

Job Title:	Read House & Gardens Curator of Education	Job Category:	Exempt
Department/Group:	Read House & Gardens	Job Code/ Req#:	RH-220630-1
Location:	New Castle, DE	Travel Required:	No
Level/Salary Range:	\$46,000–\$52,000	Position Type:	Full-time
HR Contact:	Nidia Hoffman	Date Posted:	06/30/2022
Will Train Applicant(s):	Yes	Posting Expires:	7/19/2022
External Posting URL:			
Internal Posting URL:			
Applications Accepted By:			
Email: careers@dehistory.org Subject Line: Curator of Education		Please include résumé, cover letter, and 3 professional references.	
Job Description			
<p>ROLE OVERVIEW</p> <p>The Delaware Historical Society is seeking an innovative and well-rounded individual to join the core Read House & Gardens (RH&G) team as Curator of Education. Building on a major overhaul of interpretation and branding over the past three years, this vacancy offers an opportunity for thought leadership in the field of museum engagement, especially as the RH&G embarks on a major landscape renovation campaign.</p> <p>The Curator of Education reports to the Director of the George Read II House & Gardens and is responsible for developing and managing the visitor experience across multiple audiences, including walk-in visitors, schools, and adult tour groups. This individual hires, manages, and provides ongoing training for a team of part-time Museum Ambassadors who lead tours and facilitate school programs. The Curator of Education also contributes to public programming and exhibitions, provides input on collections matters relating to the Read House, and provides a vital link to the DHS main campus through close collaboration with the DHS Director of Education and other staff from that department.</p> <p>The successful candidate will have outstanding interpersonal skills, a basis in the methodologies of material culture study, and the ability to advance and expand current practices in museum interpretation and education.</p> <p>RESPONSIBILITIES (all pertain to the Read House & Gardens except where otherwise noted)</p> <p><u>Education and Interpretation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, implement, and evaluate public tour experiences • Develop, implement, and evaluate K–12 educational programs (primarily as school field trips) in coordination with the DHS Director of Education • Hire, train, supervise, and coordinate scheduling for part-time interpretive staff consisting of a corps of approximately 8–10 Museum Ambassadors and a Lead Ambassador who assists with visitor services administrative tasks 			

- Play a central role in codifying and stewarding interpretive strategy for the RH&G and, in the future, in establishing broader interpretive strategy for the Society as a whole
- Manage bookings for school field trips and adult group tours, coordinating with teachers/group leaders and with staff from partner organizations in New Castle
- Work with the Director of the RH&G and with other DHS staff to develop and implement public programming for the RH&G, as well as to advise on other DHS programming that might incorporate aspects of Read House and New Castle history
- Provide the RH&G Marketing and Events Coordinator with content knowledge and interpretive advice toward social media and other public communications, as well as toward decisions furthering the RH&G museum store
- Create and maintain educational resources, including coordinating with the Curator of Objects (a cross-departmental position) to manage a collection of unaccessioned prop and educational objects
- Work with relevant staff to maintain the portions of the readhouseandgardens.org website related to visitor services and K–12 education
- Represent DHS favorably through speaking engagements, publication, and attendance at professional conferences and workshops

Visitor Services and Operations:

- Ensure that the visitor experience is positive and advances the DHS mission and RH&G interpretive objectives
- Monitor for accurate weekly reporting on visitation and income (completed mostly by the part-time Lead Ambassador), as well as proper execution of bank deposits and transmission of new visitor data to Institutional Advancement staff
- Manage partnerships with the New Castle Historical Society and New Castle Court House Museum, including the administration of combined ticketing and joint school- and group-tour bookings
- Coordinate regularly with the Visitor Services Manager of the Delaware History Museum
- Maintain educational spaces and ensure the suitable maintenance of all other museum spaces by coordinating the Curator of Objects and staffing
- Maintain a basic awareness of current mechanical and preservation needs and be able to point out locations and equipment to service providers when necessary, as well as to notice and report issues as they arise
- Respond to phone and email inquiries about visitation and bookings; provide occasional maintenance of museum, reception, and staff areas; and occasionally support other operations needs as they arise

