



## **CURATOR OF EDUCATION AND PUBLIC HISTORY**

**Classification:** Full-time/Exempt

**Reports to:** Director of Museums

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

#### **About our Organization**

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Historic Charleston Foundation (HCF) is a nonprofit preservation organization founded in 1947 to protect the architectural, historical, and cultural heritage of Charleston. Through its two nationally significant house museums — the Nathaniel Russell House (c. 1808) and the Aiken-Rhett House (c. 1820) — HCF fulfills its educational mission by interpreting the lives of all who lived and worked at these sites: the wealthy families who owned them and the enslaved men and women whose labor made that wealth possible.

The Nathaniel Russell House is a National Historic Landmark and one of the finest examples of Federal-period architecture in America, currently the subject of an active Kitchen House archaeological project. The Aiken-Rhett House is one of the nation's most intact antebellum urban townhouse complex, preserved as-found since the 1850s, offering visitors direct encounter with the physical realities of 19th-century Charleston life. Together, these sites draw thousands of visitors annually and serve school groups, researchers, and the broader public throughout the year.

#### **Position Summary**

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The Curator of Education and Public History is responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing all educational programming and public history initiatives across HCF's two house museums. This position advances the Foundation's mission to tell the full, inclusive history of both sites — centering the experiences of the enslaved alongside those of the propertied elite — through engaging, rigorous, and accessible programs for diverse audiences including K–12 students, university groups, adult learners, and the general public.

The Curator of Education and Public History works collaboratively across HCF departments, manages interpretive and education staff, and serves as a key liaison with local schools, universities, and community organizations. This role brings together expertise in public history, museum education, and community engagement to strengthen the educational impact of Charleston's most significant house museums.

## Primary Duties and Responsibilities:

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### Education Program Development and Management

- Develop, implement, evaluate, and continuously improve all K–12 school programs and field trip experiences at the Nathaniel Russell House and Aiken-Rhett House, aligning content with South Carolina state curriculum standards.
- Create and maintain teacher and educator resources, including pre- and post-visit lesson plans, curriculum guides, and classroom materials that connect site content to student learning objectives.
- Design and oversee adult and lifelong-learning programs, including lectures, walking tours, workshops, and public history events that expand understanding of Charleston's social, architectural, and cultural heritage.
- Develop interpretive programming that centers the experiences of enslaved people at both sites, incorporating current scholarship, community input, and the latest findings from HCF's ongoing archaeological research (e.g., the Kitchen House Project and Aiken-Rhett laundry archaeology).
- Coordinate and present Family Day activities, holiday programs, and special interpretive events at both house museums.
- Assess program effectiveness using quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods; use data to inform future program design and report outcomes to leadership and funders.

### Public History and Interpretation

- Contribute to the interpretive vision of both house museums in collaboration with the Director of Museums, ensuring interpretive content reflects the most current and inclusive historical scholarship.
- Assist with research projects relating to the history of the Nathaniel Russell House, the Aiken-Rhett House, and the broader Lowcountry region, including topics related to slavery, the domestic economy, and architectural history.
- Collaborate on the development of interpretive texts, audio tour content, exhibition labels, digital resources, and online educational platforms.
- Contribute to the review and development of site interpretive plans and visitor experience documents that articulate key themes, visitor outcomes, and storytelling strategies.
- Stay current with developments in public history, museum education, and Charleston's local historiography; actively contribute to the field through professional engagement.

### Staff and Volunteer Supervision

- Recruit, train, supervise, and evaluate interpretive guides, education staff, docents, and program volunteers at both museum sites.
- Conduct regular guide training and professional development sessions to ensure accurate, consistent, and inclusive interpretation across both houses.
- Coordinate scheduling and coverage for public tours, school group visits, guided tours, and educational events in partnership with house managers.

## Community Partnerships and Outreach

- Serve as the primary liaison with local school districts, school board representative and the South Carolina Department of Education.
- Build and maintain partnerships with universities, HBCUs, community organizations, and cultural institutions in the Charleston area and statewide.
- Identify and develop strategic partnerships that expand access to HCF's educational resources and bring new and underserved audiences to the museums.
- Represent HCF at teacher workshops, education conferences, and community events; network with educators across the region.

## Administration and Development

- Develop, manage, and monitor the Education department's annual budget in consultation with the Director of Museums.
- Assist with grant writing and fundraising efforts in support of educational programming, identifying funding opportunities and preparing compelling proposals.
- Maintain accurate records of program attendance, participant demographics, and evaluation data for internal reporting and grant compliance.
- Collaborate with HCF's marketing and communications team to promote educational programming through appropriate channels.
- Participate as a team member in broader Museum and Foundation initiatives, serving on relevant working groups as needed.

## Qualifications:

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### Required

- Bachelor's degree in History, Public History, Museum Studies, Museum Education, American Studies, African American Studies, or a closely related field.
- Minimum three years of professional experience in museum education, public history programming, or a closely related field, with direct experience creating and delivering interpretive or educational programs.
- Demonstrated knowledge of American history, particularly the antebellum South, slavery, and the social history of the Lowcountry region.
- Commitment to inclusive, equity-centered interpretation that represents the full range of people who inhabited and shaped historic sites.
- Strong oral and written communication skills, including the ability to convey complex historical content to diverse audiences of all ages.
- Proven ability to manage multiple projects, meet deadlines, and work effectively both independently and collaboratively.
- Experience supervising staff, guides, or volunteers in a professional setting.

### Preferred

- Master's degree in Public History, Museum Studies, Museum Education, History, or a related field.
- Experience working in a historic house museum or preservation organization.

- Familiarity with South Carolina K–12 curriculum standards and experience collaborating with classroom educators.
- Knowledge of archaeological interpretation or experience incorporating archaeological findings into public programming.
- Grant writing experience, including identifying opportunities and drafting proposals.
- Proficiency with digital content tools and platforms, including social media, audio tour technology, and online learning resources.
- Training or experience in anti-oppression frameworks and/or DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) practices.

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#### **Work Environment/Hours:**

This is a full-time, exempt position. Standard hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 am – 5 pm; flexibility is required for evening and weekend programming, particularly for school field trips, public events, and holiday programming. The position involves regular movement between the Nathaniel Russell House (51 Meeting Street) and the Aiken-Rhett House (48 Elizabeth Street), as well as outreach visits to schools and community organizations. Work requires walking over uneven historic flooring, outdoor spaces and areas that are not climate controlled.

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#### **Benefits:**

Competitive salary commensurate with experience (\$50,000-\$55,000) and generous benefits including medical, dental, vision, PTO, (12) paid holidays, 403(b) with match, STD, LI, EAP, free parking, Reciprocity Pass, retail shopping discount, Flex Fridays

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#### **TO APPLY:**

Please submit a cover letter accompanying your resume/CV via email to [careers@historiccharleston.org](mailto:careers@historiccharleston.org)

**The employment relationship with Historic Charleston Foundation is at-will and may be terminated by either you or the foundation at any time, for any reason. Neither this form, or any oral or written policy or procedure, nor any representation by any HCF employee, supervisor or officer can or will change the at-will nature of your employment.**

*Historic Charleston Foundation is a nonprofit organization with a mission to preserve and protect Charleston's architectural, historical, and cultural heritage.*