

Downtown Boston Business Improvement District

Job Title: Director of Placemaking & Events
Reports to: President
Position Status: Full-Time, exempt

Position Description:

The Downtown Boston Alliance (DBA) seeks a high-performing, creative, and operationally excellent leader to shape and deliver the programs, markets, events, and seasonal experiences that make Downtown vibrant, welcoming, and full of life.

The Director of Placemaking & Events oversees more than 100 annual activations—including major festivals, cultural celebrations, pop-ups, and holiday experiences—and leads the strategic development of new offerings that reflect Boston's artistic and cultural energy. Critically, this role is responsible for designing and debuting new event types that yield operational revenue for the organization. The role blends vision with disciplined execution: designing memorable public experiences while building systems, workflows, and staffing models that improve quality, efficiency, and impact year over year.

The Director will lead a nimble team of full-time staff, contractors, and co-producers; manage vendor and municipal relationships; and work closely with the DBA's Operations and Economic Development departments to advance DBA's mission through public experience.

About the Downtown Boston Alliance (downtownboston.org):

The Downtown Boston Alliance was created by property owners committed to achieving the district's full potential as a premier and vibrant destination. Our mission is to significantly improve the experience of all who live, work, visit, go to school or shop in Downtown Boston by: (1) providing supplemental services to keep the streets and sidewalks clean, upgrade the aesthetic appearance of the district, and make people feel welcomed and safe; (2) promoting and fostering an energetic and thriving business climate in the area; and (3) serving as the voice and advocate for the district.

Principal Responsibilities:

Placemaking & Event Strategy

- Shape a year-round calendar of signature events, markets, installations, and cultural partnerships that strengthen Downtown's identity.
- Introduce new placemaking concepts, public art activations, market innovations, night-time pilots, and experiences that broaden audience reach.
- Reimagine legacy events as needed to grow attendance, cultural relevance, or economic impact.

Strategic Revenue-Generating Event Development

- Design and debut new event types that can yield operational revenue for the organization.
- Develop events structured around diverse funding models, including, but not limited to:
 - Fee-for-Service Programs (e.g., specialized workshops, exclusive access).
 - Timed/Ticketed Events with set admission costs (e.g., special exhibitions).
 - Corporate Sponsorship Assets (creating events or platforms to maximize sponsor value).
 - Grant-Funded Events (identifying concepts and supporting proposals for government/philanthropic funding).

Production, Logistics, and Systems-Building

- Lead full lifecycle execution of DBA-led and co-produced events: design, permitting, budget management, vendor management, site layouts, safety planning, and day-of operations.
- Create detailed event playbooks, templates, SOPs, KPIs, run-of-show documents, and equipment inventories to reduce friction and improve consistency.
- Establish a post-event debrief process including documentation, data collection, lessons learned, operational improvements, and vendor performance.
- Develop right-sized staffing models, including seasonal staff, interns, production contractors, and co-producers to supplement DBA labor during peak periods.
- Maintain strong relationships with City agencies to streamline permitting, safety planning, and approvals.

Audience Development & Impact Measurement

- Build strategy for audience growth, email list expansion, and visitor segmentation using raffles, QR codes, surveys, and partner marketing.
- Use data to refine programming, marketing, scheduling, and resource allocation.
- Produce simple impact reports showing attendance, audience demographics, economic benefit, and business engagement.

Markets & Vendor Programs

- Oversee DBA's portfolio of markets (arts, food, retail, seasonal) and street vending, including vendor recruitment, contracts, site plans, and compliance.
- Partner with the Director of Economic Development & External Affairs on pop-ups, incubation programs, and emerging retail concepts.

Partnerships & Co-Produced Events

- Build partnerships with cultural institutions, event producers, creative organizations, and community groups.
- Lead DBA's event RFP program, evaluating proposals for quality, logistics feasibility, equity considerations, and community benefit.
- Grow year-over-year anchor events with strong branding and audience loyalty.

Leadership & Team Management

- Supervise the Senior Manager of Destination Events, Programs Associate, and seasonal staff/contractors.
- Manage budgeting, procurement, and vendor agreements in partnership with the CFO.
- Coordinate closely with the Director of Operations on equipment deployment, staging, safety staffing, inventory management, and overall event logistics.
- Work collaboratively with External Affairs department to promote events through earned media, social, press, and digital channels.

Qualifications:

- 6–10 years of experience producing public events, festivals, placemaking activations, cultural programs, or urban public space initiatives.
- Deep experience with operational planning, permitting, logistics, site design, public-realm and revenue-focused events, and vendor management.
- Strong systems builder: able to create templates, schedules, SOPs, KPIs, checklists, staffing plans, and post-event reporting that scale.
- Proven ability to lead teams and people, manage contractors, and solve problems under pressure.
- Calm, diplomatic, and effective with a diverse range of partners and agencies.

- Commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and creating welcoming public space for all.

Logistics & Compensation Details:

- Full-time, exempt with comprehensive benefits.
- Primarily on-site in Downtown Boston; limited hybrid flexibility.
- Requires working outdoors, evenings, and weekends during event periods throughout the year.
- Some bending, carrying, lifting, and outdoor work required.
- Salary range: \$115,000–\$140,000 depending on experience.

Application Process:

- Please email cover letter and resume to: jobs@downtownboston.org with subject line "Director of Placemaking & Events - (YOUR INITIALS)".
- Cover letter should include the answer to this question: "What is a public event that has remained positively etched in your memory after attending and why?"
- Each file name should include applicant's last name
- No phone calls, please

The Downtown Boston Alliance is an Equal Opportunity Employer and greatly encourages candidates of all backgrounds to apply. Diversity of opinions, experiences, and backgrounds is a key and valued component of our work to promote a welcoming, accessible, and inclusive experience in Downtown Boston through an organization that is itself diverse and inclusive.