SKIDMORE
C O L L E G E

POSITION PROFILE

Director of Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship in the Schupf Family IdeaLab

September 2022

About Skidmore College

Creativity is at Skidmore's core; it empowers the community to combine multiple ideas and look at the world from a wide range of perspectives. Founded in 1903 by Lucy Scribner, Skidmore College has always taken a different approach to college education. Lucy believed that education should put academic theory and creative expression into practice—what she called the "mind and hand" philosophy. Skidmore's early curriculum blended the practical, the creative, and the aesthetic. Today, "mind and hand" manifests itself in our interdisciplinary courses and experiential learning opportunities, many of which are offered within the Schupf Family IdeaLab. To this day, the College seeks to prepare graduates to continue their quest for knowledge and make the choices required of informed, responsible citizens.

Skidmore is a highly selective private, coeducational, and nationally ranked liberal arts college situated on 1,000 acres of natural beauty in Saratoga Springs, New York. Skidmore currently enrolls approximately 2,700 undergraduate students from 44 states and 60 countries. The College is nationally recognized for its commitments to affordability and value, sustainability, healthy community, and academic excellence.

Skidmore's students study in 44 degree programs, including programs in traditional liberal arts and pre-professional disciplines. Interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning are a hallmark of Skidmore, advanced through the program of the Tang Teaching Museum and in interdisciplinary programs in Media and Film Studies, Black Studies, Documentary Studies, and Arts Administration, and, of course, the IdeaLab.

Consistent with its educational mission, the College's current Strategic Plan has articulated four main priorities: (1) integrative learning and education within a teacher-scholar/artist model; (2) accessibility; (3) well-being; and (4) sustainability. In working toward these goals, the College has adopted a new curriculum (including required courses that center the themes of power and justice), and a new Racial Justice Initiative. Skidmore College is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive community in which members develop their abilities to live in a complex and interconnected world. The College strives to create a socially just world that honors the dignity and worth of each individual and seeks to build a community centered on mutual respect and openness to ideas—one in which individuals value cultural and intellectual diversity and share the responsibility for creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment.

About the Schupf Family IdeaLab

The Schupf Family IdeaLab serves as a hub for cross-disciplinary innovation and for creating connections between communities both via making and via curricular innovation. The Schupf Family IdeaLab is a **physical space** where teams of students, staff, and faculty can gather to program, prototype, and model their ideas. It is equipped with state-of-the-art tools for making, a lab manager who oversees the space's making equipment, and a staff of students. The IdeaLab is located on the ground floor of the new Center for Integrated Sciences and is within feet of Scribner Library, the campus center, the Tang Teaching Museum, and most academic buildings. The Schupf Family IdeaLab is also a **curricular home** for innovative pedagogy that has its own course designation for courses that disrupt conventional models of pedagogy. IdeaLab courses reimagine student/professor dynamics, explore new and emerging fields, investigate the spaces between disciplines, and play with the basic structure of the college learning experience. IdeaLab receives regular budgeted support from Skidmore College and there are other College sources – including those provided through a generous gift from the Sands Family Foundation Initiative for Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship at Skidmore – from which additional funding may be sought to support IdeaLab's mission.

As described in its mission statement, "The Schupf Family IdeaLab is a community hub where all are welcome to (imagine and) fashion something new—to take risks, to play, to collaborate, to disrupt existing paradigms, to fail without fear, and to explore the limits of possibility." The Schupf Family IdeaLab is a nexus for experimentation, innovation, failure, and triumph. It is a model of collaboration and creativity, both in the classroom and outside of it. Over the past six years, The IdeaLab Steering Committee -- comprising a rotating team of faculty from all divisions, the College Librarian, and the Dayton Director of Skidmore's Tang Teaching Museum -- has prototyped the IdeaLab and built a community of faculty, staff, and student collaborators who engage with making in our space and with imagining new ways of teaching and collaborating via our IdeaLab innovative pedagogy curriculum.

What Sorts of Things Does the IdeaLab Support?

IDEALAB COURSES

IdeaLab courses can be ephemeral one-offs or standards within the curriculum:

Berlin Wall: German professor Petra Watzke and Theater professor Garett Wilson once collaborated on a one-off course on the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall -- students created, decorated, and then destroyed a literal wall that obstructed a major campus walkway.

On the other hand, some IdeaLab courses are now part of the curriculum:

Study and Struggle: This course is an abolitionist reading group that meets in the campus chapel and is co-taught by professors from Psychology and Religious Studies. It is offered with the support of the Mississippi-based political education and abolition project called Study and Struggle; topics and readings change semester-to-semester in response to political, economic, social, and activism-relevant factors. This course includes many disruptive pedagogical approaches. For example, there is no homework, and instead all participants engage in real-time student-professor co-learning.

