Chief Digital Officer
Computer History Museum
Mountain View, California

To decode technology – its computing past, digital present, and future impact on humanity.

THE SEARCH

The Computer History Museum (CHM) seeks a dynamic, creative, and results-driven leader to serve as the institution's Chief Digital Officer (CDO). In addition to telling the stories of computing history and its transformative impacts on society, CHM equally brings a forward-looking perspective and aims to be a torchbearer for decoding technology's histories and complexities. The CDO will boldly own CHM's digital landscape end-to-end, both cultivating innovative strategies and supporting business operations. This leader will help pioneer the next phases of digital innovation for CHM and museum sector as a whole.

The Computer History Museum is the leading institution examining computing's ongoing impact on our world. From the heart of Silicon Valley, CHM is uniquely positioned to cull the key lessons of the past and through research, exhibits, events, and an incomparable collection of computing artifacts, help create digital citizens with the knowledge and understanding to make the choices that will shape a better future. For more than 40 years, CHM has collected the technologies and captured the stories of the visionaries, disruptors, and pioneers of the computing revolution, welcoming 100,000 annual visitors. More recently, CHM has expanded its reach to digital audiences beyond the walls of the museum, reaching tens of millions of people, including more than 25 million impressions on social media alone last year. As artificial intelligence redefines what it means to be human, and as our world grapples with many complex, technology-driven issues, CHM's mission, reputation, and ambitious goals position it as a key institution to shape a better future.

With an unparalleled collection, highly relevant physical location, dedicated board and staff, and critical mission, CHM is primed to enter its next chapter of cultivating and educating digital citizens around the globe. The CDO will join a passionate and energized community as it strives to expand its audience and develop world-class digital engagement. Primary duties for the CDO involve overseeing the digital strategy and social media for the museum. The CDO will be a highly collaborative leader, building their team and playing a pivotal role in shaping CHM's digital and technology landscape to amplify its cultural and educational impact.

The Computer History Museum has retained the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller to assist in this search. All applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed to the parties indicated at the end of this document.

CHM CORE BELIEFS

The world is changing; the telling of, and the learning from, history needs to change with it. Physical is merging with virtual, learning is merging with entertainment, time and attention spans are shrinking, yet people still love, and learn from, stories. CHM recognizes the need to tell its stories in a way that reaches a much larger audience in a much more engaging and memorable way. With a better understanding of the past, the world can make better decisions about the future. CHM's work is guided by three core beliefs:

Our computing past informs our digital present with lessons that span generations.

CHM believes history can equip us with knowledge and inspire us with stories that spark imagination for generations to come. CHM collects and preserves the legacies of pioneers, company builders, and innovators to understand the past, contextualize the present, and explore what tomorrow might look like.

Technology should be created and applied ethically and expand access to opportunity.

CHM believes that carefully examining the evolution of technology, from the objects it collects to the stories it tells, generates new perspectives to inform our ongoing choices. CHM provides a trusted forum to share ideas about the individuals who use technology, the companies who make it, the people who benefit from it, and the communities who might be harmed or excluded. Together, we can pursue a better way.

Technological progress should be in service to human progress.

CHM believes problem-solving is at the heart of innovation. CHM believes that technology—coupled with human creativity—can solve problems, bring people together, and build a positive future if we're mindful of the risks. CHM fosters creativity, stimulates learning, and convenes conversations about the possibilities and responsibilities of technology to further civic discourse, collaboration, and social change.

CHM Mission and Strategy

CHM's mission is to *decode technology–its computing past, digital present, and future impact on humanity.* CHM seeks to fulfill that mission through three strategic pillars that outline the work it does:

- Preservation: CHM collects and cares for the artifacts and stories of the ongoing computing revolution to understand how our digital world came to be and where it might be headed.

- Education: CHM provides engaging experiences that make technology and computing history accessible and understandable to people of all ages, backgrounds, and interests, empowering them to make choices for a better future.

- Conversation: CHM facilitates dialogue and stimulates debate about critical issues in technology, because the action we take today creates the future we live in tomorrow.

