ByalaSearch LLC

VICE PRESIDENT OF EDUCATION AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

ByalaSearch LLC is pleased to announce that our firm has been retained by The Chicago Architecture Center to identify candidates for the position of Vice President of Education and Audience Engagement.

ABOUT THE CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE CENTER

The Chicago Architecture Center is a nonprofit cultural organization with tours, exhibitions, programs and events for all ages. The mission is to inspire people to discover why design matters. The CAC is the leading organization devoted to celebrating and promoting Chicago as a center of architectural innovation. As Chicago’s forum for the exchange of ideas on urban design, the CAC inspires people to participate in the building of vibrant communities and to demand the highest standard in urban design. The CAC awakens young people to achieve their potential through the discovery of architecture, engineering and design.

The CAC was founded in 1966 as the Chicago Architecture Foundation to save the historic Glessner House. Since then, the CAC has grown to become one of the largest cultural organizations in Chicago. For more than 50 years, its educators, volunteer docents, and guest services volunteers have shared the stories of Chicago architecture with millions of visitors. In 2018, the CAC served over 600,000 people.

The CAC has an annual operating budget of $26 million, a staff of 75, over 1500 volunteers, and nearly 13,000 members. The 35-member Board of Trustees consists of some of Chicago’s leading civic, business, and philanthropic leaders. Proceeds from the CAC’s admissions, tours, store, and venue rentals, as well as grants, sponsorships, and donations, support our mission.

At this time of transformation for the organization, the primary goals are to redefine the visitor experience through both youth and adult programming, increase awareness, and drive attendance to its new center.

On August 31, 2018, the Chicago Architecture Center opened its new location, 111 E. Wacker Drive. Called “The latest jewel in Chicago’s architectural crown” by the Chicago Tribune, the CAC features more than 8,000 square feet of vibrant exhibitions, including:

- Building Tall - Located on the second floor of the CAC, in the stunning Drake Family Skyscraper Gallery, Building Tall is filled with supersized scale models of famous skyscrapers from Chicago and around the world.
- Chicago Gallery – this space teaches how Chicago became the “city of architecture, It allows exploration of the stories of five evolving neighborhoods, experiencing Chicago’s residential architecture, and discover architects who shaped the city and view new up-and-coming projects
- The Chicago City Model Experience - the star attraction in the Chicago Gallery tells amazing stories of the city through more than 4,000 buildings and interactive elements.
- From Me to We: Imagining the City of 2050 - What will urban life be like in 2050? Several local architects offer insights and predictions for a future Chicago.
The new CAC builds on our already-outstanding reputation in Chicago as the provider of quality programming on the built environment, including:

- 85 different tours offered by expert docents nearly 7,000 times per year: boat, walking, bus, “L” train and bike
- Workshops, programs, competitions, and mentoring that engage over 30,000 students, educators, and families.
- Lectures, members-only events, classes for adult learners and much more, inspiring new ways to stay engaged with Chicago’s built environment. Large-scale events like Open House Chicago, a free, two-day architecture festival that offers behind-the-scenes access to more than 250 buildings in Chicago neighborhoods.

**Overview of Education and Audience Engagement at the CAC**

The Education department serves 30,000 youth, educators and families each year through a robust portfolio of program offerings across . Programs range from light-touch introductory experiences, workshops and field trips, to multi-day educator trainings and a fellowship program.

**Teen Academy Programs**

The CAC’s Teen Academy provides teens with authentic experiences in architecture, construction, engineering and design. Offerings scale from introductory to immersion programs to help students develop critical skills in ACED fields and create career pathways for teens.

- **Career Pathway Studios** – A series of studios lead in partnership with local design professionals on skills such as sketching, model building, design thinking and digital design.
- **Teen Fellows** – This immersion experience supports students particularly from underrepresented populations gain access to portfolio building projects, once-in-a-lifetime study trips, and a paid internship at a local architecture, construction, engineering or design firm.
- **Newhouse Architecture + Design Competition** – As CAC’s legacy program, Newhouse partners with teachers to engage students in school to solve real-world design challenges and culminates each spring with awards presented by field professionals.

**Family Programs**

As a national leader in architecture education, the CAC explores the fundamentals of architecture and design through hands-on experience for all ages. Programs are designed to inspire and encourage families to explore the built environment and build together.

- **Studio Programs and Festivals** – Each week the CAC activates the studio and galleries through LEGO building workshops, experiments from our Mobile Architecture Lab, and festival events.
- **Summer Camps** – Camps serve ages 7-14 in week-long explorations of Chicago to inspire teamwork and creative problem solving, build self-confidence and provide communication opportunities
- **GirlsBuild!** – In response to research that girls have been historically underrepresented in STEM fields, GirlsBuild! engages girls ages 11-14 in a design thinking, architecture, and leadership and confidence development while working alongside female, professional role models.