Gardenside: This course is taught by staff in the Sustainability Office. Students engage in a co-living "experiment" (i.e., they live in the same dorm), engage in academic scholarship related to sustainability, and do hands-on work in the campus garden.

PourMore Skidmore Lava Project: This course explores lava from both a geologic and artistic perspective and is co-taught by professors in Geosciences and Art. Students learn to turn basalt into lava and use the lava to conduct scientific and artistic experiments!

MAKING IN THE CLASSROOM

Many professors include making projects within their classroom, whether or not their courses are listed as "official" IdeaLab Courses. Some recent projects include courses where students used a RISOgraph to generate complex prints; generated 3-D print objects via calculus equations; created altered books so that the books themselves communicate about scientific findings from the psychology of reading; screen printed political protest signs in French; created banners and heraldry for a LARP-based gamified history course focused on the history of the year 1190; recreated ancient coins as part of the class "Dominatrix: Influential Women in Antiquity."

OTHER IDEALAB PROJECTS

IdeaLab supports many other initiatives to promote innovation, creativity, and making.

Faculty Collaboratives: Faculty from different areas are compensated to engage in creative and disruptive collaborative endeavors.

Pop-up Makerspaces: Faculty and staff are invited to host pop-up makerspaces around campus, including a pop-up electronic noisemaking event in a main campus dining area, a pop-up "fruit" printing event in the campus center, and an outdoor succulent potting event!

Activism "Hour": The Schupf Family IdeaLab hosts a weekly "hour" (in addition to standard drop-in time, when all students are welcome) specifically to support student activist groups in making.

Independent Student Projects: Students are also invited to work on their own, personal projects. One learned to sew sanitary pads for girls and women for her social enterprise that focused on strategically addressing the issue of period poverty. Another student worked on an agrimonitoring system to yield an inexpensive means to consolidate, analyze, and transmit data from instruments. A student digitized an image from pre-Columbian pottery into a quilted square.

The Opportunity
Director of Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship

Skidmore College invites nominations for, and inquiries and applications from, individuals interested in serving as the Director of Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship in the Schupf Family IdeaLab. Skidmore College seeks for its inaugural IdeaLab Director a compelling advocate for creativity, innovation in teaching and learning, and inclusive community building.

The inaugural Director will have a unique opportunity to shape the IdeaLab and maximize its impact in advancing Skidmore's mission of fostering creativity. The mission of the Director of Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship in the Schupf Family IdeaLab is threefold: promoting making (broadly construed), fostering innovative pedagogy across campus, and overseeing the infrastructure and administration of the Schupf Family IdeaLab.

The Director will report to the Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs and be a member of the VPAA Senior Staff. In turn, the Director will be supported by (1) the IdeaLab Manager, who handles the equipment and training on equipment within the Schupf Family IdeaLab; (2) the Faculty Curriculum Liaison, who will serve as a bridge between faculty and the director in supporting innovative pedagogy; (3) an Administrative Assistant for logistical and administrative tasks; and, (4) if the Director desires it, a multi-disciplinary Advisory Board, whose members can provide advice and act a sounding board.

KEY JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

Promoting Making across Campus

The Director will work with students and faculty to imagine how making -- broadly construed -- shapes teaching and learning across fields and disciplines. They will invite the Skidmore community to work at the Schupf Family IdeaLab to create both curricular and extracurricular projects. They will bring makers, thinkers, activists, and others to campus to hold workshops and collaborate with staff, faculty, and students. The Director will:

- Collaborate with students, faculty, and staff to help support making, prototyping, and innovation.
- Provide support to faculty who are integrating making or design-thinking methodologies into their coursework (with the IdeaLab Manager providing technical support for these projects).
- Coordinate logistics for and assist with workshops, events, and activities for faculty, staff, and students to engage in new ways with creativity, making, innovation, and entrepreneurship broadly construed.
- Invite makers, activists, thinkers, and others to campus for events that promote making, creativity, innovation, and/or design thinking.
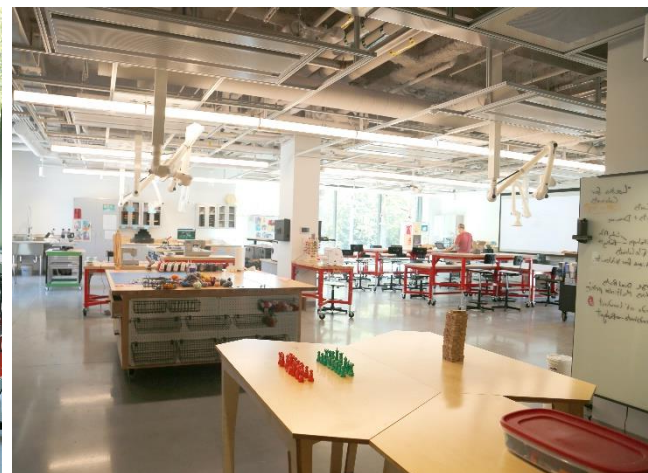
Fostering Innovative Pedagogy