CHM leadership have defined a roadmap to build a strong, sustainable 21st-century Museum reaching millions of people – online and in person. This plan, Strategy to 2030, has the following goals and objectives:

- Audience Reach and Impact: CHM will engage millions of people around the world with world-class experiences that empower them to understand technology's deep impact on our world and empower them to shape a better future.

- Operational Excellence and Continuous Improvement: CHM will further its role as a leading museum and trusted resource by embedding evaluation in all it does and continuously improving its systems and processes while responding to changing audience needs.

- Financial Sustainability: CHM will advance our bold vision of a human-centered digital world by ensuring CHM has the resources to fulfill our mission to decode technology for generations to come.

For more information on CHM, see Appendix A.

Current Context

With tremendous progress made in recent years with respect to team building, operational efficiency, fundraising, and infrastructure, the CHM leadership team is prepared and eager to drive toward the next chapter of impact.

In April 2024, Marc Etkind joined CHM as its new president and CEO with an extensive background in science and technology media. He most recently served as head of communications at NASA, where he led a team of 400 people across 10 centers, with responsibility that included news, exhibits, and historical preservation. He spearheaded a digital transformation for the agency, creating a new streaming service, modernizing the website, and expanding the reach of more than a dozen social media platforms to engage nearly 400 million followers. Prior to his tenure at NASA, Etkind was the general manager of the Science Channel and has held key executive roles at the History and Discovery channels. Marc is a self-described "science and tech nerd" and museum lover. He discovered his future career at the age of ten, when he had an incredible experience watching chicks hatching at the Museum of Science in Boston with his dad.

In recent years, CHM vigorously expanded its digital strategy and began development of its ambitious open-source platform, OpenCHM. With generous support from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the OpenCHM platform is making the Museum's collection, exhibits, and programs more accessible to a global audience. Also in recent years, the Museum launched games on the Minecraft: Education Edition and Roblox platforms, collaborated with Audible to create the podcast *Recoding History,* about female

contributors to the computing revolution, and dramatically expanded its reach to tens of millions of people, all with the goal of meeting audiences where they are with stories and insights from CHM's collection. The Museum's network infrastructure was recently refurbished, and facilities updates are well underway.

The CHM community is thrilled with the fall 2024 debut of a new exhibit – *Chatbots Decoded: Exploring AI*. As the collective consciousness considers recent breakthroughs in this field, this exhibit immerses audiences into the long history of chatbots, allows visitors to interact with a conversational AI robot and understand the strengths and weaknesses of this technology, and provokes thought about how chatbots may affect humankind in the future. In addition to *Chatbots*, CHM looks forward to a variety of upcoming pop-up exhibits and in-depth digital storytelling experiences, in addition to more live programming, which has been very successful and is broadcasted and recorded for later viewing and for posterity.

ROLE OF THE CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER

As a key member of the Museum's leadership team, the Chief Digital Officer will report to the President and CEO. The CDO will drive innovation across holistic digital strategy while developing their team. The CDO will be responsible for the public facing and back-end management of the website, management of strategy and content of various social media channels, cross-departmental data and system management (i.e. Salesforce, Ticketure, etc.), video content, and IT, and must have knowledge of web analytics. The CDO will champion projects and policies that protect and engage stakeholders while expanding the Museum's research and influence within the communities it serves.

Direct reports to the CDO currently include the Director, Technology Operation and Director, Digital Technology. The portfolio involves oversight of approximately 10 staff total. CHM's current annual operating budget is approximately $16 million, and the current endowment is over $36 million.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE CDO

The CDO will be expected to address the following opportunities and challenges:

Shape and execute a creative and inspiring digital strategy

- Establish, execute, and oversee a long- and short-term digital strategy that aligns with the Museum's institutional goals, elevates its experience, and enhances its public impact.

- Work closely with the leadership team to participate in setting the long-term goals for the museum more broadly, in addition to the digital-specific strategy.