**Educator Institute**

The CAC offers educators unique, in-depth learning opportunities to explore architecture, construction, engineering, design and urban planning. The hands-on training and award-winning curriculum will help
educators use design thinking and the built environment to teach core academic subjects, develop civic identity and inspire future designers.

**Educator Trainings** – Throughout the year, the CAC hosts a variety of dynamic, standard-aligned professional development events for formal and informal educators.

**Education Guides** – The CAC annually trains volunteers as education guides to facilitate student field trips. Trainings involve familiarizing guides to use the design process and questioning strategies to lead successful field trips for K-8th grade students.

**Curriculum** – Educators can access various curriculum developed by the CAC to teach students to read and interpret architecture in the context of where they live and learn. The curriculum engages students in their city while focusing on essential skills and project-based problem solving. ¹

**Volunteers**

The Chicago Architecture Center is powered by volunteers. There are 4 different roles for our volunteers. Docents are skilled ambassadors and educators. They develop and conduct public and private tours and serve as interpreters of Chicago’s architecture and its history. Education Guides facilitate 90-minute field trips for students. These interactive experiences focus on architecture, design and Chicago history. Sessions incorporate hands-on collaboration tools to foster critical thinking in young people. Exhibit Hosts provide guests with an engaging overview of the CAC's exhibitions. Guest Services welcome guests to the CAC and assist visitors as they begin their tours.

**CAC Audiences**

The CAC’s global reach engages a diversity of audiences for its various programs and experiences aiming to exceed expectation. Some audiences including architecture buffs are highly interested in architecture and are seeking the full spectrum of architecture experiences. Others are looking for entertainment, culture, engagement, and fun. Among the CAC’s best champions are the local audience that wants to make sure their out-of-town guests experience the best of Chicago. Our Education programs appeal to families with school-age children that are looking for stimulating, creative activities, and educators looking for ways to incorporate architecture and design into their classroom curriculum. Other key segments of our audience include members, donors, sponsors, and design/construction industry members, whose support and attendance of programs and events at the CAC is instrumental to our success.

**PRIMARY FUNCTION**

The Chicago Architecture Center is seeking a Vice President of Education and Audience Engagement who, building on the organization’s past successes, will strengthen its capacity to continue to lead the way in the built environment. The CAC developed this new position to meet the needs outlined in the new strategic plan. Reporting to the President and CEO, this position is a member of the executive team and will work closely with the President and CEO to ensure the CAC is a leader in innovative education and lead a professional team of creative educators in the 7th highest-ranked visited cultural institution in the city of Chicago, serving nearly 500,000 to 700,000 program participants annually.

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¹ Curriculum includes (a) Schoolyards to Skyline (K-8th curriculum); (b) the Architecture Handbook (9-12th textbook); (c) No Small Plans (6-12th civic action graphic novel); and (d) DiscoverDesign.org an online learning platform where students, teachers and mentors come together to design solutions for real-world challenges. Students can post digital artifacts (photos, videos and links) as they are guided through a structured design process.
These programs serve an audience that includes the general public, local and national educators, students and international/domestic tourists. With a high-caliber docent education and tour program, exciting public programs, and national and internationally recognized youth education curricula, this position is essential to visualizing the health and growth of the organization’s future.

The Vice President of Education and Audience Engagement is responsible for strategizing, resourcing, overseeing implementation and evaluating the continued growth of the CAC’s ambitious youth and teacher education initiatives, community outreach and tour and volunteer training programs. The successful candidate will inspire and manage a committed team of diverse professionals who create high-caliber programs that reflect current principles and national standards for formal, informal and free-choice learning, accessibility, accountability and advocacy.

Specific Responsibilities of the Vice President of Education and Audience Engagement:

The Vice President of Education and Audience Engagement meets and collaborates directly with other senior team members to provide strategic direction, coordinated planning, and internal and external communication for the CAC. This position will work in strong partnership with the President and CEO and collaborate with the senior team. Specific responsibilities include:

Leadership:

- Provide strategic direction for the CAC’s learning initiatives. Create and manage the long term goals in learning implementation and evaluation of education programming initiatives of the organization. Create opportunities for youth to learn about architecture, construction and engineering, and related career opportunities.
- Align the CAC’s programs with the latest ideas on learning. Curate current organization trends; strategize around building innovative programs up to date design education, innovation, creative place making, 21st Century skills, STEM and cultural institution pedagogies.
- Communicate with all areas of the CAC about the department’s strategic direction and initiatives and critical information about education programs in direct reflection of the CAC initiatives.
- Build strategy for docent and volunteer education programs that reflect current community engagement, content approaches and interpretation towards relevant issues and broad dialogue. Find opportunities to integrate volunteer resources throughout the organization.
- Align the CAC programming with audiences and implement innovative ways to fulfill programming to multi-generational constituents. Address and promote the contribution of a diversity of perspectives: cultural, historic and aesthetic. Promote elimination of physical, socio-economic, and cultural barriers. Promote civic engagement based on a broad definition of architecture.

