

Head of External Relations

Company: Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Location: San Francisco, CA; Work onsite at least 3 days per week

Date Posted: December 26, 2022

Position Overview – <https://www.workshouldntsuck.co/ybca-er>

Social Sharing Kit – <https://www.workshouldntsuck.co/ybca-er-social-kit>

About YBCA

Opened to the public in 1993, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts was founded as the cultural anchor of San Francisco's Yerba Buena Gardens neighborhood. Its work spans the realms of contemporary art, performance, film, civic engagement, and public life. By centering artists as essential to social and cultural movement, YBCA is reimagining the role an arts institution can play in the community it serves.

The company focuses on being a welcoming, living art space for activities situated at the intersection of art and social justice.

YBCA activities are inherently multi: multi-abled, multicultural, multi-generational, multi-lingual, multi-sensorial, and multi-perspective. Its work includes three distinct and essential components: Exhibitions and Public Program, Community Use and Special Events, and Artist Initiatives.

Exhibitions and Public Program works in relationship with artists to build creative opportunities for the public to engage in art experiences across disciplines. Through commissions, fellowships, events and convenings YBCA gives artists the platform and resources to be ambitious, bold, and innovative, sparking dynamic exchange among those participating onsite and virtually.

Community Use and Special Events recognizes that one of its greatest assets is its campus, a 130,000 square-foot multi-use property in the middle of downtown San Francisco. YBCA's work here includes long-term relationships with Bay Area dance companies, partnerships with community organizations in San Francisco's under-resourced neighborhoods, and a community rentals program, which contributes revenue to fund the operations of YBCA.

If you are new to YBCA, here is a video tour of the campus created by the YBCA team to help introduce new coworkers to the spaces during COVID-19.

Artist Initiatives includes a variety of investments each year that [help support the work of artists](#) and their livelihoods. Through regranting programs like the [San Francisco Guaranteed Income Program for Artists \(SF-GIPA\)](#) and Artist Power Convenings; senior fellowships; plus research and development (R&D) to test new, innovative economic models for artist relief following the devastating impacts of COVID-19, YBCA is actively investing in a shared creative ecosystem of artists who contribute to the well-being of communities in the Bay Area and beyond.

Context for Role

For the first time in YBCA's history, the Communications, Development, Marketing, and Government and Public Relations activities will be held within the scope of an individual role. Previous organizational designs have split responsibility for these in different configurations, which created challenges in unifying priorities, energy, and storylines across all of the activities of the organization. In making this new role a member of the leadership team, YBCA intends to provide the structural, relational, and administrative representation of these key storytelling functions at the leadership level that hasn't existed holistically before. This shift aims to bring these functions into closer working relationships with each other and also strengthen their overall presence and integration, both internally and externally.

Of this role and search, YBCA CEO Sara Fenske Bahat offered, "I'm excited about this search because what I see is the opportunity to really combine our storytelling and cultivation efforts. We want to tell really, really strong stories about our work and equip somebody in this role to do so really consistently across the audiences that we serve so that our funders are really invited into the full story and really called to the table of the work that we're doing as a community institution."

For more context from the employee perspective for this opportunity, please watch [these videos](#) at the bottom of the job post.

About the Search Committee

The [search committee](#) for this role consists of YBCA employees from across functions:

- Sara Fenske Bahat, CEO
- Angela Carrier, Director of Artist Engagement & Impact
- Ursula Hunting, Manager of Corporate Partnerships and Events
- Daniela Lencioni, Senior Manager of Strategy and Operations
- Julie Mae Lopez, Director of People & Culture
- Mark Sabb, Creative Director, Head of Content & Digital Strategy

The committee consults with YBCA Board Chair [Renuka Kher](#) as needed. Sara Fenske Bahat holds approval of final decision-making on this hire. To hear more from Renuka and Sara about YBCA and the importance of this new role, [check out this podcast episode](#).

Board of Directors

YBCA is governed by a board of directors that are invested in building a leadership practice in partnership with the CEO. This reciprocity is focused on encouraging advice and guidance is situational and multi-directional as needed: the board may be invited to bring their expertise to operational issues (like staffing, program, and systems), and partnership explorations (creation of financial policies, allocation of capital, terms, etc.), and the CEO and team will be asked to bring their expertise to board-level strategy development (like sustainability or directional decision making, for example).