- Inspire a culture of innovation, transparency, and accountability across digital and IT functions, ensuring alignment with the Museum's mission and values.

- Represent the Museum in national and international forums, building relationships that enhance its leadership role in the digital cultural sector.

- Participate in Board of Trustee and committee meetings as needed, serving as a strategic advisor on digital and information matters.

Advance digital engagement and media innovation

- Champion digital storytelling and media production that deepens audience engagement and reflects the Museum's unique voice and mission.

- Oversee strategy and content development for social media platforms to expand the Museum's reach and relevance.

- Build and nurture partnerships with technology companies, educational institutions, and cultural organizations to amplify the Museum's digital capabilities and influence.

Integrate digital strategy across core Museum functions

- Collaborate across departments to ensure digital tools and platforms support mission-aligned outcomes and institutional learning.

- Contribute to long-term financial planning, ensuring digital investments align with institutional priorities and sustainability goals.

- Leverage analytics and data-driven processes to evaluate the impact of digital initiatives and refine strategies accordingly.

- Partner with Collections and Exhibitions to develop preservation strategies that ensure long-term access to digital records and assets.

- Collaborate with Development to identify and secure funding for digital and IT initiatives.

Strengthen information governance and cybersecurity

- Promote a culture of technology security, literacy and human-centered applications that reflects the Museum's values.

- Apply best practices in cultural heritage information management to develop robust governance, applications, and security protocols.

- Safeguard data and digital assets by staying ahead of emerging threats and legal requirements (e.g., AI, privacy, PCI compliance, accessibility).

Lead and cultivate a high-performing, inclusive digital and IT team

- Recruit, mentor, and retain a diverse team of digital and technology professionals, fostering a collaborative and high-performance culture.

- Promote inclusive leadership and open communication, ensuring strong interpersonal relationships and positive team dynamics.

- Model ethical, professional behavior and cultivate a workplace grounded in trust, respect, and shared purpose.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The CDO will be a creative and strategic leader who can bring together multiple constituencies to support and achieve a common vision. This decisive individual will be committed to the highest ethical standards and will lead in a transparent and accountable manner, with a leadership style that inspires and motivates others. This individual will have the capacity to discern and manage competing priorities and be able to recognize and act on opportunities. While no single candidate will have all the ideal qualifications, but it seeks candidates with the following experience and abilities:

- Bachelor's degree required; graduate-level degree preferred.

- Previous experience leading, developing and implementing consumer-facing digital technology and enterprise systems in a company at scale, ideally within the tech, media, museum or education sector.

- At least 10 years of experience in administration of information systems and technology, with increasing levels of responsibility throughout.

- Experience leading initiatives in a highly integrated environment with complex interdepartmental technology dependencies.

- Experience spanning web, mobile, and social media with a proven track record in assessing intended impact and facilitating incremental improvement.

- Experience leading content development for social media.

- Possess strong business acumen and commercial capabilities, the ability to establish a digital strategy and long-term technology vision, and the skills to translate that vision into actions that elevate value for consumers and achieve the company's business objectives.

- An appreciation and support of diversity and inclusion values.

- Knowledge of open-source software and emerging technologies and trends.

- Strong understanding of cloud technologies and trends.

- Understanding of principles and practices related to digital asset management, discovery systems, digital presentation, and preservation infrastructure.

- Excellent knowledge of IT systems and infrastructure.

- Solid grasp of asset management fundamentals, intellectual property issues, and trends in open access to cultural heritage information.

- A solid understanding of Microsoft products – both cloud and local (Azure, Office, Sharepoint, etc.)

- Leadership, supervisory, management, and mentoring skills; experience in recruiting, managing, and retaining staff with diverse functions and skills.

- A strong understanding of network concepts.

- Strong interpersonal skills; works effectively with people at all levels, including board members and external stakeholders.

- Highly effective in managing multiple projects and tasks within a deadline-driven environment. Exhibits a resourceful growth mindset, flexibility, and attention to detail while adhering to organizational and departmental policies and procedures.