The Director will collaborate with a faculty curriculum liaison and with faculty throughout the College on developing and running new courses that reimagine the methods of teaching and learning. These pedagogical collaborations among students, faculty, and staff may involve making directly, or may disrupt the traditional college classroom in other ways. For example, IdeaLab courses must disrupt power dynamics within the classroom, traditional disciplinary boundaries, and/or traditional classroom practices (e.g., temporal format, spaces for learning), etc. The Director will:

- Create opportunities for innovative pedagogy development.
- Provide support to faculty who are integrating innovative pedagogy into their courses.
- Coordinate and provide support for faculty who are teaching IL-designated (i.e., IdeaLab) courses.
- Oversee and promote the creation, scheduling, and running of all IL courses.
- Allocate a portion of the IdeaLab annual budget toward efforts to increase innovation in pedagogy.

Overseeing the Administration of the Schupf Family IdeaLab

The Director will supervise a small staff and will need to coordinate and partner with the many different individuals who will utilize the tools and resources available through the Schupf Family IdeaLab. Partners may include faculty offering innovative pedagogy courses; faculty assigning projects supported by the IdeaLab; students completing course projects; student workers; clubs offering extracurricular projects; and faculty, students, and staff offering workshops. The Director will be responsible for developing a financial and logistical plan for the space. The Director will work actively with relevant campus constituencies to help secure additional funds to support innovative IdeaLab initiatives. These may include working with prospective donors, writing grant proposals, and collaborating with Advancement and Alumni Relations. The Director will be charged with creating a space that welcomes and supports all identities and disciplines through outreach and community-building programs. The Director will:

- Supervise the IdeaLab Manager.
- Supervise the IdeaLab Administrative Assistant.
- Work with staff to plan purchases.
- Work with staff to oversee the IdeaLab facilities and maintain a safety plan.
- Work with the IdeaLab Manager and existing creative/prototyping spaces on campus to coordinate equipment resources.
- Participate in relevant professional development opportunities.
- Track expenditures and manage an operating budget including materials, student workers, workshops and events, and innovation grants.
- Oversee campus-wide publicity and communications.
- Produce annual reports.
- Recruit and welcome faculty, staff, students, and community members to the Schupf Family IdeaLab.
- Seek external funds and engage in fundraising and friendraising.

QUALIFICATIONS

We acknowledge that candidates will have particular strengths among the qualifications below -- no candidate is likely to be expert-level for all the qualifications below. Please use your application materials to highlight your qualifications and strengths.

- Relevant experiences could include, but are not limited to, work in the areas of innovative thinking, makerspaces, making/artistic production, entrepreneurship, community engagement and/or organizing, design thinking, and/or engineering.
- Graduate degree preferred but not required.
- Familiarity with making, broadly construed.
- Experience mentoring and advising, broadly defined.
- Documented success running a significant or meaningful project, including resource allocation, prototyping, and planning for the future.
- Fundraising or grant-writing experience at any scale.
- Ability to welcome and motivate different communities.
- Ability to design programming that centers equity and justice.
- Experience with teaching and learning, broadly defined.
- Expertise managing logistics and budget.
- Ability to foster and facilitate collaborations.
- Ability to advance college's and IdeaLab's DEI missions.
- Evidence of intellectual curiosity and interest in multiple disciplinary fields and/or media.
- Ability to disrupt or revise existing structures or processes.

COMPENSATION

Starting salary is $100,000 to $110,000; generous benefits provided.

Procedure for Candidacy

Skidmore College, in consultation with Summit Search Solutions, Inc., will begin a confidential review of application materials immediately and continue until the position is filled; parties who apply by **October 24, 2022,** will be given first consideration. All applications and nominations will be held in confidence.

