

James W. Johnson

LETTER OF INTEREST



Dear Mr. D'Albor,

I am writing to express my interest in serving on the City of Santa Fe's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC). I am a Santa Fe resident and the Executive Director of Make Santa Fe, a nonprofit community makerspace dedicated to workforce development, entrepreneurship, and creative economic growth.

In my role at Make Santa Fe, I oversee a multidisciplinary organization that sits at the intersection of skilled trades, advanced manufacturing, arts and culture, and technology. Our programs support individuals and small businesses through hands-on training, access to tools and infrastructure, and pathways into sustainable careers. My work primarily focuses on fabrication, digital manufacturing, and creative production. I work closely with artists, fabricators, entrepreneurs, educators, and public partners to translate creative potential into real economic opportunity.

My professional background spans nonprofit leadership, arts administration, workforce training, and technology-driven small business development. Through this work, I have seen firsthand how thoughtful economic policy, early stakeholder engagement, and strategic investment can directly impact local businesses, job creation, and long-term resilience. I am especially interested in contributing to discussions around workforce development, small business support, creative industries, and emerging technologies—areas that I believe are essential to Santa Fe's economic future.

I am drawn to EDAC's role in advising elected officials early in the policy process and helping shape recommendations that balance economic growth with community values. I bring a practitioner's perspective to this work, grounded in day-to-day operational experience, fiscal responsibility, and collaboration across sectors. I am comfortable working in advisory and governance settings and value clear process, transparency, and constructive dialogue.

I would be honored to contribute my experience and perspective to the Committee in service to the City of Santa Fe. Thank you for your time and consideration. I have attached my resume for your review and would be happy to provide any additional information if helpful.

Creative Work Portfolio: <http://thejameswilliam.com>

Website Company Portfolio: <https://mind.sh/are/projects/>

James W. Johnson
Developer, Designer and Creative

James W. Johnson

RESUME



Work Experience

James W. Johnson is the Executive Director of Make Santa Fe and CEO of Mindshare Labs, with more than a decade of experience building organizations at the intersection of workforce development, creative industries, and technology. He leads multidisciplinary teams supporting small businesses, artists, fabricators, and entrepreneurs through hands-on training, access to shared infrastructure, and pathways to sustainable economic participation.

James holds a BFA in Theatre and Art from the University of Idaho and has designed or built over 150 theatrical productions nationwide. His background in large-scale fabrication, project management, and production design extends to installed art, sculpture, fine furniture, cabinetry, and custom fabrication. This experience that informs his practical understanding of skilled labor, manufacturing workflows, and creative enterprise.

Over the past decade, his career evolved into nonprofit leadership and economic systems-building. Through Mindshare Labs, James has helped nonprofits, cultural institutions, and educational organizations strengthen their impact through digital platforms, fundraising systems, and operational tools. He has led marketing, development, and business strategy initiatives, and brings a strong understanding of how policy, infrastructure, and early-stage investment shape local economic ecosystems.

Oct 2022 - Present

Executive Director, Make Santa Fe

- Develop and institute fundraising efforts through grants, service contracts, and other donations.
- Manage all finances and spending as directed by the Board of Directors.
- Oversee and lead all fabrication and service contracts.
- Design and implement marketing strategies that promote the organization.
- Serve as a key point of contact for program-related outreach and engagement.
- Manage the physical maker space upkeep and building.
- Oversee staff and volunteer programming.
- Manage staffing and HR matters.

Jan 2016 - Present

Owner/CEO, Mindshare Labs, Inc

Mindshare's ambition is to create a more meaningfully interconnected world through technology. As owner, I am driven by the belief that the world can be a more open, collaborative, and fluid place through better online experiences. My goal as the company leader is to collaborate with organizations working to improve our world. I do this through empathetic consultation, human-centric systems design, and best-of-breed technologies. We work with arts, education, social justice, and climate change-related organizations.

Jan 2012 - Present

Scenic Designer & Fabricator, Freelance

(see next page for scene design experience)

As a scenic designer, my ambition is collaboration. I strive to work with my fellow artists to tell stories that matter at a specific place and moment. I strive to find a personal connection to my work. My work coalesces in a design package that effectively communicates my designs through graphic representation, physical and digital modeling, and highly detailed drafting. I utilize my ancillary skills as a fabricator, programmer, and multidisciplinary artist to find solutions for the team that uplift the stories we're striving to tell.

*BFA Theater Arts
University of Idaho*

Core Skill Competencies

Economic & Workforce Development

- Workforce Training Program Design
- Creative Economy Development
- Small Business & Entrepreneur Support
- Skilled Trades & Advanced Manufacturing Pathways
- Nonprofit Leadership & Organizational Development

Production, Fabrication & Manufacturing Systems

- Multidisciplinary Design & Fabrication Workflows
- CNC Manufacturing (Drafting, Programming, Production)
- Digital Fabrication (Laser Cutting, 3D Printing, CNC Routing)
- Metalworking & Welding (Production & Prototyping)
- Wood Manufacturing & Fine Fabrication
- Machining & Lathe Operations

Design, Planning & Technical Communication

- Drafting & Technical Design Documentation
- 2D & 3D Modeling, Visualization & Rendering
- Production Planning & Build Coordination
- Graphic Design & Visual Communication
- Applied Scenic & Environmental Design

Technology & Systems Development

- Web-Based Platform Development for Nonprofits & Small Organizations
- Custom Software & Workflow Automation
- Programming & Systems Integration (PHP, JavaScript, Python, C++, HTML/CSS)
- Microelectronics & Prototyping (Arduino & Embedded Systems)
- Creative Practice & Applied Arts

References

Vince Kadlubeck

Founder, MeowWolf

Contact info upon request

Colin Hovde

Executive Director

Santa Fe Playhouse



Zane Fisher

Board President, Make Santa Fe



Robyn Rikoon

Artistic Director

Santa Fe Playhouse



