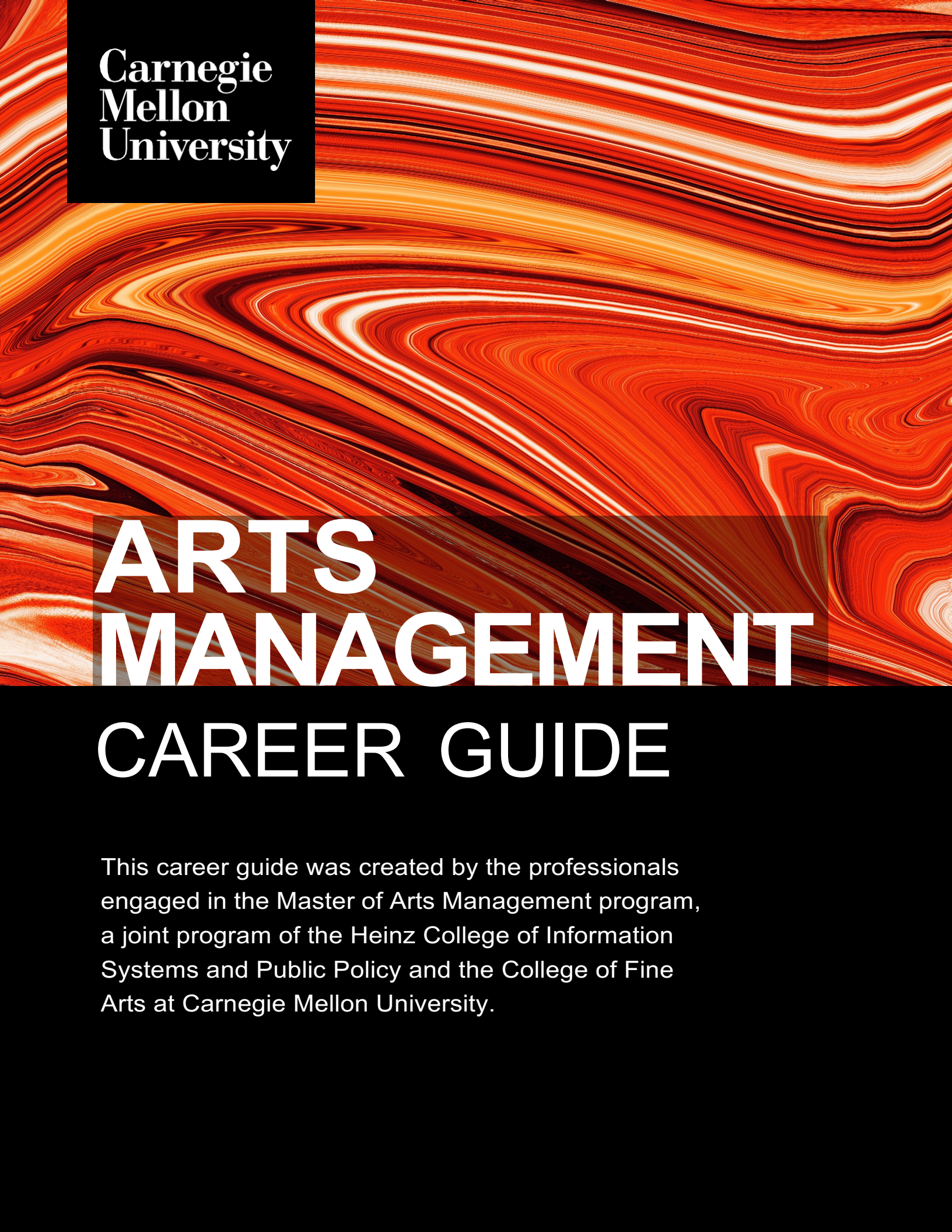




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ARTS MANAGEMENT CAREER GUIDE

This career guide was created by the professionals engaged in the Master of Arts Management program, a joint program of the Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy and the College of Fine Arts at Carnegie Mellon University.



