



Director of Museum Technology

Reports to: Executive Director
FLSA Status: Full time, Exempt
Date Written: October 2024

ORGANIZATION

Planet Word (www.planetwordmuseum.org) is a new museum in Washington, D.C. Built on an idea rather than a collection of objects, it's 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 philanthropist and educator Ann Friedman, the museum resides in the Franklin School, a restored and rehabilitated National Historic Landmark at the corner of 13th and K Streets, NW, in the heart of downtown. The building has undergone an extensive interior restoration, and the museum has installed architecturally significant large-scale, high-tech, and media-intensive exhibits and installations. The museum opened to visitors in October 2020 during the global health pandemic and operates a growing portfolio of onsite and online public and education programming. We expect annual onsite visitorship to the museum this year of over 155,000 people.

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. We encourage and welcome applicants who will work to further this commitment and add to the diversity of our organization on multiple dimensions.

POSITION

Planet Word is seeking a Director of Museum Technology with a discerning eye to oversee the museum's technology infrastructure – exhibition technology, information technology, network operations, and audio-visual technology systems. Collaborating with external exhibit developers, AV contractors, and IT service providers, the successful candidate will be responsible for ensuring seamless operation and integration of technology in the museum to deliver a high-quality visitor experience, enhance operational efficiency, and support opportunities for future growth that align with the museum's core values. The position works closely with the museum's internal programming, visitor services, operations, events, and finance teams to support the use of museum technology in their areas of activity; and with the museum's technology partners to extend the use of museum technology to other platforms, including digital and virtual applications (e.g. sharing exhibit content beyond the museum, temporary exhibits, etc.).

Directing the operations and maintenance of all museum technology (with support from staff technicians and outside partners), the Director of Museum Technology is responsible for ensuring that the exhibits and business operating systems are efficient, properly maintained, and functioning at optimal performance levels, as per museum needs. This position is the primary liaison for external partners and has an internal team of one full-time Lead Technician and a part-time AV Technician. This role provides hands-on management, technical infrastructure support, and overall risk assessment in accordance with the museum's strategic direction, communicating exhibit tech, IT, and AV policies, changes, and updates to staff as needed.

A member of the museum's leadership team, the Director of Museum Technology recommends innovative solutions/platforms in accordance with the museum's strategic goals; and supports marketing, communications, and development by serving as the point of contact for the museum on matters related to technology. Flexibility and the ability to work across teams to foster collaboration in support of the museum's mission, vision, and values are key components of this position.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (other duties as assigned):

Exhibition Technology: Ensure that Planet Word's award-winning immersive exhibits and installations are always up and running and operating as designed by proactively monitoring, managing, and troubleshooting all exhibition technology and related support components to optimize systems and minimize exhibit downtime, ensuring proper compatibility and functionality. The exhibits employ substantial amounts of custom software. This software, supported through a maintenance agreement with our experience design partner and software developer, includes iPad apps, network traffic management, BrightSign presentations, Unity applications, Steam VR modules, Windows software, an array of Azure cloud services, and inter-device communication servers. Managing the maintenance agreement and understanding how these technologies work individually and symbiotically is critical to the success of exhibit operations. Common hardware within the museum includes:

- Christie & Panasonic projectors
- Dante audio networking devices
- Network to DMX nodes
- Extron extenders
- iPads & SimpleMDM
- LED tape & DMX lighting
- Microphones & headphones
- Pandora's Box media servers
- Powered & amp supported speakers
- QSys & I/O Frames
- Touch screen monitors
- USB extenders
- Windows computers (various configurations)
- Vive / Valve VR components
- Networking hardware

Information Technology: Serve as the primary point of contact for IT-related matters. Manage and collaborate with the museum's contracted IT service provider to ensure that IT management strategies are in place to maintain the reliability, security, and accessibility of the museum's IT framework. Strategies include:

- Proactive and timely procurement, installation, configuration, inventory, and maintenance of all hardware, software, and network systems.
- Updating and renewing software and related licenses and subscriptions that support the network and exhibits.
- Regular backups, upgrades, security audits, risk assessments, and disaster recovery planning to ensure robust network security and data protection measures are in place and compliant with relevant regulations, industry standards, audit requirements, and security protocols.
- Onsite troubleshooting and help desk support as necessary.

Audio Visual Technology: Assess and understand the organization's internal AV capabilities to determine the best approach to support live and web-based programs and events, and day-to-day business operations. Work with staff to support a range of public programs, private events, and operational needs. Serve as the primary point of contact for outside contractors as necessary and manage internal AV technical support staff. Participate in cross-training with museum departments to ensure adequate program and event support as needed.

Administration: Hire, train, manage, and coach exhibit tech and AV staff in their respective duties. Schedule staff coverage to ensure technology support is onsite as required. Develop and monitor department operating and capital budgets.

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent job experience; specialized study in broadcast, communications, media production, technology, art, film, theater, or related field preferred.
- Minimum 7 years related experience in audio visual production or technology.
- Museum exhibit experience preferred.
- Proof of technical skills/experience in: Exhibition installation and maintenance, projection mapping and geometry correction, networking (TCP/IP/DHCP), vendor management, AV equipment maintenance, and media production/publishing.
- Experience administering the following AV systems/hardware: Medialon, Q-SYS, WatchOut, Pandora's Box Server/Manager, Dante, Brightsign, QSC Q-Sys, Mobile device management (MDM), Computers, Servers, and iPads.
- Experience with budgets, staffing, deadlines, metrics, and deliverables.
- Experience working directly with software developers and custom software including iOS and Unity preferred.
- Ability to explain complex technology and audio-visual related issues to non-technical staff.
- Ability to prioritize and adjust heavy workload, manage a variety of tasks, and meet various deadlines with changing priorities, frequent interruptions, and conflicting deadlines while promoting a positive work environment.
- Ability to effectively lead, mentor, and support staff.
- Ability to work evenings, weekends, and off-site as appropriate; 24/7 for critical exhibition issues.
- Experience in database administration in SQL or equivalent and working knowledge of PCI-DSS requirements is a plus.
- Experience acquiring and deploying SaaS products is a plus.

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 accommodations 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. The employee is frequently required to lift up to 50 pounds, operate lifts, and work while on a ladder. The employee must be able to wear Personal Protection Equipment and enter noisy, dirty, and dusty facility and exhibit construction areas.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

\$80,000-\$100,000 annual salary
(negotiable depending on experience)

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

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.

To Apply

Please send your resume and a letter of interest via email to:

Careers@planetwordmuseum.org

Subject: Director of Museum Technology