Education and Audience Engagement Program Development and Evaluation:

- Develop curricula goals for youths, families, professionals, tourists, skilled trade workers and the entire spectrum of the CAC’s potential audiences.
With the Exhibitions and Programs Department, develop and integrate education components into the CAC permanent and temporary exhibition programs. In collaboration with Exhibitions and Programs Department, create highly fundable exhibition and educational programs.

Oversee the strategy and development for teen programs.

Oversee the strategy and development of professional development programs for teachers, all school-based programming and programs relating to youth and families, including web-based curricula.

Work with the tour development staff and docents to ensure that the CAC’s tour program is relevant and continues to be a superior, international role-model program.

Evaluate and report program status and achievements, including change in learning, social and organizational outcomes annually. Help realize schools’ core curriculum goals. Act on formative evaluation findings and provide evaluations for future work.

Organizational Representative:

- Develop partnerships with local agencies, businesses, and organizations to create and implement programming. Align with local, national, and international initiatives. Strengthen the CAC’s partnership with the community to better serve key audiences. Build relationships and credibility with schools and school systems.

- Represent the CAC at national and international workshops and conferences to help the organization remain a leader in education, including presentations of its work.

- Serve as the key staff liaison with the Board of Trustees’ educational committee, working with the chair to set the agenda.

- Act as a key player in Association of Architecture Organizations/Architecture + Design Education Network to ensure that CAC’s strong presence

Marketing and Fundraising:

- Collaborate with Development Department on developing funding proposals for current and new large-scale educational and engagement initiatives. Engage donors and steward relationships with current and prospective donors. Ensure that relevant commitments to donors are met. Support development staff in evaluating potential funding sources for departmental programs and activities.

- Ensure that departmental areas have a strong marketing strategy and website presence. Work with development and the management team to build audiences.

- Create and oversee a robust education and engagement evaluation process that evaluates the quality and impact of all learning programs. Develop and implement action steps during and immediately following evaluation.

Ideal Skills and Experience:

- At least 10 years of proven experience in program development in museums or other formal/informal education settings

- Advanced degree in areas like education, museum studies, or in built environments. Successful track record of developing and managing creative programming initiatives

- Strong teaching, writing and presentation skills

- Ability to speak and understand the language and goals of educators and align those with institutional goals; Develop programs with educational standards in mind
- Hands on program and curriculum development
- Staff management of creative, smart, and independent thinkers
- Collaborative and flexible attitude; ability to reprioritize when needed
- Knowledge of program evaluation and metrics
- Volunteer management

**Critical Competencies for Success:**

- A track record of creating and marketing K through 12 programming and sharing it through volunteers, guides and teachers on and off site; develop those relationships through partnerships with school systems and individual schools.
- History of effectively developing and reaching a new audience, leading to increases in attendance and engagement.
- Successful track record in supporting fundraising efforts and the ability to work with Development Department on grant and sponsorship proposals.
- Facility and experience with metrics to use them in the evaluation of program and staff performance.
- Proven experience leading a team to achieving development and executive strategic goals; ability to manage a team to its fullest potential and serve as a situational leader with an internal and external presence.

**Other Characteristics:**

The ideal candidate will have a unique talent for inspiring, motivating and mentoring staff, volunteers and others to achieve new heights of success at a mission-driven organization. He or she will be an exceptional manager with a history of success rallying constituents around a common goal. The candidate will possess a high level of comfort with public relations and public speaking as well as communicating information and program content to a wide range of audiences, from donors and volunteers to the press and the general public via both the written and oral communication skills. He or she will have effective multi-tasking and prioritization skills as well as high efficiency in time management and the ability to meet deadlines under pressure. The candidate should be well-disciplined and an extremely resourceful self-starter with the ability to adapt quickly and make decisions independently in a decisive manner. The Vice President of Education and Audience Engagement must be a passionate supporter of the mission, and demonstrate interest in the built community.

Kindly send nominations or expressions of interest to:

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