

August 2023

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

DIRECTOR OF THE LIBRARY & MUSEUM (LIBRARIAN)

“Promoting useful knowledge since 1743”

The APS is seeking a vibrant, enthusiastic, inspirational, and energetic scholar to lead its Library & Museum as they sustain historic strengths while embracing an increasingly digital future.

ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

The American Philosophical Society (APS), founded in 1743 by Benjamin Franklin, is America’s oldest and most distinguished learned society. It is a major center for research and scholarship, continuing Franklin’s original mission of promoting useful knowledge. The Library & Museum, situated in four buildings adjacent to Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia, includes some 300,000 books and bound periodicals, 14 million manuscripts, hundreds of thousands of images, and thousands of portraits, artifacts, and sound recordings. Its collections center on American history before 1860; history of science, technology and medicine; and Native American languages and cultures. Three library centers – the David Center for the American Revolution, the Center for Native American and Indigenous Research, and the Center for Digital Scholarship support research, fellowships, seminars, conferences, and public outreach. The museum’s annual exhibitions attract hundreds of thousands of visitors. The library’s conferences, often keyed to the themes of museum exhibitions, support innovative scholarship and publication through the APS Press.

The American Philosophical Society’s current activities reflect the founder’s spirit of inquiry, provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas, and convey its conviction that intellectual inquiry and critical thought are inherently in the best interest of the public.

The APS is an elected body of scholars and leaders from all disciplines and professions. Today, the Society has approximately 1,000 elected members, about 840 of whom are resident members (are citizens of or live and work in the United States), and about 160 of whom are international members from more than two dozen countries. Election to membership honors those who have made exceptionally significant contributions to science, the arts and humanities, and public life. Fewer than 5,900 members have been elected since 1743. Since 1900, more than 260 members have received a Nobel Prize.

With a \$12 million budget, an endowment of \$264 million, and a staff of 50, the APS is supported by endowment income, public funds, private donations, and foundation grants.



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THE POSITION

As Director of the Library & Museum, the Librarian will be a learned scholar and experienced manager active in all aspects of the Library & Museum and an integral member of the team and culture. The Librarian will ensure that a global and diverse community is aware of and able to access the Library & Museum's collections. They will be an energetic and enthusiastic representative of the library, museum, and Society, and committed to its constituencies and intellectual vibrancy.

Reporting directly to the Executive Officer, the Librarian will steward the Society's collections and the many scholarly activities connected with them. This includes collection development and care; oversight of research centers, conferences, fellowships, museum exhibitions, and scholarly programs; management of staff and budget; and raising funds for library and museum activities.

The Librarian has a senior team of four direct reports, a staff of 35, and an operating budget of approximately \$6 million.

ONGOING PRIORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

COLLECTIONS:

- Approve acquisitions; purchase manuscripts, books, recordings, artistic objects, and other items for the Library & Museum collections; identify and negotiate acquisition of materials directly from scholars, researchers, and donors; guide and review collection development policy and practice in collaboration with outside experts and staff.
- Ensure Library & Museum holdings are available for scholarly use.
- Assure proper stewardship of all Library & Museum materials; employ appropriate conservation methods to maintain the longest possible useful life of the collections.

SCHOLARSHIP AND TEACHING:

- Sustain a record of scholarly engagement and productivity; understand the needs of scholars; give talks and presentations of scholarly papers.

RESEARCH CENTERS AND OUTREACH:

- Oversee the Society's three research centers: the Center for Native American and Indigenous Research, the David Center for the American Revolution, and the Center



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for Digital Scholarship; ensure the efficient functioning and use of resources dedicated to each center and provide guidance on the scholarly direction of the Library & Museum programs.

- Support a robust set of programs along with a large number of fellows, seminars, workshops, and conferences.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION:

- Internal:
 - Represent the Library & Museum at the Society's semi-annual meetings, through collaboration with the Executive Officer, at meetings of the committee on Library & Museum, its subcommittees, and the APS council.
 - Increase engagement of Society members.
 - Clearly communicate institutional goals and plans with staff.
- External:
 - Deepen public awareness of the Library & Museum to publicize its holdings and to encourage new users.
 - Serve as a highly visible and articulate spokesperson for the Library & Museum; represent the Library & Museum and the Society externally with professional organizations.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Provide leadership for fundraising initiatives; serve as the principal development officer for the Library & Museum in coordination with the development department; coordinate with the development department and the Executive Officer to produce proposals for government and foundation grants; play an active role in the cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of donors and prospects, including members, friends of the APS, and institutional funders.

MANAGEMENT:

- Supervise Library & Museum staff; demonstrate the ability to manage a staff of librarians, archivists, conservators, and museum curators.
- Maintain a comprehensive grasp of the budget and other key financial metrics; prepare and manage the annual budget for the Library & Museum in collaboration with the Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer.
- Manage special-purpose and other restricted funds.



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- Approve all major purchases and capital expenses for Library & Museum operations.
- Oversee all Library & Museum publications.
- Maintain the physical integrity and security of all Library & Museum spaces.
- Lead appropriate use and investment in digital technology, resources, and services, including access to collections, preservation, outreach, and administration.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND PRIORITIES

The APS is currently developing a strategic plan for 2024-2028. Among priorities likely to be highlighted in that plan, in which the Librarian will play a key role, are:

- Create and endow a center for the history of science, technology, and medicine.
- Endow the APS Museum, including support for catalogs and virtual exhibitions.
- Establish traveling exhibitions and summer training institutes.
- Grow the acquisition budget of the Library & Museum and intensify efforts to increase its digital collections.
- Create and disseminate new digital resources based on APS collections.
- Rescue the endangered contents of its large, fragile media collection through digitization, thus both preserving it and making it readily available to researchers.
- Oversee the renovation and enhancement of the physical facilities of the Library & Museum, including improved office facilities for staff and fellows and installation of state-of-the-art technologies in Library Hall and Richardson Hall.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

- A strong commitment to research, scholarship, and public communication
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access.
- Significant management skills and experience in academic institutions or research libraries.



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- Superior leadership skills within teams and across institutions.
- Strategic planning experience, including delivering on agreed-upon outcomes.
- A strong track record of effective fundraising.
- Experience working with boards and governing bodies in complex organizations.
- Sophisticated communications skills, both verbal and written.
- Advanced degree in humanities, arts, or sciences; significant scholarly research.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- The ability to convey a strong and compelling presence, to inspire people to perform at a high level, and to show decisiveness, diplomacy, and tact.
- Confident leadership that can motivate, retain, and lead an accomplished group of people who collaborate to achieve results.
- The ability to anticipate problems, resolve ambiguity, and take decisive action.
- Integrity, empathy, emotional intelligence, and cultural agility.

COMPENSATION

The salary range for this position is estimated at \$250,000 to \$300,000.

The APS is an equal opportunity employer, dedicated to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment on any basis including race, creed, color, age, sex, gender, religion, or national origin. The APS values diversity and inclusion and encourages diverse applicants to apply.

Applications, including cover letters and resumes, or nominations should be sent to Susan Meade and Addie Jones at APS@PhillipsOppenheim.com.

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