



# TOM O'CONNOR

## CONSULTING GROUP

### **National Black Theatre** **Director of Development**

Position Profile

January 2025

## Director of Development

### Position Profile

**NATIONAL  
BLACK  
THEATRE**

### About the Opportunity

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National Black Theatre (NBT) seeks a Director of Development with an energetic, entrepreneurial attitude, a collaborative spirit, and a well-founded dedication to and excitement for the mission of this organization. With a firm knowledge of the performing arts landscape in New York City and the funding and donor community that supports it, this leader will be a key contributor to the organization's forward momentum. They will join NBT at a critical moment, as the team completes a historic capital campaign and prepares to open their new arts complex on 125<sup>th</sup> Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Harlem in 2026. Responsible for setting and managing an annual fundraising plan, the Director of Development will oversee two to three staff members and fundraising consultants. Reporting directly to Chief Executive Officer Sade Lythcott, the incoming leader will have the opportunity to celebrate the strength of the organization's stature in Harlem, its commitment to Black artists and storytelling, and its longstanding leadership.

The successful candidate will have the following strengths:

- **Capacity to shepherd direct reports and senior leadership through fundraising efforts.** An expert project manager and relationship builder, this person will bring confidence and a collaborative spirit to the role as they guide team members, engage outside consultants, and work with leadership to try out new ideas and establish best practices for NBT going forward.
- **Demonstrated experience in establishing and managing a pipeline of individual donors.** This Director of Development should arrive with an understanding of all aspects of fundraising, but with an expertise in building individual giving programs and cultivating stronger relationships with individual donors at all levels of involvement, from board members to major donors, to new and sustaining contributors.
- **Flexible determination to see through various projects from initiation to completion.** They will bring a fresh perspective on how to establish systems and structures to advance internal operations, energize the Board, pursue new funding relationships, implement donor events, and keep fundraising communications on track to meet annual goals.
- **Deep respect for the remarkable legacy and potential for the organization.** Upon arrival to the team, this leader will dive deep into the history of NBT, its founder Dr. Barbara Ann Teer's approach, and the company's progress over 50+ years. Celebrating the past and supporting the organization through its evolution and its

move into the new space will be an essential part of the role. They will need to both honor the culture of the organization and be part of building the next chapter.

Overall, this position has the chance to elevate NBT's development approach in many ways and to extend its artistic reach for years to come. It will require equal parts creativity, flexibility, and persistence.

## About National Black Theatre

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National Black Theatre (NBT) was founded in 1968 by Dr. Barbara Ann Teer, an award-winning performer, director, visionary entrepreneur, and champion of the Black Arts Movement. NBT has broken ground as the country's first revenue-generating Black art complex, as the longest-running Black theater in New York City, as acquirer of the largest collection of Nigerian New Sacred Art in the Western Hemisphere, and as one of the oldest theaters founded and consistently operated by a woman of color in the nation.

More than five decades after its founding, NBT's core mission remains the same: to be the premier producer of transformative theatre — theatre that enhances African American cultural identity by telling authentic, autonomous, multifaceted stories of the Black experience. NBT is envisioned as a means to educate, enrich, entertain, empower, and inform national consciousness around social justice issues that impact our communities.

In 2023, NBT made its Broadway debut with the co-production and transfer of *FAT HAM*, making it the third Black theatre company in the history of 'The Great White Way' to do so. Additionally, NBT has been included in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C.

Holding tight to the founding principles of ownership, self-determination, and human transformation, NBT continues to reach brand new heights with over 350 original theatre works, many of which have toured world-wide, including a partnership with the National Black Theatre of Sweden. The work and accomplishments of NBT have solidified its position at the leading edge of Black theatre development, production and innovation, activating resources for the entire arts sector. NBT is an AEA Equity house and a member of Theatre Communications Group, A.R.T./New York, Harlem Arts Alliance, and the Coalition of Theatres of Color.

Under the current leadership of Chief Executive Officer Sade Lythcott, daughter of the beloved Dr. Teer, and Executive Artistic Director, Jonathan McCrory, NBT remains anchored in the Liberationist spirit of the past, tapped into the beating pulse of the present, and serves as a catalyzing force for our collective creative future.

# Job Description

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NBT seeks a Director of Development who can envision a long-term approach to fundraising, while also setting and reaching tactical, practical benchmarks. At this transitional moment for the organization, this leader will take the work already started to the next level of sustainability and maturity. The responsibilities of the role include:

## Organizational Leadership & Strategy

- Collaborate with the CEO, COO, and Executive Artistic Director to create a holistic, multi-year strategic fundraising plan, which maps the goals for sustaining and growing the organization's portfolio of contributed income streams through government, foundation, corporate, and individual funding and/or sponsorships
- Understand the organization's planned growth in the coming years, from a budget of \$4.5M to \$6M+ once the building opens, to ensure that contributed revenue strategies dovetail with approaches to and goals for earned income
- Work with the Marketing Director to develop strategies that expand institutional/brand awareness through membership programs and donation opportunities, community relations, speaking engagements, awards applications, etc.
- Strategize with the Finance team to create and manage the annual development budget and articulate which projects and line items to target for fundraising appeals
- Assess the operations of the development team and consider how the department may evolve and grow when possible

