Assistant Manager of Public Programs

Reports to: Manager of Public Programs
FLSA Status: Full time, exempt employee
Date Written/Revised: September 2026

ORGANIZATION
Planet Word (www.planetwordmuseum.org) is an interactive museum that brings language to life with unique, immersive experiences for people of all ages. Nothing like it exists anywhere else in the world. Established by educator Ann Friedman, the museum is housed in the Franklin School, a restored and rehabilitated National Historic Landmark at the corner of 13th and K Streets NW in the heart of Washington, D.C. The museum opened in October 2020 and welcomes more than 100,000 visitors annually, alongside a growing portfolio of public and education programming. Planet Word's policy is to provide equal opportunity employment (EOE) to all persons. Planet Word recruits, trains, compensates, and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, veteran status, and other protected status. Planet Word's commitment to promoting diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion is clearly reflected in the stories we tell. At Planet Word, we strive to provide a forum for civil discourse and to be a place where community, in all its vibrant diversity, can gather to share the words that bridge differences and forge solutions.

POSITION
Planet Word is looking for an Assistant Manager of Public Programs to contribute to the planning, development, management, and evaluation of Planet Word's suite of public programs and experiences. Planet Word's Public Programming is mission-driven and intentional, aiming to keep the museum dynamic and relevant, serve a variety of communities and audiences, contribute to the intellectual and cultural life of Washington, D.C., and have an impact on the city's literacy landscape.

The Assistant Manager manages assigned public programs and components of larger initiatives from planning through implementation and evaluation. In partnership with department and other museum colleagues, and leadership, the Assistant Manager helps determine program approaches, timelines, resource needs, partnerships, budgets, and operational requirements. The position has responsibility for carrying forward agreed-upon plans, making appropriate day-to-day decisions within established parameters, and identifying issues or opportunities that will be discussed and agreed upon with colleagues and leadership.

The Assistant Manager is expected to take ownership of assigned responsibilities while recognizing that program decisions frequently involve multiple perspectives, departments, and institutional considerations. Successful performance requires the ability to balance initiative with collaboration, seek input when appropriate, thoughtfully evaluate different perspectives, and work toward solutions that support both program goals and broader museum priorities.

The Assistant Manager also serves as a key connector with Public Programs, Education, Visitor Services, Development, External Relations, Technology, Facilities, and Finance whose work contributes to successful programming. The position helps ensure that relevant stakeholders are engaged early, information is shared appropriately, and decisions are coordinated across teams.

The Assistant Manager reports directly to the Manager of Public Programs and works with considerable responsibility and professional judgment within the collaborative structure of the department. The position also supports larger programs and initiatives led by the Manager of Public Programs, Director of Education and Public Programs, and Manager of Education Programs.

This position requires flexibility to work some evenings and weekends based on the public program schedule.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Program Design, Development, and Strategy (30%)

- Champion institutional mission, vision, and strategic priorities through program and activity design, partner alignment, and content curation.
- Maintain and apply an active awareness of Planet Word stakeholders, community partners, content areas, key audiences and quality standards.
- Formulate, roll-out, message and train on all hands-on activities designed for either standalone use or as components of larger multi-part public programs.
- Design, own, and oversee the production of all public program collateral including informational and directional signage and oversee the development of program media ensuring strategic messaging and brand consistency across all public programs, inclusive of production support as needed.
- Participate in a collaborative and dynamic research, design, and pitch process to develop innovative public programs that advance organizational priorities under the supervision of the Manager of Public Programs.
- Manage, own, and maintain the annual public program master calendar to ensure and maximize operational efficiency – flagging bottlenecks and conflicts for leadership.
- Serve as a liaison to established community partners to maintain important relationships for current and future public programs.
- Apply museum-wide program accessibility standards and DEAI practices across all public programs.
- Benchmark organizational programming against national industry standards and suggest ways to incorporate emerging educational & museum best practices.

Program Logistics, Support, & Business Operations (30%)

- Own and oversee furniture inventory and design room layout and setup plans for all programs.
- Own, oversee, and maintain program-related supply inventory and select and procure relevant supplies & materials for upcoming programs.
- Oversee and maintain department credit card expense recordkeeping.
- Manage supply and material budgets for individual programs as assigned.
- Maintain and evaluate vendor relationships and manage vendor procurement and payment processes in coordination with Finance to ensure timeliness and compliance on tight and evolving timelines.
- Maintain accurate and organized records such as program schedules using team calendaring systems, program development documents, registration lists, attendance reports, survey feedback reports, photographic records and other program documentation.
- Develop program staffing plans in collaboration with the Manager of Public Programs and the Visitor Services team.
- Assist with the development of and evaluate the implementation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for public programming operations.
- Complete other logistics, support and business operations tasks to produce public programs as assigned.

Program Staffing (30%)

- Captain public programs as assigned by Manager of Public Programs.
- Staff all virtual and onsite public programs unless otherwise assigned by Manager of Public Programs and ensure adherence to organizational quality, safety, and brand standards throughout.
- Oversee part-time program support staff and vendors, enforcing high service standards, risk-management guidelines, and facilities compliance policies.
- Oversee part-time AV/IT operations personnel as needed to ensure seamless technical delivery. Must also be comfortable with operating basic Museum A/V equipment.
- Introduce programs in front of public audiences as assigned, connecting the program to Planet Word's mission, vision, and values.
- Represent museum leadership when serving as a host for speakers, special guests, and programming partners when they serve as Planet Word's guests and talent

Other Duties as Assigned (10%)

- Support the Education, Development, and External Relations teams in delivering programming when necessary inclusive of facilitation support.
- Participate in the success of cross-department initiatives as needed.

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

- A commitment to Planet Word's mission, vision, and values
- **Availability for flexible and occasionally long hours based on business needs, as well as evening and weekend availability**
- A bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in the fields of museum studies, public programming, or similar
- Demonstrated success in museum, cultural or community center, arts programming or similar, with a minimum of two (2) years of relevant work experience
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills
- Exceptional attention to detail
- comfort speaking in public with diverse audiences in a variety of contexts
- Flexibility, creativity, and the ability to solve problems and thrive in a fast-paced environment.
- Ability to balance and adjust to competing initiatives and evolving priorities
- Capacity to take initiative, build consensus, and to work effectively cross-organizationally
- Ability to work individually or in a team
- Punctuality and reliability
- Willingness to learn new skills

WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job the employee is regularly required to sit, use hands and arms to operate keyboard, mouse and phone. The employee needs to regularly use senses of sight and hearing. The employee is frequently required to reach with hands and arms and required to stand, walk, stoop, or kneel. Coordinates with teams across the museum to oversee event space setups and spatial requirements including moving light furniture or furniture on wheels.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Range: $55-60,000 annually

Planet Word offers a generous benefits package including: Full employee medical, dental, vision, life, STD/LTD/AD&D coverage plus 50% dependent share and 403(b) plan
PTO: Vacation, holidays, personal days

TO APPLY

Please send your resume and a letter of interest via email to:
Careers@planetwordmuseum.org
Subject: Assistant Manager of Public Programs