

OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN



**Provost
Executive Search
Otis College of Art and Design**

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Position Narrative

OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Otis College of Art and Design is a leading private art and design college, known and respected for its outstanding students, alumni, faculty, staff, and its creative, collaborative, and agile culture. The College has a history of experimentation and innovation in art and design education.

Established in 1918 as Los Angeles' first professional school of the arts, [Otis College of Art and Design](#) is a national leader in academic excellence and professional preparation of artists and designers.

The College serves nearly 1,200 students, awarding Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degrees in [Architecture/Landscape/Interiors](#), [Communication Arts](#) (that includes Graphic Design and Illustration), [Digital Media](#), [Fashion Design](#), [Fine Arts](#), [Product Design](#), and [Toy Design](#); and Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degrees in [Fine Arts](#), [Graphic Design](#), and [Writing](#). Numerous Areas of Emphasis within majors, minors, and core programs such as Foundation, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Creative Action further support the College's mission to prepare students to enrich the world through their creativity, skill, and vision. Otis College Extension offers certificate programs as well as personal and professional development courses.

The College's reputation attracts students from over 35 states and from countries all over the world, including China, Mexico, Iran, South Korea, Vietnam, Canada, and more. Thirty-two percent of the Fall 2018 entering class came to Otis from another country—making Otis College one of the most diverse art and design colleges in the United States. In fact, Otis ranked in the top 1% of all colleges and universities in the nation in diversity by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Taught by a community of renowned and accomplished faculty committed to student success, Otis has trained generations of artists who have been in the vanguard of cultural and entrepreneurial life. The College's alumni are well represented at leading museums and prestigious collecting institutions throughout the world: the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Guggenheim Museum in New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles; the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and many others. Otis-educated designers shape the visual world and their impact is felt from the products people use to the built environments they live in, and from the clothes people wear to the toys that influence children's development through play.

Otis students are passionate and highly motivated. They care deeply about academic success and about success beyond graduation. Ninety percent of students are employed or in graduate school within one year of their Otis education. Since 1918, Otis graduates have made individual, positive, and lasting marks on the world. Alumni are cultural leaders who can be found working around the world in companies like Disney and Pixar, Mattel, Sony Pictures, Nike, and The Gap. Imagine the Oscar ceremonies without its golden statuette, *The Sound of Music* without its costumes, *The Lord of the Rings* without its visual effects, Avatar without its trademark blue alien skin, or the Getty without its famed garden, and you will have a sense of the world without the College's alumni.

Otis College of Art and Design, a private, nonprofit institution of higher learning, is accredited by WASC Senior College and University Commission and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). Otis is a member of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD).



OTIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN (CONTINUED)

The five-acre Elaine and Bram Goldsmith Campus on the Westside of Los Angeles houses nearly all of Otis' programs, along with the Ben Maltz Gallery, the Millard Sheets Library, and state-of-the-art labs and shops. The Goldsmith Campus is anchored by Ahmanson Hall, the converted 1963 futurist IBM Aerospace building, famous for its computer punch card window design, and the neo-modernist Galef Center for Fine Arts. Situated in the Westchester neighborhood, with the Graduate Fine Arts Studio in Culver City, Otis College of Art and Design is a critical focal point for art and design education in Los Angeles, the creative capital of the 21st century with an economy that exceeds \$1 trillion.

Since 2007, the College has commissioned the [Otis Report on the Creative Economy](#), an invaluable tool to assess the tremendous economic impact and influence of the area's creative sector on the economy.

Otis College of Art and Design students and faculty distinctively benefit from the College's location in Los Angeles, one of the world's most internationally diverse cities and the creative capital of the Pacific Rim. Los Angeles has a vibrant arts, design, entertainment, communication, theater, and media community featuring hundreds of cultural centers, academic institutions, and creative and communication businesses. Innovation is one of the city's hallmarks and exemplified by Silicon Beach, home to over 500 start-ups that include media, entertainment, and fashion companies. Otis College is a critical component of the creative fabric of this continually evolving city, and its alumni and faculty are key contributors to the creative economy in Los Angeles, and globally.



