



Position: Special Events Manager

Reports To: Creative Director

Status: Part-Time Seasonal / Non-Exempt

Contract Dates: January 4 - April 30, 2027

Compensation: \$25/hour

Hours: Hours will fluctuate based on event needs, with a greater time commitment anticipated in the weeks leading up to the event.

OVERVIEW:

The Special Events Manager is responsible for the planning, preparation, and execution of First Stage's annual gala, the Make Believe Ball. Now in its 33rd year, this fundraiser brings together entire families to support our mission of *transforming lives through theater*. Working closely with both the Development and Marketing teams, the Special Events Manager will manage all the necessary logistics to ensure the event runs smoothly. The ideal candidate will be a self-starter with the ability to adapt quickly and work well with internal and external stakeholders.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Planning

- Lead vendor relationships with caterer, DJ, photographers, AV company, and others
- Track event registrations and guest information
- Coordinate all sponsor benefits and track fulfillment
- Procure all raffle baskets and other fundraising elements
- Collaborate with Creative Director to create event materials including presentation, printed program, signage, etc.
- Track expenses to stay within budget
- Work closely with the Director of Production to design the event space and reflect the work of our talented artists
- Design and create additional event décor
- Recruit and schedule event volunteers
- Support fundraising efforts, as needed

Preparation

- Set up online fundraising platform
- Proof and approve all event marketing emails and materials
- Finalize and print all necessary materials related to the event
- Research VIP attendees and create donor profiles
- Finalize volunteer management plan

Execution

- Lead the preparation, load-in, and set up of the venue
- Day-of coordination of the event including vendor and timeline management
- Lead load-out and clean-up process
- Finalize all reports and evaluate event success with the help of the leadership team

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS:

- Experience with large-scale event management is required
- Expert problem-solving skills, especially under pressure
- Excellent attention to detail and time management
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Knowledge of best fundraising practices preferred
- Proficiency in Canva and/or Adobe, Asana, and fundraising platforms is a plus
- Passionate about youth development and committed to the mission of First Stage

TO APPLY:

Send a resume and cover letter to Andrea Klohn, Creative Director, at aklohn@firststage.org with the subject line **Special Events Manager: (First Name Last Name)**. No phone calls please. Application submission period will remain open until position is filled.

ABOUT FIRST STAGE:

First Stage, Milwaukee's premiere non-profit theater for young people and families is a nationally acclaimed professional theater company drawing annual audiences of more than 120,000 people. First Stage's production season includes mainstage shows at the Todd Wehr Theater, as well as our First Steps and Young Company Series of productions at Goodman Mainstage Hall at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center—a total of more than 400 performances annually. First Stage also offers Theater in Education programs, serving 20,000 students in classrooms annually throughout southeastern Wisconsin. The First Stage Theater Academy, the largest and most high-impact training program of its kind in the nation, teaches life skills through stage skills to nearly 2,000 young people ages 3-18 each year. For more information about First Stage, including current updates on our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion work, please visit www.firststage.org.