Individual board members are passionate about YBCA and bring diverse experience and perspectives to their mission-based and strategic governance roles.

To learn more about those serving on the YBCA Board of Directors, [click here](#). Also explore, [“The Case for a Year of Care: Shifting the Leadership Transition Narrative”](#) a piece written for the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society by Board Chair Renuka Kher and CEO Sara Fenske Bahat as they offered their thoughts and perspectives on YBCA’s recent CEO transition.

Work Culture

As part of the preparation for this search, the Work Shouldn’t Suck team conducted more than 30 individual interviews with YBCA employees. During those conversations, staff were asked to share their insights into YBCA’s work culture. Overall, team members share that they take incredible pride in the work they do, and are committed to cheering each other on, working together, and becoming a work environment where folx can thrive. They expressed that the team has been through a lot over the last few years, including staff turnover and a series of senior leadership transitions, massive changes due to the mandatory closure of the buildings because of COVID-19, and the organization’s subsequent response activity.

YBCA is proud of their commitment to care during these times. Nearly all employees transitioned to remote or hybrid work arrangements, and previous systems relaxed to allow for greater autonomy. Employees across the organization acknowledge the impacts they have experienced during these challenging times, including strains on capacity, feelings of isolation or

lack of connection, and perceptions of silos with different micro work cultures owing to different ways teams worked.

While some roles have worked onsite full-time since nearly the beginning of the global pandemic, other roles were hired and worked entirely remote until just recently. Starting in September 2022, all staff members began working onsite an average of at least 2 days per week. And, beginning in January 2023, all staff members will be working onsite at least 3 days per week. (Find more about their current work plans below.)

Team members noted that even prior to the pandemic, YBCA felt a little inconsistent in focus or narrative – “It has always shifted and evolved.” They express recognition of an opportunity in this moment – a call to do something beautiful, and a desire to clarify and commit to inspiring priorities the organization can hold and work towards in the years to come. [In this video](#), staff were asked to imagine YBCA three years from now and what would it feel like to be thriving at work.

Anti-Racism and Accessibility Commitment

For the last two years, the YBCA staff and board have been engaged in learning to help better understand how the organization’s systems, structures, language, policies, and practices create internal and external barriers to participation and thriving. They are focused on building awareness and developing personal and organizational practices that will move YBCA into alignment as a values-based institution. Their work that has specifically focused on accessibility has been guided by the folx at [Kinetic Light](#), and their anti-racism work has been guided by the folx at [Equity Quotient](#). The team is committed to their journey towards anti-racism and accessibility, and this search is among a variety of efforts to reimagine and co-create how YBCA operates in the world.

Annual Budget

The annual budget for YBCA is currently \$25M.

Position Description

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Head of External Relations

Overview:	A newly-created leadership position responsible for Communications, Development, Marketing, and Government and Public Relations. This public-facing role will support integration of these functions – and support all YBCA activities.
Type of Employment:	Salaried, exempt
Reports to:	CEO
Important Relationships:	Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Operations, Chief Producer, and Chief of Staff. This role will also work closely with the senior members of the External Relations team, including the Director of Philanthropy, and the Creative Director, Head of Content & Digital Strategy. Additionally, the role works in close coordination with the Director of People & Culture.
Supporting Resources:	This role oversees 10 full-time equivalents (FTEs) across the External Relations functions, as well as a contract grant writer. External consultants are also currently engaged to provide support and capacity to the team during this transition period.

Responsibilities

Leadership:

- Interface with fellow senior leaders on strategic and management issues.
- Lead financial planning, management, and budgeting for the External Relations functions. Maintain a strong situational awareness of financial capabilities, risks, and trends. Work with the Chief Finance Officer to maintain fiscal awareness and accountability.
- Foster collaboration and guide continuous improvement within a large team and promote cross-functionally throughout the organization.

- Team design: Clarify roles, build cohesive structure, understand knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required in the team and create plans to train/develop/upskill existing staff.
- Implement feedback loops and practice active listening to help the team feel heard and make evidence-based decisions.
- Forge excellent working relationships with program directors, project managers, and curators, and develop a thorough – and always evolving – knowledge of YBCA's programs and activities.

