

About Koya Partners

Koya Partners, a part of Diversified Search Group, is a leading executive search and strategic advising firm dedicated to connecting exceptionally talented people with mission-driven clients. Our founding philosophy—**The Right Person in the Right Place Can Change the World**—guides our work as we partner with nonprofits & NGOs, institutions of higher education, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

At Koya, we don't just accept difference—we celebrate it, support it, and thrive on it for the benefit of our team, our clients, and the communities we serve.

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