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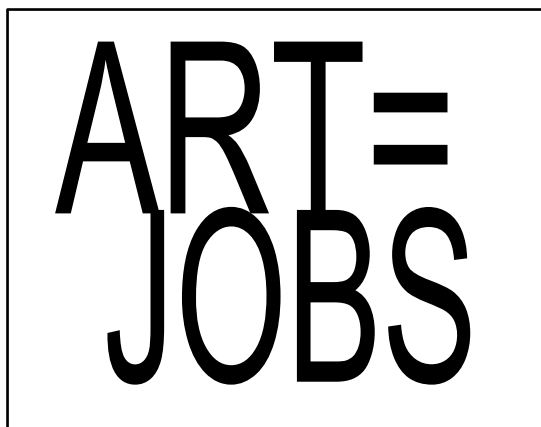
MAM student visited The Andy Warhol Museum, Spring 2023

SOME BASIC FACTS

According to the National Endowment for the Arts and the Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2023 arts and cultural industries contributed \$1.2 trillion to the U.S. economy, or about 4.2 percent of GDP. The sector's real value has doubled over the past 25 years, highlighting its sustained growth.

The arts and cultural industries supported 5.4 million jobs, with employment increasing across 27 states. These jobs span industries such as performing arts, museums, design, film, publishing, and broadcasting.¹

Beyond the numbers, the arts engage people as audiences, creators, educators, and leaders, and intersect with public, private, and nonprofit sectors to shape both cultural life and the broader economy.



SO, WHAT IS ARTS MANAGEMENT?

Arts management, also called arts administration, is a professional field that blends cultural knowledge with leadership and organizational skills. It developed in response to the need for trained professionals who can guide arts and cultural organizations with both vision and practical expertise. Arts managers plan and evaluate programs, oversee budgets, market performances and exhibitions, and raise funds through grants, sponsorships, and donor support. Their work ensures that artistic projects are supported by the financial, organizational, and other resources needed to succeed.

Arts managers operate in a rapidly evolving landscape shaped by cultural, social, and economic change. As the field advances, their responsibilities extend beyond sustaining organizational stability to promoting equity, accessibility, sustainability, and innovation. Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, introduce new efficiencies in operations and broaden the ways art can be created and experienced. Yet these positions require highly skilled professionals adept at managing complex, interdependent tasks that rely on creativity, emotional intelligence, and nuanced communication, which are the qualities that distinguish arts managers.²

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¹ National Endowment for the Arts, "Arts and Cultural Industries Grew at Twice the Rate of the U.S. Economy, Adding \$1.2 Trillion"

² Arts Management & Technology Laboratory, "Is AI a Job Killer in Art Museums?"

BUILDING A CAREER

Arts organizations operate in both nonprofit and for-profit structures. Nonprofits are mission-driven and reinvest surplus into programs and services, while for-profits generate profit for owners or shareholders. Some organizations also adopt hybrid models that combine aspects of both.

Graduates of Carnegie Mellon University's Master of Arts Management (MAM) program pursue careers across the nonprofit, for-profit, government, and education sectors. Alumni with less than two years of experience typically begin in a variety of early-career roles, while those with prior professional backgrounds often enter mid-level positions. Many go on to advance into senior leadership and executive roles at major organizations around the world.

Sample First Positions After Graduation of CMU MAM

- Walker Art Center, Performing Arts Coordinator
- Pittsburgh Public Theater, Assistant Director of External Relations
- Aspen Music Festival, Operations Manager
- Banff Centre for the Arts, Registrar
- Museum of Modern Art, Information Technology Manager
- James Cohan Gallery, Gallery Manager
- Interlochen Center for the Arts, Charitable Giving Coordinator
- Institute of Museum & Library Services, Financial Analyst
- Los Angeles Nomadic Division, Associate Director
- IMG Artists, Artist Manager

Sample Positions 5+ Years After Graduation of CMU MAM

- Idaho Commission on the Arts, Executive Director
- Step Afrika!, Executive Director
- Salzburg Festival, Director of Concert Planning
- Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, General Manager
- Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Director of Special Events
- Washington Performing Arts, Director of Programming
- J. Paul Getty Trust, Associate Director for Exhibitions
- Guggenheim Museum, Director of Corporate Giving
- Smithsonian Museum, Director of Visitor Experience
- Philadelphia Museum of Art, Director of Annual Giving
- TRG Arts, Senior Consultant
- WolfBrown, Senior Associate for Research and Outreach

SUSTAINING THE ARTS

Good arts managers make thoughtful decisions that sustain creative work without compromising its integrity. They serve as advocates for artists, audiences, and institutions, creating environments that are responsible and resilient.

With this sense of purpose guiding their work, arts managers build careers that are both meaningful and sustainable. The field offers a wide range of full-time, paid opportunities across the cultural sector, where graduates contribute to the vitality of the arts in museums, theaters, orchestras, foundations, festivals, agencies, and creative enterprises around the world.