- Proven ability to work collaboratively in interdisciplinary teams, maintain confidentiality, and communicate effectively through excellent written and verbal communication skills.

COMPENSATION AND LOCATION

The salary range for this position is between $200,000 and $220,000 annually. Compensation is commensurate with experience.

The Computer History Museum is located in Mountain View, California, in the heart of Silicon Valley – the global epicenter of technology innovation, renowned for its vibrant startup culture, world-class research institutions, and leading tech companies. Nestled in the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area, Silicon Valley offers a unique blend of urban amenities, stunning natural beauty, and a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. Families in Silicon Valley enjoy access to top-rated schools, parks, and recreational facilities. The region boasts a diverse range of outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, and camping in the nearby Santa Cruz Mountains or exploring the stunning beaches of the Pacific Coast. Additionally, Silicon Valley offers a variety of cultural experiences, from world-class museums and theaters to exciting theme parks and family-friendly events. From the bustling tech hubs of San Francisco and Palo Alto to the picturesque coastal towns of Santa Cruz and Monterey, Silicon Valley offers a variety of lifestyles and experiences to suit every preference.

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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. Electronic submission of materials is required.

Courtney Wilk-Mandel, Evan Layne, and Cara Meyers
Isaacson, Miller

As an equal opportunity employer, the Museum provides equal employment opportunity (EEO) to all persons regardless of age, color, national origin, citizenship status, physical or mental disability, race, religion, creed, gender, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, genetic information, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. In addition, the Museum will provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with disabilities.

APPENDIX A

HISTORY OF THE COMPUTER HISTORY MUSEUM

The Digital Computer Museum, founded by Ken Olsen and Gordon and Gwen Bell, opened in 1979 inside Digital Equipment Corporation's office in Marlborough, Massachusetts. Five years later, it dropped the "digital" from its name and relocated to downtown Boston. Its mission was three-fold: To educate and inspire the public through dynamic exhibitions and programs on the technology, applications, and impact of computers; to preserve and celebrate the history and promote the understanding of computers worldwide; and to be an international resource for research into the history of computing.

In 1987, The Computer Museum began its Fellow Awards program to honor distinguished technology pioneers—unsung heroes and legends—for their outstanding merits and significant contributions to the advancement of computing and the evolution of the digital age. Grace Hopper was the first recipient.

Between 1996 and 2000, parts of the Museum's collection moved to Silicon Valley, and it was eventually reborn as today's Computer History Museum, with a mission to preserve and present for posterity the artifacts and stories of the information age. In 2011, following a two-year renovation of its home – the former headquarters of Silicon Graphics – the Museum reopened with a new lobby, café, gift store, and its signature exhibition, *Revolution: The First 2000 Years of Computing*. It covers the history of computing in 20 galleries, from the abacus to the internet. More recently, the Museum opened *Make Software: Change the World!*, which demonstrates how lives are transformed by software, leveraging multimedia and touchscreen interactives where visitors can explore coding with hands-on experiences.

Today, CHM is home to the largest and most significant collection of computing artifacts in the world. The collection comprises approximately one million items, including archival collections, software code, oral histories, and audio-visual components. New artifacts are regularly accepted into the collection after careful consideration by the curatorial and archival teams, and CHM stimulates learning and facilitates insights through collections-based research and access to primary source material.

CHM's oral history program records and preserves the firsthand recollections of computing pioneers from around the world. With in-depth interviews and demonstrations with more than 1,800 people, this collection is one of the most comprehensive on the subjects of computing, technological innovation, the web, entrepreneurship, and networking.

The Museum regularly convenes the world's most thoughtful, engaging leaders for its premier event series, CHM Live. It offers original productions exploring historical and current issues in technology, entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as the ongoing transformation of computing and its impact on society. This program helps the Museum cultivate a community of informed digital citizens empowered to make choices for a better future.

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All these activities ensure CHM fulfills its current mission: To decode technology – its computing past, digital present, and future impact on humanity.

For more information, visit computerhistory.org/.