Communications & Public Relations

- Serve as a key external face of YBCA, doing the work of connecting what's happening in the sector, and city, to what's happening within YBCA.
- Build and maintain strong local relationships and encourage a sense of belonging that draws community members to YBCA.
- Scale stories of YBCA's hyperlocal activity to the broader cultural moment.
- Work across internal organizational boundaries to build the infrastructure, processes, and structures that facilitate communication, unite YBCA narratives and build alignment in storytelling for multiple audiences.

Marketing & Brand

- Assess the needs of programs, community investment, and funding functions of YBCA and determine how marketing works in relational service to these activities.
- Ecosystem development: Refine the organization's understanding of the longer arc stories YBCA should tell and the opportunities to share the shorter arc experiences.
- Develop and build consensus and a consistent tone for the YBCA brand, visual identity, and voice.
- Connect deeper, cohesive points of view to inform marketing activities to draw participation and attendance, and to facilitate fundraising efforts.
- Identify and prioritize broader trends in marketing, technology, and storytelling to ensure marketing strategies are current and engaging as many audiences as possible.
- Discover revenue generating opportunities.
- Collaborate internally with IT, facilities, and other departments to understand compliance, health and safety, legal and contractual risks linked to use of technological platforms and public facing events.

Development

- Collaborate with internal stakeholders to understand how YBCA's activities align with the communities we serve in order to develop an institutional fundraising strategy that meets YBCA's revenue goals, securing financial support from diverse funding sources.

- Act as a bridge between the interests of YBCA's development, funders, artists, and community stakeholders to manage, translate, and align priorities.
- Support grant writers and fundraisers by ensuring access to current organizational identity frameworks and documents to ensure a storytelling approach to fundraising.
- Actively participate in the identification and cultivation of strong, long-term development relationships, and the solicitation and stewardship of funders.
- Serve as YBCA's primary contact for development campaigns and high profile donors, and attend YBCA events to cultivate and meet potential funders on behalf of the organization.
- Coordinate with the CEO, leadership team, and YBCA Board to maximize presence and representation of YBCA externally in the community and philanthropic spaces.
- Collaborate with Events, Facilities, and Programs on related events and productions to support event management.

Required/Preferred Related Experience

- In-depth understanding and practice in the public sphere and at least one or more specializations including Fundraising, Marketing, Communications, and/or External/Public Engagement, evidenced by a relevant combination of at least 5-7 years' experience, related certification, accreditation, or a degree in a related field of study.
- An anti-racism and accessibility lens including, i.e., ongoing personal learning and development, an understanding of history and its implications and accountability to contemporary social justice issues, familiarity with integrating equity principles into all aspects of organizational strategy, and a caring, inclusive, facilitative leadership style.
- Personal experience that relates to YBCA – i.e., as a champion of multidisciplinary, multiperspective, multicultural and multilingual art, as a San Franciscan, or someone invested in a just, equitable and inclusive region and a holistic understanding of the communities we serve, as someone with a passion for working in organizations seeking to create positive change

Compensation

The salary for this position is between \$180,000-\$220,000 based on full-time hours, and includes a competitive benefits package that is available to all employees.

YBCA is in the midst of an organization-wide compensation assessment process in service of increasing pay equity and transparency throughout the organization. The range above is provided because, at the time this position posting went live, the assessment's preliminary information had been received but not the full and final compensation levels.

Relocation

Reimbursement of relocation expenses, as required by the successful candidate, will be provided via expense claim upon receipt of invoices.

Employment Benefits

Benefits Overview

YBCA is committed to providing a competitive program of group benefits for full-time employees and eligible family members, available after the first 30 days of employment.

Options include:

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance at 100% premium coverage for employees
- Flexible Spending Accounts for reimbursements of qualifying medical expenses (available for healthcare and dependent care)
- Long Term Disability Insurance
- Basic Life and AD&D
- Employee Assistance Program
- Employer-matched 403(b) Retirement Plan (per dollar match or percentage up to 4%)
- Commuter Benefits

Paid Company Holidays

YBCA observes the following paid holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day

- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- 3 Paid Personal Floating Holidays

Paid Time Off (PTO)

Employees may use accrued PTO for any reason, including vacations, illness, medical appointments, personal business, and emergencies. The following is a table showing the different accrual rates for each employment category:

Employment Category	Accrual Rate	Maximum Balance
Regular Full-Time, less than 3 years of service	20 days per year	30 days
Regular Full-Time, 3 or more years of service	25 days per year	37.5 days

Health and Safety at YBCA

YBCA continues to prioritize the health and well-being of its community. Their current COVID-19 health and safety protocols meet or exceed local, state, and federal public health requirements. Please note that masking requirements and other illness prevention policies may be reimposed depending on local public health conditions.

