



THE HUNTINGTON

Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens
Position Profile

Nadine and Robert A. Skotheim Director of Education and Public Engagement

September 2024



Search for the Nadine and Robert A. Skotheim Director of Education and Public Engagement

The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens
San Marino, CA

The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens (The Huntington), a renowned collections-based research and educational institution, seeks an innovative, strategic, and collaborative leader for the position of Nadine and Robert A. Skotheim Director of Education and Public Engagement.

The Huntington is a 207-acre campus and one of Southern California's premiere cultural landmarks. Open to the public since 1928, its mission is to "share its world-renowned collections to support scholarship, foster learning, inspire creativity, and offer transformative experiences for diverse audiences." As the institution enters its second hundred years, it continues to be an inspiring destination for scholars and visitors, hosting 2,000 researchers, 54,000 member households, and over 1.1 million guests in 2023.

Under the leadership of President Karen Lawrence, The Huntington has deepened its collections across the Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens and significantly expanded access and public engagement. The One Huntington [strategic plan](#) emphasizes that The Huntington's physical and intellectual resources, individually and in tandem, provide critical cultural, historical, and ecological frameworks for understanding the past and the present. The plan lays out a five-year vision for sustaining multidisciplinary collaboration, engaging broad publics on-site and online, and providing leadership to address contemporary challenges.

Reporting to the President, the Director of Education and Public Engagement will be responsible for shaping an innovative and ambitious vision for The Huntington's diverse learning experiences, consistent with the institution's strategic plan and aspirations. Overseeing a budget of **\$2.4 million**, a full-time staff of 22, and 1,000 volunteers and docents, this is an extraordinary opportunity to expand programs, reach new audiences through in-person and digital engagement, and champion the continued relevance of The Huntington's collections and research.

The Huntington has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. Please direct all applications, nominations, and inquiries to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT THE HUNTINGTON

The Huntington's [history](#) as an educational institution began in 1919, when railroad and real estate businessman Henry Edwards Huntington and his wife, Arabella Duval Huntington, signed a trust document opening their private estate and extensive library, art, and botanical collections "to promote the public welfare." Following Henry's death in 1927, the grounds and collections opened to the public on January 27, 1928.

Today, The Huntington is singular for the breadth and depth of its collections, which combine primary resources available only on-site with rich academic context that attests to their ongoing relevance. The [Huntington Library](#) is one of the world's great independent research libraries, with some 12 million items spanning the 11th to the 21st century. The [Art Museum](#) features British, European, American, and Asian art spanning more than 500 years and includes more than 45,000 objects. Encompassing roughly 130 acres, the [Botanical Gardens](#) feature living collections in 16 themed gardens with more than 83,000 living plants and a laboratory for botanical conservation and research. Each year, some 2,000 scholars in the fields of history, literature, art history, and the history of science, technology, and medicine come from around the world to conduct academic research in the library and art collections. Continued digital growth through The Huntington's online platforms will play a critical role in fulfilling strategic priorities for education, engagement, and access.

[Karen R. Lawrence](#) assumed her position as the ninth president of The Huntington on Sept. 1, 2018, following a decade as president at Sarah Lawrence College. Relevance, access, and diversity have been important themes in President Lawrence's leadership at The Huntington. In particular, she has championed the institution's public mission, including enhancements to the visitor experience on-site and online as well as partnerships that expand The Huntington's audiences and impact. President Lawrence leads a team of 11 Senior Staff directing more than 600 full- and part-time staff members.

The Huntington's fiduciary Board of Trustees consists of seven individuals with a spectrum of professional experience, including collectors and business leaders. A 67-member Board of Governors provides additional strategic oversight. As of June 30, 2023, The Huntington's annual operating budget was approximately \$83 million, and its endowment totaled \$762 million. The annual budget is comprised of 37% endowment and investment income, 35% membership and contributions, and 28% earned revenues from a diverse mix of growing revenue streams.

To learn more, please visit <https://huntington.org>

ABOUT THE EDUCATION DIVISION

Through formal programs for educators, students, and lifelong learners as well as informal interactions in the gardens and galleries, The Huntington's education division promotes active use of and connection to Huntington collections and exhibitions. It is a core component of The Huntington's mission to engage

diverse local and global communities. Student and family programs give a hands-on introduction to art and the natural world; professional development programs offer resources for educators; adult classes, workshops, and talks connect Huntington collections with contemporary interests and issues; and more than two dozen community partner programs support the greater goal of expanding reduced-cost opportunities to visit The Huntington. Each year, more than 15,000 students participate in school-based programs on campus, and educational public programs reach nearly 80,000 participants. There is a significant opportunity to expand the national and international reach of The Huntington's educational programs through curriculum development and digital engagement.

Docents and volunteers play a vital role in educational programming and visitor interactions. Approximately 300 docents and 700 volunteers work in over 30 designated areas and programs on campus, including and within the Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. Docent-led visits are central to programs and partnerships and increasing the training of docents available on a regular basis is a priority to maintain a high-quality visitor experience. The education division provides ongoing training and oversight for docents and volunteers, ensuring they are well-equipped for their roles, fostering camaraderie and engagement, and identifying opportunities to diversify and cultivate leadership within both groups.

ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Director oversees the learning and engagement strategy for in-person and digital programming serving students, teachers, multi-generational public audiences, and community groups, and is responsible for learning and engagement programs, school programs, and partnerships. Reporting directly to the President, the Director serves as a member of the President's Senior Staff, which works as a team to advise the President on the management of the institution. The Director works collaboratively with the directors and curators of the Library, Art, and Botanical collections, the Director of Research, an Education division team of approximately 22 staff, and the expansive volunteer and docent corps to encourage understanding of the humanities, arts, and nature through engagement with The Huntington's extraordinary collections. The annual divisional budget is \$2.4 million.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DIRECTOR

As the Education division looks to the future, the Director is expected to address the following interrelated opportunities and challenges as key priorities.

