



Lead Technician

Reports to: Director of Museum Technology

FLSA Status: Full-time, exempt

Likely Salary: \$60-70k, depending on experience

Schedule: Typically Tuesday–Saturday or Sunday–Thursday; includes regular

early

morning starts on exhibit reset days and evening work for events

Date Written: May 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 155,000 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 seeks a Lead Technician to join the Museum Technology team. Reporting to the Director of Museum Technology, the Lead Technician is the senior technician on a small in-house team and the on-site backbone of three interconnected workstreams: exhibit technology, information technology, and audiovisual support for events, all underpinned by the day-to-day operations that keep the department running. The role is a good fit for someone who is comfortable on a ladder, on a laptop, and on the phone with a vendor — often in the same morning — and who can move fluidly between hands-on work and the judgment calls that come with directing contractors and partnering across the museum.

The Lead Technician keeps our award-winning interactive exhibits running, supports staff IT alongside our managed service provider, directs scenic and fabrication contractors on exhibit-related projects, and coordinates the contract AV Operators who run the board for our growing slate of public programs. They work closely with the Director of Museum Technology and partner across the museum with programming, visitor services,

operations, and events teams. A schedule that includes one weekend day provides regular on-floor presence, complemented by museum staff outside the tech team who handle additional weekend coverage.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Technical Operations

- Maintain an inventory of assets spanning exhibit, AV, and IT systems; track warranties, certifications, software subscriptions, project files, and recurring maintenance schedules.
- Process purchase orders and invoices for technology spend across exhibit, AV, and IT budgets; coordinate with finance on vendor payments and reconciliations.
- Schedule maintenance, repairs, vendor visits, projects, and program coverage around a fast-moving museum calendar; coordinate timing across departments.

Exhibit Technology

- Maintain and troubleshoot exhibit AV systems across nine permanent galleries, ancillary experiences, and temporary installations, all integrated through a Medialon show control system.
- Diagnose and resolve issues that escalate beyond the daily walkthrough — cabling, peripherals, projector and camera calibration, software updates, network and device-level troubleshooting.
- Maintain working familiarity with daily exhibit operations sufficient to identify problems on the floor, train staff, and cover walkthroughs as needed.
- Clean and maintain interactive exhibit hardware: touchscreens, projector lenses, headphones; manage consumable stock including lamps, filters, printer media, headphone covers, and batteries.
- Direct scenic, fabrication, paint, lighting, and other physical-build contractors on exhibit refreshes and repairs: scoping, briefing, quality-checking work.
- Log exhibit AV issues, coordinate repairs with the museum's experience-design and AV partners, and follow through to resolution.
- Keep maintenance logs, AV as-builts, and standard operating procedures accurate and current.

Information Technology

- Serve as an on-site first responder for staff IT issues — laptops, peripherals, conference-room AV, printers, network connectivity, account access — escalating to the museum's managed IT service provider as needed.
- Coordinate hardware procurement and deployment for staff and exhibits.

- Administer the museum’s mobile device management (MDM) for iPads and other managed devices.
- Support basic networking tasks: switch port assignments, IP management, Wi-Fi and wired troubleshooting, and coordination with network vendors.
- Help the Director assess MSP performance and contribute to ongoing improvements in the museum’s IT posture.

AV and Events Support

- Schedule and assign contract AV Operators for the museum’s public programs, private events, and rentals.
- Maintain event AV equipment in the auditorium, classrooms, and event spaces; manage spares, and replacements.
- Partner with programming and events staff on technical planning, run-of-show review, and third-party production needs.
- Prepare and load presentation media for public and private programs — slideshows onto auditorium PCs, JPGs into BrightSign players, and similar pre-event media handling.
- Set up and strike temporary AV equipment for events; backstop event coverage when contract operators are unavailable.
- Onboard and train new AV Operators on Planet Word’s auditorium systems, expectations, and run-of-show practices; quality-check their work.

(other duties as assigned)

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

Required

- Minimum 3 years of related experience in technology operations at a museum, theater, performing arts venue, broadcast facility, AV integrator, or similarly mixed environment.
- Demonstrated experience coordinating and directing contractors — scenic, fabrication, paint, AV, IT, or production crews. Comfort scoping work, briefing crews, evaluating quality.
- Working knowledge of networking fundamentals: TCP/IP, DHCP, VLANs, basic switch and firewall concepts, and Wi-Fi troubleshooting.
- Sound judgment, ability to work without direct supervision, triage competing problems, set priorities, and know when to escalate.
- Conduct clear, patient communication with non-technical colleagues and outside contractors. Remain calm in front of guests, presenters, and VIPs.
- A discerning eye for the physical and aesthetic quality of exhibits — ability to notice when something doesn’t look right and to articulate what needs to change.

- Ability to read line diagrams and manufacturer documentation, work methodically through unfamiliar systems, and document what you find.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent job related experience.

Preferred

- Familiarity with one or more of the following: show control systems (Medialon, Pandora's Box, Crestron, QSC), audio networking (Dante), digital signage (BrightSign), and projection mapping.
- Live event AV experience (sound boards such as Behringer X32, video switchers such as Blackmagic ATEM, PTZ cameras, OBS, basic light boards) — sufficient to evaluate contractors' work and provide coverage when needed.
- Experience with mobile device management platforms (SimpleMDM, Intune) and Windows/iPad fleet management.
- Experience supporting custom interactive software systems.
- Prior work in cultural institutions, museums, or visitor-facing environments.
- OSHA certification (training will be provided if needed).

Schedule and physical considerations

- This role is typically scheduled Tuesday–Saturday or Sunday–Thursday and includes regular early morning starts on exhibit reset days, evening work for events and exhibit flips, and on-call availability for critical exhibition issues.
- Ability to climb ladders, lift up to 50 pounds, and work in tight spaces and dusty conditions. See the Work Environment section below.

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.

This is a physically active role. The Lead Technician is regularly required to stand, walk, climb ladders, kneel, crouch, and work in tight spaces behind exhibits and inside equipment racks. The role frequently involves lifting and carrying up to 50 pounds, operating scissor and personnel lifts, and working overhead while on a ladder. Significant time is spent on the employee's feet moving through galleries with hand tools and routinely entering noisy, dirty, and dusty exhibit and back-of-house areas. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is required for certain tasks.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is also regularly required to sit and use hands and arms to operate a keyboard, mouse, phone, and AV control surfaces. The employee needs to regularly use senses of sight and hearing.

TO APPLY

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

Careers@planetwordmuseum.org

Subject: Lead Technician