## Fundraising

- Create and execute fundraising plans that grow NBT's individual donor base through identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship
- Build structures and practices for all members of the team to cultivate major gifts and oversee the solicitation of ongoing support via direct mail and digital giving
- Plan and manage both recurring and one-time events that intersect with NBT's programming while currently itinerant, to engage existing and potential donors
- Begin the planning and management of events that will draw in funders, donors, and sponsors and celebrate NBT's community during the opening year of the new space
- Coordinate with NBT's artistic/production team to connect and engage current and potential donors with the creative process and the development of NBT's projects
- Oversee institutional giving efforts by collaborating with NBT's external fundraising consultants, Latz & Co. to grow and support the current pipeline of institutional (foundation, government, and corporate) funders
- Maintain and improve the department's systems to submit funding applications and reports
- Partner with NBT's CEO and COO to strengthen relationships with government agencies, elected officials, and other public funders
- In collaboration with NBT's CEO and capital campaign consultant, act as a leader in the final stages of this \$90 million capital campaign (of which more than two-thirds

- has been successfully raised), engaging the campaign consultant, managing donor cultivation, and soliciting gifts
- Identify corporate sponsorships and other dedicated funding opportunities to support the opening of NBT's new space
  - Supervise NBT's Development Manager and Coordinator as a coach and mentor, creating a positive team atmosphere and building opportunities for professional growth
  - Strategically plan for growth in the development department, as the budget size and needs of the organization increase
  - Ensure that the development team is operating efficiently to complete ongoing tasks associated with prospect research, gift acknowledgements, and other donor processes

### Board Development

- Collaborate with NBT's Leadership Team and Board Chair to create a plan for growing and activating NBT's Board of Directors
- Serve as a key liaison to the Board, keeping them informed and engaged on a number of fronts, including the cultivation of new donors and Board members
- Establish and manage a Development Committee of the Board

### Organizational Cross-collaboration

- Maximize NBT's use of a new CRM (Raiser's Edge) to track contributions and communications with donors of all types and to create monthly, quarterly and annual reports, monitoring the financial results of fundraising activities for review by the Finance and Senior Leadership Teams
- Communicate with the finance staff to generate timely, accurate reports on fundraising goals and progress toward them
- Oversee the gathering of information and materials for grant proposals, reports and updates, and ensure grant compliance and delivery of expected grant outcomes
- Work with NBT's external fundraising and PR consultants and in-house marketing staff to tailor collateral and communications campaigns to current and prospective donors, utilizing tools like NBT's e-blasts/newsletters, website, and social media

### **Qualifications:**

- Progressive experience in development, including significant time maintaining productive working relationships with board members, donors, and community members
- Deep appreciation/enthusiasm for the mission, history, and culture of National Black Theatre
- Knowledge of and experience in the New York City performing arts landscape
- Comfort and confidence in talking about and asking for money
- Eagerness to learn about NBT's organizational development and a thoughtful understanding of how to build a culture of philanthropy in line with the organization

- Demonstrated ability in building, cultivating, and sustaining relationships over time, and collaborating with senior leadership on relationship management
- Experience using a CRM, creating dashboards, and running reports to fully leverage a donor database
- Demonstrated experience conceptualizing, executing, and adapting lessons learned from fundraising events
- Exposure to the planning, execution, or completion of a capital campaign
- Solid understanding of budgeting principles
- Adeptness for project and people management and demonstrated investment in the professional development of team members
- Strong planning and organizational abilities
- Excellent persuasive writing and editing skills, as well as a keen attention to detail
- Excellent verbal and interpersonal skills
- Excellent computer skills including proficiencies in Microsoft Office and Google Suite

**Not sure you meet 100% of our qualifications?** Research shows that cis men apply for jobs when they fulfill an average of 60% of the criteria, while others tend only to apply if they meet every requirement. **If you believe that you could excel in this role, we encourage you to apply.**

We are dedicated to considering a broad array of candidates, including those with diverse workplace experiences and backgrounds. So, whether you're returning to work after a gap in employment, simply looking to transition, or taking the next step in your career path, we will be glad to have you on our radar.

Please use your cover letter to tell us about what you hope to bring to this role.

## Compensation

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This is a full-time role exempt from overtime, reporting to the CEO. The salary for this role is \$125,000 - \$150,000. Benefits include medical, vision, and dental insurance; and access to flexible spending accounts, a 401(k) account, and an annual wellness stipend after a year of employment. NBT provides team members unlimited planned time off, 10 days of unplanned time off, and supports professional development opportunities when possible. This position is currently hybrid and requires being in person in the office in Harlem with regularity. Occasionally, there will be a need to work on weekends and in the evenings in order to participate in NBT programming or cultivation events.

## Application Instructions

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The Director of Development search is being conducted on behalf of National Black Theatre by Tom O'Connor Consulting Group, a New York-based executive search and consulting firm specializing in the arts and culture industries. The search is being led by Search Consultant Brenna Thomas, in consultation with and support from the TOCG search team.

To apply, visit the [online application](#) and submit your materials. Your cover letter should include any training or experience relevant to the job profile that you would like to highlight, why you consider yourself a good fit for this opportunity, and anything else you'd like us to know about your qualifications that may not be present in your resume.

**The priority application deadline for this search is January 31, 2024.** Applications received by this date will receive priority consideration. While we will still accept and consider applications after this date, we encourage you to apply as early as possible for the best chance at being considered for the position. Please note that meeting the priority deadline does not guarantee an interview.

National Black Theatre (NBT) is an equal opportunity employer.

National Black Theatre recruits, employs, trains, compensates and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, veteran status, and other protected status as required by applicable law.