For more about Otis College of Art and Design,
please visit: <https://www.otis.edu>

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This is a pivotal moment for Otis College of Art and Design. The College maintains an exceptional reputation, however, like many 4-year institutions of higher learning, Otis faces several challenges to sustaining its success, including greater competition for top-quality students, tuition-dependency, and rising operating expenses. At the same time, recent leadership changes have led the College to a transitional period, inviting new opportunities for innovation and change-leadership with the advantages of a strong tradition of academic excellence.

To help shepherd the College to its next era and beyond, Otis seeks a visionary academic leader to serve as its next Provost. The successful candidate will bring an inclusive and facilitative leadership style that inspires and empowers the campus community, encourages open communication and collaboration across the College, and fosters innovation, while sustaining the differentiating features that make Otis unique, such as:

- its highly diverse student body (one of the most diverse in the AICAD);
- being the only art/design school situated within Los Angeles (a creative capital, and home of the influential Report on the Creative Economy);
- its graduates' notable career preparedness: 90% are employed within 1 year of graduation, and 92% of those are in the field the graduates studied at Otis;
- its core Foundation program, which serves all incoming first-year students with a transferrable skill-building curriculum that prepares students for all majors offered;
- its core integrated learning program, Creative Action, focused on mentorship, collaboration, and site partner relationships for real-world problem solving through art and design;
- its strong sense of community, small average class size, and many opportunities for close student/faculty interaction; and
- its distinguished educational and student support programs, and the distinguished faculty and staff behind them.



Working with academic and administrative leadership, faculty, students, and Trustees, the Provost will help the College strengthen and align its academic vision for the future, engage the campus community in that vision, further distinguish the College from its competition, and position it for continued and heightened success.

The Otis College community encourages critical-thinking and innovation, and with its tradition of a nimble, open, and non-hierarchical culture, growth and change through shared governance can happen quickly. This is an exceptional opportunity for a proven leader to build on Otis' rich history, foster community alignment, inspire and enact collaborative change, and make a lasting impact for one of the nation's leaders in art and design education.

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the President, the Provost serves as the Chief Academic Officer of the College, responsible for the quality of its academic programs and faculty. The Provost provides leadership for all academic areas consistent with the mission, goals, and values of the College and its newly completed [2019-2024 Working Strategic Plan](#). As the intellectual leader for Academic Affairs, the Provost specifically leads the development, supervision, and conduct of all academic programs, ensuring and supporting the achievement and fulfillment of academic excellence across all programs and departments.

The Provost oversees the academic integrity of the College and provides leadership in long-range academic planning, budgeting, curriculum/program development, assessment and accreditation, academic support services, and divisional personnel. More specifically, this position requires oversight of an \$18 million plus budget, and the ability to lead a direct/indirect staff of approximately 500 (including part-time staff and faculty). The ideal candidate will be a future-focused problem-solver with an eye toward innovation, new ways of educating students, and consultative change leadership. Unless otherwise directed by the Board of Trustees, the Provost serves as the acting chief executive officer in the absence of the President. The Provost also serves on the College's Senior Leadership Team. Read more about [Otis' President](#) and [Senior Leadership](#).

Internally, the Provost will work closely with academic and administrative leadership and staff, establishing policies and meeting strategic goals, providing clear direction and ensuring effective implementation of the College's educational mission. Externally, the Provost will serve as a lead spokesperson for Otis to all audiences, and will work to strengthen and expand relationships important to the College.

All of this shall be accomplished with a high level of professionalism and integrity, a transparent, team-oriented and collaborative style, a passion for the mission of Otis and a commitment to identifying, embracing, and sharing appropriately with others opportunities for change that will help the College move forward.

Key areas of responsibility for the next Provost will include:

Providing academic vision and strategic leadership:

- Lead educational program and academic policy development and regularly advise the President and Senior Team on these matters as they pertain to strategic plans and campus initiatives.
- Represent Academic Affairs on the Senior Team, and collaborate with the President and Senior Team members to meet, develop, and implement institutional strategic plans consistent with the institution's planning cycles.
- Advocate for student success, academic integrity, and the academic mission as central tenets in the operation of the College.