Curatorial:

- Curate or co-curate temporary exhibitions as assigned
- Advise on the deployment of collections objects in museum period rooms
- Advise the Director on collection development
- Support ongoing historical research
- Assess collections-care and building preservation concerns raised by part-time interpretive staff and transmit them accordingly to the Curator of Objects or Director of Buildings and Grounds
- Collaborate with the Collections and Access department on emergency response planning and ensure that interpretive staff are trained accordingly
- Facilitate the scheduling of part-time interpretive staff for annual collections cleaning and inventory (led by the Curator of Objects)
- Manage or assist with the occasional moving of collections objects

QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

- M.A. in history, art history, material culture studies, museum studies, education, or a related discipline, or equivalent work experience
- Understanding of current practices in museum interpretation and education, along with the ability and ambition to further them
- Understanding of methodologies for the study and teaching of historical material culture
- Supervisory experience
- Excellent interpersonal skills and mastery of oral and written communication
- Thorough understanding of the issues and strategies around building diversity, equity, and inclusivity in the public interpretation of historical assets
- Affinity for digital media and its applications in museums and public history
- Ability to meet deadlines, manage multiple duties concurrently, and take individual responsibility for ensuring successful outcomes
- Ability to work within a team environment, including across departments and campuses

PREFERRED SKILLS

- Expertise in American decorative arts, design history, and/or early-nineteenth-century U.S. historiography
- Familiarity with K–12 curriculum standards

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Work Schedule:

35-hours per week. Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm. Occasional evening and weekend hours required.

Benefits:

DHS offers a competitive benefits package including medical, dental, vision, and life insurance, retirement account with contribution matching, and generous leave time.

Physical requirements:

- Must be able to navigate stairs in a large historic house and traverse uneven ground in the gardens.
- Must be able to adapt to high-pace environments, occasionally moving and/or lifting up to 25 lbs.
- Must be able to work in indoor and outdoor environments.
- Must be able to maintain regular, punctual attendance, including occasional evening and weekend hours as needed.

About the Organization

The Delaware Historical Society (DHS), founded in 1864, preserves, promotes, and shares Delaware’s history in a welcoming environment to educate, inspire, and empower people and communities. DHS is an independent, non-profit, non-government historical society founded in 1864. It stewards nine historic buildings, eight of which are in Wilmington and straddle the 500 block of Market Street. The ninth is the George Read II House & Gardens in Historic New Castle, situated adjacent to the First State National Historical Park and overlooking the Delaware River.

The Read House & Gardens (RH&G) comprises a 14,000-square-foot mansion built between 1797 and 1804 and formal gardens added in 1847–48. As an outstanding example of Philadelphia federal-style architecture, it was designated a National Historic Landmark—the highest level of significance—in 2017. George Read II was the first U.S. Attorney for Delaware, and his father was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, as well as a governor, U.S. senator, and chief justice in Delaware. Under the stewardship of Philip and Lydia Chichester Laird in the 20th century, the house and grounds became a noted example of colonial revival taste and appeared widely in lifestyle and design publications. The Delaware Historical Society assumed ownership of the site upon Lydia Laird’s death in 1975 and undertook a state-of-the-art restoration and furnishing campaign during the 1980s. The RH&G is now in the early stages of a major landscape renovation project to reimagine its 2.5 acres of historic grounds for the current and next generations.

Through experiential programming and collaborative initiatives in the decorative, fine, and performing arts as well as in horticulture, it serves as an inspiration and gathering place for people of many identities. Its public offerings invite onsite and remote audiences to deepen their reflection on the complex layers of history that remain present in contemporary society. The RH&G is situated within local, regional, national, and global historical narratives and continues to engage audiences on all four levels, including through frequent partnerships with artistic collaborators.