MATERIALS TO BE SUBMITTED

Cover Letter: In the cover letter, please include information that may not be highlighted elsewhere in your application, and that will help the search committee evaluate your experience with making/prototyping, your curiosity across disciplines/fields/media, your experience with leading and managing projects, and/or your relationship to teaching/learning/mentoring/advising. If you can react to, connect with, or get excited about elements of the IdeaLab Director position, this is the place to do so! **To assist the search committee in understanding and evaluating your candidacy, please fully address the following topics in your cover letter:**

1. Your ability to imagine/create/grow/develop/disrupt an enterprise. Please describe a project that did so and highlight your contributions over time. Please explain your involvement in the many phases that a project goes through (e.g., idea, fundraising, prototyping, planning for the future), and about your ability to work collaboratively and inclusively.
2. Your interest and experience in making (broadly construed). This could include your experiences in or thoughts about makerspaces, making/artistic production, entrepreneurship, community engagement and/or organizing, design thinking, craftivism/activism, recreational making, and/or engineering.
3. Your interest in innovative teaching, broadly construed. This could include classroom instruction and/or curricular development, grassroots information sharing, non-classroom sharing of knowledge and resources, and/or inquiry-based community building.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) statement: Please describe how your experience supports IdeaLab's goals of creating physical and intellectual spaces that center equity and justice. Skidmore's community of students, staff, and faculty represents diversity across a wide range of identity categories, and a successful IdeaLab director will create a welcoming and supportive environment for all members of the community in the IdeaLab.

Curriculum Vitae: Please attach your curriculum vitae (CV). Given the cross-disciplinary nature of the position, you are encouraged to include all relevant information or experiences. This may include "traditional" CV materials (such as positions and appointments, conference presentations, publications, patents, etc.) but can also include any other information you deem relevant (e.g., artistic hobbies, leadership of groups, mentorship, funding secured, software skills, technical skills, service, and administrative duties, etc.). **In addition to candidates with formal training and education in making, we also invite applications from candidates whose qualifications for the position come from both their professional and non-professional (extra-curricular) background.** If your managerial, making, fundraising, collaborative, and/or teaching background comes from experiences that might not be on a standard academic CV, please include them.

To apply online, go to: https://theapplicantmanager.com/jobs?pos=su328

For more information or to offer recommendations:

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Skidmore College is committed to being an inclusive campus community and, as an Equal Opportunity Employer, does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, predisposition or carrier status, domestic violence victim status, familial status, dating violence, or stalking, or any other category protected by applicable federal, state or local laws.

Summit Search Solutions, Inc. is a boutique executive search firm dedicated to serving the education and nonprofit sectors nationwide. Summit has a team of experienced recruiting consultants in strategic locations across the country including California, Kansas, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, and Utah.

About Saratoga Springs and the Capital District

Skidmore College is located in **Saratoga Springs, NY** with a population of over 26,500, nestled in the foothills of the Adirondacks just 30 miles north of Albany, NY. Faculty and staff of the College typically live in and around Saratoga Springs and the surrounding Capital District. The downtown is full of restaurants (top five in the US for restaurants per capita!), shops, spas, galleries, hotels, and venues like **Caffè Lena**, where Ani DiFranco and Bob Dylan got their starts. Congress and High Rock Parks host some beautiful but aggressive ducks, a few of the **mineral springs** the city became famous for during the 19th century, a historic carousel, and a **farmer's market**. Just west of downtown lies the **Beekman Street Arts District**, which is home to additional restaurants, galleries, shops, and the historic **Frederick Allen Lodge**. A major draw during the summer are the horse races at the **Saratoga Race Track**. The races go from mid-July through Labor Day. On the southern edge of the city is Saratoga Spa State Park, where the **Saratoga Performing Arts Center** (SPAC) is located. SPAC is the summer home of the Freihofer's Saratoga Jazz Festival, New York City Ballet, and the Philadelphia Orchestra. SPAC also hosts a number of Live Nation Concerts (Rock, Country, and Hip Hop) and is the venue for Skidmore commencement each May. Skidmore College's **Zankel Music Center** also hosts a number of performances and events. Nearby is the **Saratoga National Historic Park**, site of the Battle of Saratoga, as well as Saratoga Lake. With the Adirondacks nearby, there are plenty of opportunities for outdoor recreation. Lake George and Lake Placid are short drives away. For skiing, Whiteface and Gore Mountains in New York are nearby, as are Killington and Mount Snow in Vermont. Saratoga Springs is part of the Capital District metropolitan area, home to over 1.1 million residents. Albany, Schenectady, and Troy form the Tri-City core of the region. The region boasts a number of museums and major performance venues (e.g., the Egg, the Palace Theatre, Proctor's Theatre, and the Times Union Center). CDTA runs buses throughout the region which are free to ride with a Skidmore ID. Albany International Airport is served by a number of different carriers. The Capital District is also served by Amtrak (with stops in Rensselaer-Albany, Schenectady, and Saratoga Springs) with service to New York City, Montreal, Boston, Chicago, Toronto, Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, and Niagara Falls. Within a three-hour drive are New York City to the South, Rochester to the West, Montreal to the North, and Boston to the East.

Click here to learn more:

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Discover Saratoga: *https://www.discoversaratoga.org/*
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