



FINLANDIA FOUNDATION NATIONAL **Finnish American Heritage Center**

Curator of Special Exhibitions *Job Description*

Finlandia Foundation National, Inc.:

Founded in 1953 in Pasadena, CA, Finlandia Foundation National (FFN) is the nation's premier organization for Finnish-Americans in the United States, with nearly 60 chapters throughout the country. FFN has become the most important private source of philanthropy for Finnish and Finnish-American culture, supporting over \$2 million in grants, scholarships, and programs since 2003. FFN is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization governed by a volunteer board of trustees. The FFN office, staffed by an Executive Director, Operations Manager, and Communications Director, is located in Pasadena. Since 2023, FFN operates the Finnish American Heritage Center (FAHC) in Hancock, Michigan, which includes North Wind Books, the Finnish American Folk School, Finlandia Art Gallery, Historical Archive, and the *Finnish American Reporter* monthly newspaper. Visit FinlandiaFoundation.org to learn more.

Our Mission:

As the premier Finnish-American cultural organization, Finlandia Foundation National champions a vibrant Finnish-American heritage and legacy and builds bridges between modern Finland and the United States, enabling people of all backgrounds to share in the traditions, values, and spirit of Finland and Finnish America.

Position Summary:

Curator of Special Exhibitions

Project Dates:

Start: September 1, 2025

End: March 31, 2026

Salary Range:

\$15,000 – \$17,000

Location:

Preference will be given to applicants who can be on-site in Hancock, MI for much of the duration of this assignment. Remote opportunities are possible, with travel to Hancock, MI required.

Position Description:

FFN is seeking an *innovative enthusiastic history and/or museum professional with interest and experience in curating historical exhibits* to join our team as Curator of Special Exhibitions to bring our “Price of Freedom” collection to life.

The candidate should be a *positive team player, detail oriented, and be an expert in curating exhibits from existing collections*. They should enjoy working in teams as well as independently.

We are seeking a freelance professional or contractor in the field of museology / history / education who will create a special exhibit for FFN using the collections of the Finnish American Historical Archive at the FAHC located in Hancock, MI. Specifically, the Curator of Special Exhibitions will focus on curating the “Price of Freedom” collection into a traveling exhibit concept (to include both a physical exhibit as well as digital components) which will be available to tour to our local Finlandia Foundation chapter network and other partners across the country.

The Fall of 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. In recognition of this moment, we are seeking an experienced curator who will:

- Convey the stories told in our “Price of Freedom” collection to a modern audience
- Draw on historical events, facts, and artifacts to educate the public about Finland’s Winter War
- Highlight the lessons this history offers for today

To learn more about the “Price of Freedom” collection, see the links below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUaGR01JJ5w>

<https://www.uppermichiganssource.com/2022/07/26/price-freedom-museum-is-open-hancocks-jutila-center/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAo5gSQAn68>

<https://www.palmbeachpost.com/story/news/2012/03/22/finnish-native-curates-military-memorabilia/7595272007/>

Being a team player is central to the work culture at FFN. The Curator of Special Exhibitions will be able to take part actively and constructively in a team setting that is in-person as well as in virtual meetings and be a motivated self-starter. Having a good

sense of humor and can-do attitude, excellent presentation skills, being able to offer and respond to constructive criticism and differing perspectives, and adhering to timelines are characteristics we seek in a new team member.

Responsibilities:

The Curator of Special Exhibits will be responsible for carrying out the following duties:

- Examine the current collection of histories and artifacts relating to World War II and Finland's Winter War in the Finnish American Historical Archive in collaboration with the Archivist
- Research topics related to the collections
- Interpret the collection to identify narratives, stories, and histories to be highlighted in the exhibition
- Develop plans for a traveling exhibit based on this collection
- Determine what objects to include in an exhibit based on the collection
- Develop compelling content—including written text and visual graphics—to support the exhibit that can be adapted to a physical layout and/or digital format.
- Maintain records of the existing Price of Freedom collection and update as necessary
- Write articles about the collection, the project, and the process as it is occurring for Finlandia Foundation publications as well as other forms of publicity
- By the end of the project, create the curated exhibit with artifacts that will be ready to travel to affiliated locations in 2026
- Consult with the Archivist and the Communications Manager throughout the process to access the archive and understand our diverse audiences at FFN
- Manage the project budget in consultation with the Executive Director

Qualifications:

- Master's degree in History, Education, Archival Studies, Museum Studies, or a related fields, **or 4+** years working in an archival / museum / educational setting
- Experience working with archives, special collections, or historical materials
- Familiarity with best practices in curating historical exhibits, both physical exhibits and online exhibits
- Familiarity with PastPerfect or other similar programs
- Design experience is required in this position, for example with InDesign, label layout, special analysis, etc.
- Understanding of exhibitions, for example object mounting, packaging of crates, shipping requirements, and developing loan agreements
- Strong organizational and project management skills
- Excellent communication skills and ability to collaborate with a team
- Knowledge of Finnish-American history and culture is a plus
- Knowledge of the Finnish language is a plus

Desired Characteristics:

FFN values a high level of flexibility, professionalism, and communication on our team. The hybrid nature of FFN management and team creates an opportunity for growth and innovation and a potential challenge for communication. The Curator of Special Exhibitions should have the following:

- Advanced communication skills with customers and colleagues
- A “can-do” attitude, approaching every challenge with an open mind
- A willingness to try new things and learn from mistakes
- A readiness to report concerns, questions, or potential issues to their supervisors as well as ideas, suggestions for improvement, and vision
- Ability to respectfully hold self and colleagues accountable for actions
- Knowledge of and enthusiasm for contemporary Finland, Finnish-American heritage and culture, and/or topics related to the Nordic countries

The position is an independent contractor position.

For questions regarding this position, please contact office@finlandiafoundation.org.

Applications for the Curator of Special Exhibitions position are due July 15, 2025.

The anticipated start date for this role is September 1, 2025.

[Click here to apply](#). The form will allow you to upload your CV, Cover Letter, and examples of your previous work, and enter up to three professional references. You will receive a confirmation email that your application has been received.

Finlandia Foundation National is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any employee or job applicant because of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or age.