

La Jolla Historical Society

PO Box 2085 | La Jolla, CA 92038-2085 | www.lajollahistory.org
Office & Research: 7846 Eads Avenue | Wisteria Cottage: 780 Prospect Street

Position Announcement

Executive Director

Organizational Profile

The mission of the La Jolla Historical Society is to inspire and empower the community to make La Jolla's diverse past a relevant part of contemporary life, and to serve as a thriving community resource and gathering place where residents and visitors explore history, art, ideas and culture. Founded in 1964, the Society operates a campus of three historic buildings. In addition to Wisteria Cottage, LJHS also operates a 1909 cottage serving as Office & Research Center, and a 1916 Carriage House retrofitted for state-of-the-art archival storage.

This mission-delivery profile of LJHS is structured on six (6) functional areas: exhibitions, educational programs, publications, community events, public accessibility for archival research, and historic preservation. LJHS has built a reputation for collaborative, transhistorical, interdisciplinary exhibitions and programs across arts, humanities, and science fields. Projects range in diversity, from contemporary art to historic preservation, local history to current affairs, the natural to the built environment.

LJHS collects historic photographs, records, artifacts, artworks, architectural drawings, and documents reflecting community heritage, and develops programs and collaborations to link today's audiences with La Jolla's history. This includes rotating exhibitions, adult and youth education programs, collaborative projects with educational and cultural institutions, and annual community events (La Jolla Concours d'Elégance and Secret Garden Tour of La Jolla). LJHS consults with the City of San Diego, the architectural community, and La Jolla property owners on historic designation in the community.

The business model is structured on a program of fundraising that includes membership, contracts and grants, appeal campaigns, special events, and direct solicitations. This diversified revenue structure enables the presentation of content-based educational exhibitions and programs such as lectures, panel discussions, symposia, and presentations offered to the public free of admission charge or at minimal cost.

Position Summary

LJHS is looking for an experienced museum professional to serve as Executive Director. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will serve as a forward-thinking, innovative, and creative chief executive officer with overall responsibility for the execution of the Society's mission. The Executive Director will be committed to museum excellence and best practices, cultivation of multiple stakeholder and constituent groups, and to providing interrelated strategic vision and operational leadership. This is not a position for a traditionally-minded history museum director.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic and Operational Leadership

Responsible for strategy development and implementation, development and fundraising, community relations, curatorial and exhibition-making, educational program development, personnel administration, financial and facilities management, marketing, and archival and collections management.

Able to conceive, articulate, and realize a progressive curatorial vision for exhibitions and programs that is innovative, creative, thought-provoking, and forward-thinking.

Responsible for hiring, tasking, and managing staff employees, independent contractors, volunteer organizers, and interns.

Oversees all day-to-day operations, with a focus on providing quality exhibitions and programs within the framework of excellence in the visitor experience.

Manages communications with stakeholders to articulate a clear vision for programming, financial support, and community partnerships, and ensuring consistency of branding and messaging.

Ensures that the necessary organizational structure, policies, systems controls, and procedures are in place and regularly reviewed for effectiveness.

Meets regularly with the Board of Directors, including with the Executive Committee and other Board-established committees, to report on and coordinate organizational activities.

Fundraising and Financial Management

Partners with the Board to cultivate relationships and financial resources that will ensure the success of the institution.

Cultivates major donors, members, and event volunteer leaders to expand fundraising activities and build financial resilience in support of ongoing programs and operations.

Manages the development of institutional funding sources including government agencies and private foundations.

Manages the preparation of the annual operating budget with the Treasurer and the Finance Committee, and provides quarterly financial reports to the Board.

Oversees the preparations of the annual audit report and 990 tax filings with an independent auditor, and coordinates reporting by the auditor to the Board.

Oversees routine financial transactions and management with the Business Manager, bookkeeper, and accountant, and coordinates liability, healthcare, and collections insurance coverage.

Community Relations and Engagement

Develops an active community presence and relationships to foster opportunities for new initiatives and partnerships that build connections, support increased attendance and membership, enhances organizational reputation, and strengthens the fabric of social and cultural organizations in the San Diego community.

Uphold the Society's commitment to embed equity, diversity, and inclusion in programming and outreach including, but not limited to, free public access to the Society's archives and research collections. This commitment includes programming that challenges structural inequalities and promotes constructive dialogue around issues related to marginalized communities.

Actively engages with a comprehensive network of museum professionals, independent curators, and arts and culture sector practitioners by hosting and participating in relevant meetings and convenings that share sector trends and current best practices.

Develop local networks in the arts and culture community to identify and cultivate collaborative programs with independent curators and institutional partners.

Experience and Qualifications

Required

- Graduate degree in History, Museum Studies, Curatorial Studies, Cultural Studies, Interdisciplinary Arts and Humanities, or a related field.
- Professional experience of at least 10 years, with recent experience at the senior management level, in museums or arts/cultural sector organizations.
- A seasoned professional with multiple literacy skills: social, cross-cultural, business, civic, programmatic, media.
- Agility to oscillate between and interrelate strategic direction and operational management.
- A mindset of cross-disciplinary and collaborative thinking.
- An appetite for innovation and new ideas in a progressive museum practice.
- Advanced critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Experience and enthusiasm for working with a wide variety of public constituents; excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Enthusiasm for participating in a wide range of organizational functions.
- Experience managing staff, independent contractors, volunteers, and interns.
- Proficiency with MS Office suite.

Preferred

- Familiarity with DonorPerfect and PastPerfect.
- Knowledge of the local and regional community and its history.

Salary and Benefits

Annual salary: \$85,000-\$90,000. This is an exempt, full-time position. Benefits include medical and dental insurance, 10 days annual vacation per year for years 1-2 of employment increasing thereafter, 8 days medical leave, and 12 paid holidays.

Equal Opportunity

The La Jolla Historical Society is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status. The Society is dedicated to diversity in all forms in its staffing and governance, as well as in its accessibility policies, to create and promote an inclusive organization and community.

To apply

No later than May 31, 2021 email letter of interest, resume, and three professional references in Adobe PDF format to hfox@lajollahistory.org using the job title and your name in your subject line (example: "Executive Director – Jane Smith"). All attachments should be submitted with applicant's first initial and last name included in the file name (for example "J.Smith Resume"). Interviews will be held during May and June, and the position start date is anticipated to be not later than August 1, 2021.