POSITION SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

Sustaining and supporting a vibrant culture of faculty and academic staff:

- Promote consultative and integrative academic leadership that fosters college-wide teamwork, diversity, equity, and inclusion, workplace effectiveness and morale, and sustainable institutional operations.
- Provide leadership, support, coaching, and guidance to the leaders of academic programs and support services, including Chairs, Directors, and the Provost's Office staff.
- Lead open, transparent communications with academic leadership, keeping Chairs and Directors informed on the condition of the College and on relevant factors, trends, issues, and activities.
- Manage, with hiring departments, faculty communication, contracts, compensation, welfare, services, and collective bargaining needs.

Building a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community:

- Provide leadership around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and promote increased cultural sensitivity and understanding among faculty and academic staff.
- Support further diversification of the staff and faculty including, but not limited to, identities of race, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and national origin.
- Enhance support services and curricular innovations that take into account different perspectives, student demands and experiences, and teaching methods.
- Support ongoing diversity training and professional development for faculty and staff and build administrative structures and policies that ensure accountability.
- Work with campus leaders and faculty to weave diversity, equity, and inclusion into the curriculum and embed it in all parts of the institution.

Supporting a diverse, collaborative institutional culture with strong shared governance:

- Provide guidance, support, clarity, and visibility for the College's system of shared governance. Counsel the Academic Assembly and Faculty Senate, and interact productively with the various faculty governance committees.
- Support Chairs and Directors in their recruitment, selection, supervision, professional development, and evaluation of faculty, and the enhancement of diversity within the curriculum and faculty.

POSITION SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

Providing operational and administrative leadership and support for Academics:

- Deploy resources effectively, efficiently, and fairly, working with Chairs and Directors to balance workload and effort, and provide regular feedback so academic leaders can continuously improve their supervision and mentoring skills.
- Oversee budgets, space planning, implementation, and monitoring of academic programs and academic support areas. Ensure balanced budgets and the financial well-being of academic operations to support short- and long-term goals.
- Oversee the College's assessment practices and sustain its high accreditation status.

Representing Otis effectively with external constituents:

- Represent the College as its chief academic officer in the community with consortia, professional associations, conferences, openings, and other functions; assist with fundraising proposal development, donor cultivation, and solicitation, as needed.



CANDIDATE PROFILE

The successful candidate for this position will be an inclusive, collaborative, and proactive leader and experienced educator with the professional experience and leadership attributes to inspire respect and shared vision among multiple campus constituencies. The Provost will bring demonstrated ability in academic administration and vision-building with ten or more years of relevant academic leadership experience, and many, if not all, of the following qualifications and attributes:

Visionary and strategic academic leadership

- Intellectual vision, a record of successful strategic thinking and collaborative implementation, and the ability to inspire a campus community to strive to fulfill its educational mission.
- Exceptional deductive reasoning, critical thinking, analytic, strategic planning, and synthesis skills, with the intellectual curiosity and willingness to encourage and champion innovation, and the ability to generate buy-in and develop consensus and excitement for new ideas that support and advance the mission of the College.
- A forward-thinking educational outlook that embraces diversity, inclusivity, sustainability, instructional technology, and a wide range of traditional-to-progressive pedagogies.
- Demonstrated success in bringing a holistic and strategic perspective to investigations, plans, decisions, and programs and to consider their impact on the College's overall health and sustainability, in addition to situational factors.
- An understanding and appreciation of the power of art and design to drive positive change in the world and the willingness and desire to promote extraordinary opportunities for learning and to serve as a thought leader in art and design education.
- A keen awareness of and appreciation for the full spectrum of visual arts, design, literary, and liberal arts, and for inter- and trans-disciplinary learning strongly desired.
- A progressive leader, with a commitment to transformative education that encourages and ensures the development of visual literacy, innovation, art/design skill-building, creative and intellectual risk-taking, and the creation of transformative work by students and faculty.
- An honest, trustworthy, accountable leader, with a deep passion and drive aligned with the mission, goals, and values of Otis College.