Provide exceptional institutional leadership in partnership with the President and Senior Staff

- Collaborate with the President and other Senior Staff on institutional resources and their allocation;
- Seek opportunities to engage new and diverse audiences and to raise the profile of The Huntington's collections and programmatic activities;

- Devise and maintain effective methods of evaluating the impact and efficacy of programs, exhibitions, and the visitor experience;
- Play a leading role in cultivating relationships with members, donors, and potential donors to garner support for the Education division;
- Catalyze new opportunities for onsite and digital engagement, curriculum development, programming, community outreach, and partnerships.

Craft an ambitious, shared vision for Education and Public Engagement across The Huntington

- Develop the direction and vision for education and public engagement programs, ensuring high-quality programming that addresses community needs and national standards;
- Ensure operational excellence in processes and systems. Establish operations that represent best practices and provide seamless experiences for partner divisions and audiences; evaluate existing processes and systems on an ongoing and regular basis to align with changing needs;
- Recruit, train, motivate, mentor, and assess division staff. Lead staff in setting and prioritizing individual and department-wide goals, balancing them with institutional goals and priorities;
- Lead and strategically develop a robust K-12 school program, including onsite visits and digital resources;
- Provide engaging, relevant, collections-based teacher professional development programming;
- Provide strategic leadership and support for onsite visitor engagement programs and classes;
- Enhance professional development to ensure staff can sustain high-quality output and consistently implement best practices;
- Ensure a positive and collaborative environment within the division;
- Oversee the recruitment, onboarding, ongoing training, and management of volunteers and docents;
- Plan and judiciously steward the Education division budget by ensuring that the division operates within budget and policies, and finding strategic avenues to grow earned revenue.

Champion diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of the division's work

- Promote a divisional culture that maintains a commitment to and fully incorporates The Huntington's values of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and implements the strategies outlined in the DEI strategic plan;
- Prioritize increasing accessibility and attracting ever-more diverse audiences and learners, maximizing the potential of the collections and programs to ensure The Huntington includes and reflects the communities it serves in Southern California and around the world.

Provide effective and strategic cross-divisional leadership and collaboration

- With Senior Staff colleagues, develop programs to assess, enhance, and expand informal learning opportunities for a spectrum of learners, including K-12 to life-long learners;

- With the Directors of the Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens and their staff, lead efforts to offer onsite and digital learning to supplement school curriculums;
- With curators and other relevant stakeholders, establish, implement, and evaluate learning goals and plans for exhibitions and installations;
- With Advancement colleagues, identify and pursue prospective funding sources for educational initiatives, including grants and individual philanthropy;
- With the Marketing and Communication division, successfully communicate, advertise, and promote educational programs;
- With the Vice President of Digital & Technology and other institutional colleagues, develop the strategic use of digital resources and platforms to fulfill the institution's strategic priorities for education, engagement, and access.

Support and strengthen critical relationships

- Strengthen relationships and maintain a culture of trust within the extensive volunteer corps, including approximately 300 docents providing vital audience engagement. Cultivate robust processes and procedures to guide volunteer interactions, sustain a culture of continuous learning, and develop leaders within their ranks. In partnership with Human Resources, establish effective, inclusive, transparent, and consistent systems for volunteer training and development;
- Conceive, develop, and cultivate dynamic and interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships with local, national, and global communities to form sustainable relationships that promote accessible, equitable, and inclusive experiences for all audiences;
- Deepen an open, collaborative, and responsive working relationship with the Education Committee of the Board of Governors, understanding their members' strengths and bringing forth their best ideas, resources, and contacts.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While no one individual will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional and personal qualifications:

- Minimum of five years of proven leadership experience and extensive experience in education and learning, particularly within a museum, cultural institution, or related academic discipline;
- Master's degree in education, museum education, or an advanced degree in a relevant field preferred;
- Proven track record of successfully building and coaching a team to offer mission-related formal and informal learning, in person and digitally;
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of current trends, issues, and best/next practices related to learning and engagement, museum education, and K-12 education, including evaluation;

- Demonstrated ability to apply the latest technology in enhancing educational access to collections and supplemental curricular resources, especially as related to interpretation and web-based learning, as well as high comfort with data-driven analysis to guide strategy and decision-making;
- Demonstrated creativity in design and delivery of education and programming within the context of a cultural institution, and demonstrated ability to pioneer new ways to connect with diverse audiences;
- Experience working with and/or supervising volunteers and/or docents;
- Experience forming and/or leading committees and advisory groups to inform divisional work;
- Demonstrated cultural sensitivity and diplomacy, emotional intelligence, and commitment to the highest standards of professionalism;
- Creative and interdisciplinary thinker, with a proven ability to work effectively with colleagues from across disciplines and functional areas and with other major stakeholders;
- Ability to cultivate new and long-term relationships with community partners, formal and informal educators, and local audiences;
- Demonstrated experience in budget management and grant writing;
- Excellent communication skills in writing and public speaking.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

This is a full-time, on-site position in San Marino, CA. The targeted salary is \$200,000-230,000, commensurate with experience.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/huntington-library-art-museum-and-botanical-gardens/director-education-and-public>. Electronic submission of materials is required.

Claire Hennessey, Ryan Leichenauer, Aku Ammah-Tagoe, Rachel Banderob
Isaacson, Miller

At The Huntington, we believe that having a team of people with diverse backgrounds and voices will enable us to support and promote the appreciation of the humanities, the arts, and botanical science. The Huntington is proud to be an equal opportunity employer and is committed to providing employment opportunities regardless of race, religious creed, color, national origin, disability, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by local, state or federal law.