OPEN POSITION

Title: Director of Beacon Press
Reports to: UUA Executive Vice President
Location: Boston, MA
Updated: February 23, 2022

Purpose

As the chief executive of Beacon Press, the Director oversees the Press’s staff, operations, planning, and production to ensure that the books and authors the Press puts into the culture affirm and promote the Principles and Purposes articulated by the Unitarian Universalist Association in an appropriate and effective way, and that the Press has the structures, practices, relationships, and resources necessary to sustain its work.

Responsibilities

1. Leads overall planning and operations of Beacon Press, in collaboration with the senior executives on the Beacon Leadership Team (BLT), to achieve the Press’s publishing mission in alignment with its values and in a sustainable manner. Supervises the Beacon Leadership Team and an assistant.

2. Working closely with the Editorial Director, oversees acquisitions and the editorial process to ensure that the Press is publishing books that affirm and promote the shared mission of the UUA and Beacon Press; that authors represent the values embodied in that mission and respected within their fields; and, that agreements and contracts are aligned with the Press’s mission, ethics, and values.

3. In collaboration with the CFO, oversees the business, budgeting, and financial management of the Press with strategic, informed, and ethical practices. Manages and maintains external relationships with distributors, vendors, suppliers, collaborators, and others to ensure the Press has the partnerships needed to produce, market, and sell its books.

4. In collaboration with the Associate Publisher, keeps abreast of trends and developments in the larger publishing industry, including technological innovations, new competitors, potential allies, vendors, retailers, and the book media. Identifies threats and opportunities for the Press, and develops strategies to mitigate risks and take advantage
of new developments. Engages the Beacon Board of Advisors in strategic and generative conversation about Beacon’s role in the publishing environment.

5. Acts as a public representative of Beacon Press to raise the Press’s profile and builds strategic relationships with other authors, agents, and sellers. Participates in publishing industry events and organizations.

6. Working with the BLT, creates an inclusive and respectful workplace in which staff members are skilled and capable of meeting the needs of the Press; they have the resources needed to do their work (including training and professional development); and, in which staff members are supported and valued. In collaboration with UUA Human Resources, updates and manages workplace policies.

7. Reports to the leadership of the UUA on the operations, financial, and cultural health of the Press. Helps engage other staff groups within the UUA, serves as a member of the UUA Staff Group Directors’ Council, and reports annually at General Assembly to the UU community on the mission work of the Press.

Qualifications

Qualifications may be met through lived experience, volunteer work, professional experience, and/or formal or informal training. Requirements include:

• 10+ years of relevant professional experience in book publishing and media, with a strong background in nonfiction publishing, acquisitions, and marketing.

• 5+ years of experience in management and supervision, with prior executive-level experience in a mid-size or larger organization expected (e.g., supervising other supervisors). Demonstrated ability to lead diverse, high-functioning teams is required, as is experience in leading culture change to support organizational diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion efforts.

• Expresses personal and professional commitment to the inclusive, equitable, and justice-oriented values of the UUA, including an eagerness to work in an organization in which the dismantling of white supremacy and patriarchal cultures is a high priority. Worked or lived experience with communities of color or Indigenous peoples is of particular value.

• Outstanding skills in written and verbal communication, especially with political, social, and ethical ideas. Strong editing and manuscript development skills are highly valued.

• Exceptional professional skill set in leading institutions and organizations to become more just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive. Commitment to creating an open, equitable, and supportive workplace is required.

• Successful experience in strategic planning, budgeting, evaluation, and goal setting is expected.

• Exceptional personal and professional ethical standards.

• Demonstrated ability to exercise clear leadership in complex and fraught environments. Strong emotional intelligence and good listening skills are required.
• Bachelor’s degree expected, and master’s degree in a relevant area preferred (e.g., business, literature, nonprofit management, etc.) or possess other applicable professional, educational, and lived experience.
• Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Word), and able to use other online platforms including Zoom meetings.
• Ability to travel as required to the annual General Assembly and other professional meetings or publishing events (estimated at 10% travel).

Applications

Applications for this position are considered by invitation only, as there is a strong internal candidate. To inquire, send cover letter and résumé—indicating “Director of Beacon Press Inquiry” in the subject line—via e-mail to careers@uua.org, via fax to (617) 948-6467, or to Human Resources, UUA, 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. E-mail inquiries preferred.

Support for the Mission and Values of the Association

The Unitarian Universalist Association is a progressive and historic religious denomination. While it is not generally required or expected that an applicant/employee identify as a Unitarian Universalist (UU) or be a member of a UU congregation in order to work at the UUA and Beacon Press, all UUA and Beacon Press staff members are expected to perform their job duties in accordance with the UUA’s values, principles, and mission. In particular the following points, drawn from the Seven UU Principles, are of particular importance for the UUA’s work environment and staff culture:

• The inherent worth and dignity of every human being: We affirm the need for a human-centered workplace that allows our diverse staff to flourish. We also understand that our wider culture and society oppresses and denies human dignity, and we seek to counter the effects of that oppression in our hiring and workplace culture so that each person feels whole and valued.
• Justice, equity and compassion in human relations, and the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all: We speak openly and publicly of our support for social and political issues, including LGBTQ equity, racial justice, climate justice, gender equity, and reproductive justice.
• The interdependent web of existence: We recognize that the liberation of all people is interwoven, and we work to counter patriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, environmental exploitation, and other interrelated systems of marginalization.