CANDIDATE PROFILE (CONTINUED)

Faculty and academic staff support and guidance

- Background in effectively managing and motivating large teams, with the ability to mentor, inspire, and empower faculty and staff with respect, support, and kindness.
- Experience and a track record of success in attracting, recruiting, developing, retaining, and leading a diverse group of top academic talent who work in alignment with the overall mission of an institution.
- Demonstrated success in discerning and advocating for faculty concerns and interests while balancing the overall needs and mission of the College.
- An accessible, facilitative leadership style, characterized by integrity, high emotional intelligence, intellectual curiosity, creativity, commitment to transparency, collaboration and fairness, productive capacity, and the ability to balance these with occasional needs for expediency, decisiveness, and accountability.
- A calm, consistent, and inclusive servant-leadership style that inspires confidence in others and promotes workplace effectiveness and morale.



Demonstrated ability to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community

- A strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion that is modeled, demonstrated, and acted upon in all aspects of academic endeavors, including diversity hiring.
- Cultural humility and a commitment to equity and social justice. Track record of success in fostering a positive culture and workplace morale within a complex organization, respecting and promoting diversity of all kinds.



CANDIDATE PROFILE (CONTINUED)

Ability to support a diverse, collaborative institutional culture with strong shared governance

- A deep understanding of and commitment to the value and benefits of shared governance. A leader who understands how the inclusion of campus constituents improves an institution, and who systematically communicates and effectively participates in the College's system of shared governance.
- A student-centered approach, and a leader who sees students as individuals, listens to their concerns and needs, considers the potential impact (positive or negative) of decisions made by the College upon the student experience, and helps the College develop strategies that put it ahead of competitor institutions.
- The ability to function as a catalyst, coach, and doer, guiding people at all levels of the College by utilizing a collegial and input-rich decision-making and governance process; ability to recognize and respect existing talent and vision, as well as adeptness at leading others through process rather than by mandate.
- Character and substance: a person with the highest ethical and professional standards, as well as the ability to manage sensitive, controversial, nuanced, and confidential issues and matters with tact, diplomacy, and discretion.

Academic operational and administrative excellence

- Experience with and knowledge of the changing ecosystem of higher education, evolving academic standards in the context of accelerating change/ accountability, and a track record of measurably elevating the academic stature of institutions. Prior leadership experience within a tuition-driven institution desired.
- Excellent organizational, administrative, technological, and project management skills, including the ability to diagnose critical areas that require attention, assimilate information quickly, synthesize multi-channel input to arrive at resonant conclusions, accurately represent such conclusions to a variety of audiences, and translate them into strategies and achievable steps. Prior experience successfully leading an organization through alignment, change, and/or growth highly desired.
- Business acumen and solid financial grounding. Track record of effective budget planning and maintenance, and resource and space allocation, with the ability to identify and explore opportunities to increase operational efficiency and diversification of revenue sources.
- Familiarity and experience with best practices in assessment and accreditation in higher education and the sustaining of a strong culture of evidence.

CANDIDATE PROFILE (CONTINUED)

Communications and External Relations

- Demonstrated experience in successful influence and negotiation, resulting in consensus among disparate internal and external groups with varying perspectives.
- Outstanding communications and interpersonal skills to serve as an enthusiastic and credible ambassador for the College, with proven ability to nurture relationships with internal and external constituents and educate, influence, and motivate key audiences.

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

A terminal degree or its equivalent is required, preferably in art, design, or art/design administration.

PROCEDURE FOR CONFIDENTIAL CANDIDACY

Submit resumes or nominations, with assurance of confidentiality, to Berkhemer Clayton, Inc.:

Ben Lambert
Senior Vice President
Head of Higher Education & Nonprofit Practice
213.621.2105
ben@berkhemerclayton.com

or

LB Baer
Senior Associate
310.595.6672
lb@berkhemerclayton.com



COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Otis College of Art and Design and Berkhemer Clayton, Inc. are committed to a process of diversity and inclusion. We welcome all qualified candidates for consideration.

Otis College of Art and Design is an Equal Opportunity employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic which may be specified by law or college policy.

