



CALIFORNIA  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY since 1871

## Director of Library and Collections Job Posting 5/18/18

### The Position

The California Historical Society (CHS) is seeking dynamic candidates for the position of Director of Library and Collections. The Director is a key leader in the organization, providing guidance and vision for the North Baker Research Library and CHS Collection in alignment with CHS's mission and strategic objectives. Overseeing all programs and activities of the department, the Director is responsible for: staff management; budgeting; collection development and management; processing and cataloging; reference services and public outreach; and digital projects. In collaboration with the Executive Director & CEO, other department heads and staff, the Director will develop creative projects and partnerships to inspire broad public engagement with and increased access to the CHS Collection; energetically pursue new collection development opportunities; and actively engage in fundraising, grant-seeking, and donor cultivation initiatives. Critically, the Director will drive the fulfillment of two primary initiatives in the near future: a) assessment of the Collection's needs and future in [San Francisco's Old U.S. Mint](#) as part of an intensive study of that property as CHS's new home, and b) completion of [Teaching California](#), a collaborative two-year grant project funded by the State of California, designed to offer California K-12 teachers and their students an innovative online collection of teaching resources.

As a key member of the executive team, the Director will participate in formulating strategic direction and ensuring operational alignment of the organization. The position reports to the Executive Director and CEO, and manages a small team of dedicated archivists, librarians, and paraprofessionals.

### About Us

The California Historical Society (CHS) is a non-profit organization with a mission to inspire and empower people to make the state's richly diverse past a meaningful part of their contemporary lives in order to create a more just and informed future. Founded in 1871, CHS maintains a premier collection of original materials documenting the history of California from the Spanish conquest to the present day. The CHS Collection represents the environmental, economic, social, political, and cultural heritage of the entire

state, including materials from outside California that contribute to a greater understanding of the state and its people. Beginning with its founding, and especially since establishing its Yerba Buena District headquarters on Mission Street in 1995, CHS has served residents of the Bay Area, the state, and beyond with its research library, exhibitions, publications, and public educational programs that draw on its important and wide-ranging collections of California history.

Today, CHS is embarking on a four-pronged effort to increase its public accessibility, relevance, and impact through innovative and thought-provoking exhibitions; impactful educational programs for youth and adults; expanded programming in Southern California (where CHS holds significant collections in partnerships with the Autry National Center and the University of Southern California); and a major digital preservation, management, and access initiative. Importantly, CHS has received a major grant from the State of California (through the State Library) to evaluate a relocation to the Old U.S. Mint via a partnership with the City and County of San Francisco.

Together, our small collaborative and dedicated staff is creating an ambitious and exciting future.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Participates with senior leaders, trustees, and board committee members in the formulation and execution of CHS's vision, strategies, policies, and goals.
- Directly supervises collections staff, providing leadership, vision, and professional expertise, managing performance, and promoting staff engagement and professional development.
- Oversees and provides expertise in collections care activities, including conservation and preservation, accessioning and processing, storage and stacks maintenance, disaster preparedness, and risk management; works directly with outside conservators and vendors; and advises on facilities planning.
- Oversees acquisitions, sets collecting priorities, and pursues new collection development opportunities, with a focus on collections that reflect the diversity of California and document contemporary movements, events, and themes.
- Plans, develops, and oversees efforts to increase access to the CHS Collection through cataloging and description, reference services, exhibitions, digital projects, and social media; and participates in, develops, and promotes creative public outreach efforts.
- Provides knowledge and expertise to guide collections staff in the assessment, implementation, and maintenance of collections management, cataloging, and digital asset management systems; follows national best practices in archival technology and standards.
- Provides public history perspective and intellectual leadership in support of collections, exhibitions, and relevant programs.
- Actively engages in and leads grant-seeking, fundraising, and donor cultivation initiatives; and oversees collections/library grant implementation and management, including evaluation and reports as required.

- Develops robust relationships and partnerships within and outside the organization in order to promote CHS's visibility, mission, and strategic goals; represents CHS at events, meetings, and conferences; and actively engages in public history advocacy efforts.
- Forecasts departmental budget and staffing needs and ensures that the function operates within approved budget parameters.

## Skills, Experience, and Education

- Master's degree plus 5 years leadership experience in a special collections, archives, research library, museum collections, or related cultural heritage setting.
- Strong commitment to advocacy for non-profit cultural heritage organizations, efforts, and values.
- Strong commitment to archival outreach and education, and knowledge of best practices and current trends in teaching about/with primary resources.
- Ability to develop and lead activities and projects related to collections care and management; special collections cataloging and archival description; reference services; and digitization.
- Demonstrated success in leading or implementing innovative digital initiatives; and knowledge of current and emerging digital technologies and standards relevant to special collections and archives.
- Demonstrated success in fundraising, including grant seeking, implementation, and management.
- Experience with collection development and acquisitions; and demonstrated success in donor cultivation, including building and maintaining relationships with donors, cultivating gifts of significant collections, and obtaining financial support for collections work.
- Ability to build and maintain coalitions and partnerships within and between organizations in order to advance a shared vision.
- Superior interpersonal skills and leadership ability, including demonstrated success with change management and experience working with a broad and diverse range of colleagues, stakeholders, constituents, and communities.
- MS/MLIS from an ALA-accredited institution is highly desirable, as is an advanced academic degree in history or other relevant field of study
- Strong knowledge of California history is also highly desirable as is the ability to provide historical understanding and intellectual leadership in support of collections, exhibitions, education, and relevant programs

## Things you should know:

The California Historical Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer, deeply committed to diversity among its staff. This is a full-time exempt position with benefits, including fully paid employee health, vision, dental, life, and AD&D, a generous holiday and time off policy, and a team full of interesting and warm people to work with. Position is based in San Francisco, and involves some overnight travel, evenings and weekend work.

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume or C.V. to [sjordana@calhist.org](mailto:sjordana@calhist.org) . Resume review will begin immediately and continue until position is filled.