



POSITION DATA:

JOB TITLE: Head of Conservation
DEPARTMENT: Collections
REPORTS TO: Executive Vice President of Collections & Chief Curator
CLASSIFICATION: Exempt
DATE: April 2022

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Head of Conservation (hereafter, HC) holds a senior strategic position in the Museum Division which encompasses Collections, Exhibitions & Education, and manages all conservation-related activities, staff, and contractors.

The HC is responsible for the physical integrity, overall care, and treatment of the collection of the 9/11 Museum. The 9/11 Museum's holdings are diverse and include art and artifacts in a wide range of media, including metals, textiles, print and digital photographs, moving images, ephemera, and plastics. Some exhibit damage sustained on 9/11, which is a part of their historical and interpretive significance. Many objects in the collection are commemorative in nature. The collection also includes in-situ building elements of the World Trade Center and archeological fragments.

As leader of the conservation team under the Collections Department, the HC will have the opportunity to envision new strategies and refine existing methods for the long-term care of historic holdings that encompass complex practical, ethical, and philosophical conservation issues—some unique to a memorial museum that documents and presents evidence of a recent traumatic disaster. This role will also provide expertise to support acquisitions, loans, exhibitions, and other undertakings fundamental to the Museum's operations, building on a strong culture of internal teamwork between Curatorial, Registration, Exhibitions, Education, and Buildings & Grounds colleagues.

The HC will be committed to researching the unique challenges of the collection and to the development of the Museum's conservation staff. The HC will seek to advance scholarship about the care of memorial-focused collections and maintain the Museum's leadership in this area, through publication and presentation of their own work and that of the conservation staff. This role requires a people-centered colleague able to collaborate across sectors of the institution, and confident when interacting with a variety of stakeholders from the diverse 9/11 community. These include donors, survivors, first responders and victims' relatives. The HC will also communicate well with students and scholars, the broader public including Museum visitors, and the press as needed.

This is an exempt, full-time 40 hour/week position and work will take place during business hours. However, with advance notice, schedules sometimes may be adjusted to accommodate special projects which involve early morning or evening hours.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Develops plans and implements long-term strategies for the sustainability of the Museum's multi-media holdings in compliance with the Museum's Collections Management policy and accepted professional standards, inclusive of the AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice.
- Represents the Museum's conservation program to donors, co-workers, the museum and conservation communities, the press when asked, and to the public through tours, research talks, publications, and participation in other professional activities.
- Advises on the documentation and treatment of collection objects in all media, recommending and overseeing work by outside conservators and consultants when necessary. This includes adherence to safe procedures for handling items exposed to World Trade Center dust in compliance with the Museum's internal Operations and Maintenance plan.
- Performs a full range of technical examinations of works of art and artifacts in area of specialization to identify their structure and components; determines their condition and devises the appropriate conservation treatment procedures to be performed.
- Acts as the expert voice on preventative practices for stabilizing and extending the physical well-being of wide-ranging collections, including mitigating external risks, optimizing storage and display procedures, and defining environmental conditions.
- Monitors procedures for the care of collection materials and proactively recommends improvements or policy development, also looking for opportunities to implement more environmentally sustainable practices.
- Annually sets department priorities and manages workflows for the Museum's conservation staff [currently an Associate Conservator and two conservation technicians, as well as volunteers and interns.]
- Prepares and oversees the annual budget pertinent to the Museum's anticipated conservation activities and facility needs.
- Authors reports and informational memoranda pertaining to vulnerable collection items or other preservation concerns.
- Administers cross-departmental projects involving, or likely to impact the in-situ archeological structures of the World Trade Center, particularly an extensive fragment of the site's original Slurry Wall.
- Works closely and collegially with Curatorial, Registration, Exhibitions, Communications, Institutional Advancement, and Buildings & Grounds personnel and provides content for these teams as needed.
- Encourages the professional growth and well-being of conservation staff through active mentoring, departmental and personal goals setting, regular check-ins, and two-way feedback.

- Fosters conservation education and development through such activities as hosting interns, teaching, and participation in professional activities, as schedule permits.
- Solicits quotes, evaluates estimates, and manages vendors for conservation and collection care projects.
- Advocates for pertinent conservation and object-handling trainings, equipment purchases, and upgrades.

REQUIRED SUPPORT FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EVENTS

- Participate in the Annual 5K Fundraiser and September 11th Commemoration.
- Assist with other special projects and events in support of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum mission, as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

- Graduate degree in conservation or preservation required.
- Professional Associate or Fellow status within AIC preferred.
- Minimum of 7-10 years of conservation and administrative experience working with museum-quality objects and historical media. Conservation experience should include significant research, publications or other scholarly work, and expertise treating modern media.
- Advanced knowledge of conservation ethics, principles, and techniques, as well as awareness of and commitment to professional museum best practices through membership in professional organizations and attendance at meetings, workshops, and seminars.
- Conversant with analytical methods and recent technologies in the field; knowledge of or interest in digital preservation a plus.
- Prior management of safety, environmental, and OSHA regulatory compliance for laboratory work and methods for working with hazardous materials.
- Ability to write clearly and concisely, including experience with grant writing and management.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively supervise and mentor conservation staff, interns, fellows, and volunteers.
- The incumbent should be detail oriented, flexible, and resourceful; a team player who embraces the collaborative benefits of museum work while excelling as a manager of independent museum projects and assignments.
- Experience managing multiple concurrent exhibitions and projects while maintaining flexibility with shifting priorities/deadlines.
- Value trust, transparency, and differing perspectives and communication styles.
- Commitment to advancing the organization's mission.

HOW TO APPLY

- Include position you are seeking in the email subject field.
- State the location where job posting was seen.
- Send resume and cover letter to 911mmcollectionsjobs@911memorial.org.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS/WORK ENVIRONMENT

The physical demands and work environment described in this job description are representative of those that the employee will encounter and are expected to meet to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is required to see, be mobile, and have the ability for 2-way communication with the public and staff.

The work environment is an indoor, climate-controlled office environment comprised of cubicles, walled-offices, and group conference rooms. The noise level in the office environment is typically low. Employee will be required to comply with organizational Health and Safety Plan. Minimal travel is required.

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- This job description is a descriptive list of the responsibilities and qualifications associated with this position and are not intended to be all inclusive. Employees are expected to also perform other business- related duties as assigned by the supervisor or other management.
 - The organization reserves the right to change, modify, or reassign job responsibilities, duties, and scheduled work hours as per business needs.