YBCA has joined a growing number of cultural institutions around the Bay Area and will require proof of vaccination against COVID-19 as a condition of employment. Exemption from these requirements will be reviewed according to standards set forth by state and local health agencies, and reasonable accommodations will be made for those providing valid exemptions.

YBCA no longer requires proof of vaccination or a negative test for visitors to enter its buildings.

For more information about YBCA's Health and Safety Plan, [click here](#).

Hybrid Work Policy

The YBCA team has iterated and evolved their workplace design plans as the global pandemic has shifted over the years. In their most recent iteration they offer:

The past 3+ years have prompted many of us to reflect on the ways in which we approach our work and consider the conditions that help or hinder it. Our workplace design plans are setting

and supporting the conditions for the work that needs to be done onsite and when we're in physical proximity to each other.

This structure has helped us to realize the benefits of the type of work and collaboration that can be uniquely accomplished by being in person. With regular onsite work together, we seek to strengthen the collaboration, communication, connection, and culture building that comes best when spending dedicated time in-person, while also building in flexibility to acknowledge both personal preferences and that different kinds of our work can benefit from various work environments.

All regularly scheduled staff will work onsite at least (3) days per week beginning in January 2023. These three days will include:

- *Thursdays*: All staff members will be onsite every Thursday
- *Team Day* (i.e., Marketing, People & Culture, Exhibition, etc): Each team will choose a day that remains consistent from week-to-week when the entire team works onsite together and the rest of the staff will know when to find that team in the building
- *Personal Preference Day* that remains consistent (and rarely changes) from week-to-week

Staff feedback indicated a desire for flexibility in how, when, and where YBCA staff perform their work-related duties. For some positions though, this flexibility is simply not possible owing to the core functions of the work being performed (i.e., Security, Facilities, Community Experience, Exhibition, Production, etc.). One of the challenges in workplace design like this is to experiment in ways that are consistent and equal, if not equitable, across the entire organization. This flexible hybrid work model will evolve over time to align with health mandates, safety measures, best practices, and continuing to understand everyone's experience.

YBCA onsite protocols, scheduling, and hours of operation are designed to keep health and safety as the top priority. We understand that commuting to and from work and neighborhood safety are top concerns for many of us, and gives us each the ability to adjust our hours accordingly.

The building is available for staff access from 8:00am-6:30pm Monday through Friday and Saturday/Sunday 11:00am-6:00pm.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) is committed to diversity in its programming and in creating a work culture and environment that is reflective of San Francisco Bay Area

demography. The Center encourages and actively recruits applicants representing dimensions of difference that include — but are not limited to — age, national origin, ethnicity, race, religion, ability, sexual orientation, gender or political affiliation.

YBCA will consider for employment all qualified applicants with criminal histories in a manner consistent with the requirements of the San Francisco Fair Chance Ordinance (SF Police Code, Article 49).

YBCA is an equal opportunity employer. YBCA is committed to providing a work environment free of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and disrespectful or other unprofessional conduct based on:

- Race
- Religion (including religious dress and grooming practices)
- Color
- Sex/gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), sex stereotype, gender identity/gender expression/transgender (including whether or not you are transitioning or have transitioned) and sexual orientation
- National origin
- Ancestry
- Physical or mental disability
- Medical condition
- Genetic information/characteristics
- Marital status/registered domestic partner status
- Age (40 and over)
- Sexual orientation
- Military or veteran status
- Any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law or ordinance or regulation

YBCA also prohibits discrimination, harassment, disrespectful or unprofessional conduct based on the perception that anyone has any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics.

In addition, YBCA prohibits retaliation against individuals who raise complaints of discrimination or harassment or who participate in workplace investigations.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA)

YBCA complies with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities. The company prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities

regarding application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

The company will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of the job, unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to YBCA.

For more information about this position, please contact Tim Cynova and Katrina Donald at search@workshouldntsuck.co.