In the United States, more than 700,000 businesses are involved in creating or distributing the arts, employing nearly 3 million people.³ The nonprofit arts sector contributes over \$135 billion annually to the economy and supports more than 4 million jobs.⁴ Within this landscape, CMU MAM graduates lead with both skill and conscience, advancing a sustainable and creative future for the arts.



MAM student at Space Gallery exhibition, Fall 2022.

³ [Americans for the Arts, "Reports 673,656 Businesses Involved in Creation or Distribution of the Arts"](#)

⁴ [Americans for the Arts, "Statement on Arts Jobs and the Economy"](#)

THE FUTURE

The arts and culture sectors are constantly evolving, shaped by demographic shifts, technological change, and new models of engagement. Its continued vitality depends on the ability of managers and leaders to build organizations that are resilient, innovative, and connected to their communities. Employment in arts and culture continues to grow, and opportunities now extend far beyond traditional institutions to include digital platforms, creative industries, and cross-sector collaborations.

Tomorrow's leaders must be able to balance mission with financial sustainability, respond to changes in audience behavior, and integrate new technologies thoughtfully. They must also approach their work with a commitment that ensures the arts remain accessible and relevant to diverse communities. These responsibilities require training, critical thinking, and a professional skill set that goes beyond passion for the arts alone.

Graduate education in arts management provides that foundation. Students learn to navigate budgets, marketing, fundraising, governance, and strategy, while also engaging with questions of cultural policy, creative innovation, and public impact. Professional associations such as the Association of Arts Administration Educators (AAAE) in North America and ENCATC in Europe highlight the growing global network of programs and practitioners committed to advancing the field. Through study, mentorship, and practical experience, graduates are prepared to take on leadership roles that shape the cultural sector for decades to come.

The future of the arts will be defined by change, but also by opportunity. As new forms of practice emerge and audiences find fresh ways to connect, the need for skilled managers will remain constant. Those who combine cultural insight with organizational expertise will be the ones to guide institutions, foster innovation, and ensure that the arts continue to enrich society on both local and global scales.

MAM students visiting Christie's at the Network New York event, Fall 2024.



ABOUT CMU MAM

Arts managers make a difference — and a living.

Arts and cultural institutions need leaders who combine creativity with strategic insight. The Master of Arts Management (MAM) program at Carnegie Mellon University prepares students to meet the complex challenges of cultural sector and ensure that the arts continue to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

The program brings together the creative excellence of the College of Fine Arts and the analytical strength of the Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy. This partnership equips students with the skills to make informed decisions, lead teams effectively, and build organizations that are both financially sustainable and artistically vibrant.

The Master of Arts Management (MAM) program combines rigorous coursework in data analysis, financial management, and leadership with industry-based projects and experiential learning opportunities. Over two years, students engage with world-class faculty and professionals through study trips to Washington, D.C., New York City, and Cleveland, as well as summer internships at renowned institutions such as the Aspen Music Festival, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Students also complete capstone projects that address real-world challenges for clients including the American Alliance of Museums, the Kennedy Center, and The Heinz Endowments. In addition, many gain research experience through the Arts Management and Technology Laboratory (AMT Lab), which investigates emerging intersections between technology, creativity, and management.



Arts Management & Technology Laboratory

Carnegie Mellon University



MAM students on a trek to Downtown Pittsburgh, Fall 2024



MAM students attending a guest speaker lecture, Spring 2025



MAM students advocating for the arts in Washington, D.C., Spring 2025

ABOUT CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

At Carnegie Mellon University, we strive for transformative impact on society through continual innovation in education, research, creativity, and entrepreneurship.

Consistently ranked among the world's top universities, Carnegie Mellon is recognized for its leadership in computer science, engineering, business, and the arts. Through a dynamic and interdisciplinary approach to learning, our students gain deep expertise, creative confidence, and the ability to lead with purpose in an evolving world.

The Master of Arts Management (MAM) program at Carnegie Mellon University is offered as a joint degree between the H. John Heinz III College of Information Systems & Public Policy and the College of Fine Arts (CFA). Through this collaboration, students benefit from CFA's internationally recognized programs in design, drama, music, art, and architecture while simultaneously developing quantitative, analytical, and managerial expertise in arts organizations.

If you would like more information, please feel free to email the program director

Jessica Bowser Acrie jabowser@cmu.edu

or visit our website <https://www.heinz.cmu.edu/programs/arts-management-master/>

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