ORGANIZATION: THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE

POSITION: VICE PRESIDENT OF VISITOR EXPERIENCE

REPORTS TO: PRESIDENT & CEO

LOCATION: PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

MISSION STATEMENT

In the spirit of inquiry and discovery embodied by Benjamin Franklin, the mission of The Franklin Institute is to inspire an understanding of and passion for science and technology learning.

ABOUT THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE

As one of the leading science centers in the country, The Franklin Institute is an educational and cultural center that directly reaches more than one million people each year with informal learning experiences engaging students, adults, and families. While having a national reputation, The Franklin Institute prides itself as being the most visited museum in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a top-five tourist destination in the City of Philadelphia, and an anchor of the local economy. The Franklin Institute firmly believes that science and technology have the potential to solve some of the most critical issues of our time, to improve our lives, and to inspire our curiosity about the world around us.

The Franklin Institute provides resources that help people to connect with science and technology in creative ways that resonate with learners of all ages and backgrounds. Though its historic museum is a central learning space, the Institute has evolved to provide people with educational resources in their own neighborhoods through hands-on activities in classrooms, workshops in libraries, community centers, and other settings, and through ways to interact online. Since 1824, The Franklin Institute has pursued its commitment to making these resources available to as many people as possible throughout the mid-Atlantic region.
In June 2014 the Institute opened a new LEED-Silver certified, AIA award-winning addition to its building, the 53,000-square-foot Nicholas and Athena Karabots Pavilion. This new wing houses a STEM education and conference center, a climate-controlled traveling exhibition gallery, and the new permanent exhibit Your Brain, in which visitors can explore neuroscience and their own senses.

Today, the Institute offers 12 world-class permanent exhibits that provide hands-on learning experiences that introduce and reinforce key science concepts in creative and engaging ways. The Institute also hosts renowned traveling exhibits that draw local, national, and international visitors to the museum, such as King Tut, the most visited museum exhibit in the world in 2007, and Body Worlds in 2010. As an American Association of Museums-accredited organization, the Institute holds curatorial collections particularly those related to Benjamin Franklin and the Wright Brothers—that are considered national treasures.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The Vice President of Visitor Experience is a new position that presents a rare and exceptional opportunity for the right candidate to partner with both internal team members and outside creative experts to set the content and direction of the Institute’s exhibits and visitor experiences for the next phase of the Institute’s history.

In anticipation of the Institute’s 200th anniversary in seven years, the Vice President of Visitor Experience will have the opportunity to re-imagine and co-create a vision for all of the museum spaces and to bring a big-picture, imaginative perspective to the highest levels of the museum’s leadership. Working with executive and senior staff, this role will help guide TFI’s emerging strategic plan, carrying it through all of the touch points of the visitor experience. With oversight of the Business Development, Design, and Business Operations departments, this newly created position will allow for the successful candidate to bring a large-scale, tangible expression of his or her own creativity to advance a cohesive and inspirational visitor experience at the Institute.

The Franklin Institute has unlimited potential as it begins to take on these next 7 years and is poised to stand alone in the national and international marketplace. As the Franklin Institute embarks on the strategic plan that will lead it into this 200th year, this position has an opportunity to lead in the creative vision for its future.
POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the President & CEO, the Vice President of Visitor Experience has leadership and responsibility for the overall visitor experience of The Franklin Institute. This position is responsible for creating and implementing ideas and strategies that ensure an outstanding experience for all visitors.

As part of the executive team, this position shapes the vision for visitor experience through all facets of visitor services, including exhibits, in order to maximize the Institute’s visitor potential. The Vice President of Visitor Experience brings creative leadership and vision to the Franklin Institute’s footprint even beyond the confines of the museum’s current component pieces. The role equally oversees the design and production of all exhibits which includes long-term installations and traveling exhibits. Additionally, the position manages the research and development of new business opportunities. The department has an annualized operating budget of approximately $4 million and 29 FTEs and 51 PTEs.

Responsibilities:

- Lead and oversee the development and implementation of strategies that ensure an outstanding experience for all visitors.
- Partner with executive staff on co-creation and long-term planning of the exhibition program.
- Manage systems and processes to provide a unique and exceptional visitor experience and service excellence at all times.
- Provide leadership to the identification, development, research and execution of long term and traveling exhibits.
- Review existing Franklin Institute offerings and revenue sources and identify areas for increased revenue generation.
- Govern the development and execution of operational plans to implement revenue generation programs in collaboration with other areas.
- Coordinate with other departments the generation of analytical reports and forecasts regarding museum attendance and related statistics, visitor surveys and data reports.
- Define metrics for the evaluation of initiatives to ensure they are successfully meeting the goals of the department.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

We seek a proven leader who has the potential and the passion to imagine all that the Institute can be in this next Century. The right candidate will be a creative big thinker who also has proven project management skills and has conceptualized large-scale exhibitions or projects of 10,000 square feet or larger.

The candidate shall be a good listener and have the ability to help shape and refine a culture of positivity, teamwork and co-ownership of exhibits’ success,
while also possessing solid diplomacy skills, the ability to work across department lines, and the ability to create collaborative, goal-driven relationships.

As one of the key spokespersons for The Franklin Institute, this individual must have strong interpersonal and communication skills and exhibit a polished professional demeanor with executive presence and a persuasive manner. Demonstrated track record of strategic thinking and execution skills is critical. Excellent project management skills and abilities are essential to the success in this role. Strong research, presentation and communication skills are ideal.

Demonstrated experience developing and implementing effective initiatives and strategies to ensure consistent service excellence, is a must. This person will possess knowledge of audience evaluation techniques.

The successful candidate will have a minimum of seven (7) years at a senior management or executive level in a cultural institution, museum, live entertainment or amusement organization managing large scale exhibitions and leading a diverse team of individuals and skill sets both in-house and with external contractors. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year college or university is required. A graduate degree is highly preferred.

Applications and nominations are being received by Kittleman & Associates, LLC. To apply, please visit http://kittlemansearch.com/VP-of-Visitor-Experience-The-Franklin-Institute.html.

For more information on The Franklin Institute, please visit www.fi.edu.