

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Annenberg Space for Photography Director

The Annenberg Foundation seeks an experienced professional to develop groundbreaking exhibitions and programs that explore our contemporary world through photography.

Wallis Annenberg, Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, and President of the Annenberg Foundation, established the [Annenberg Space for Photography](#) in 2009 as a unique extension of the work of the Annenberg Foundation. The Annenberg Foundation is a family foundation originally founded by publisher, diplomat and philanthropist, Walter H. Annenberg and now led by his daughter.

Enabled by continued strong investment by the Foundation, the Annenberg Space for Photography has become one of America's leaders in drawing public attention and international recognition to photographers doing meaningful, high quality, thematic work. The Space for Photography is located in its own separate building near the Foundation's Los Angeles offices. Exhibitions and programs are shaped to encourage visitors to question assumptions, explore different points of view, and form opinions on key issues affecting humanity and our world.

A hybrid institution and gallery that places the photographer's vision and artistry center stage, the organization displays images of extraordinary quality. The Annenberg Space for Photography is about seeing the world through the photographer's lens, in the process presenting the vision of fine arts, fashion, portrait, landscape, wildlife, and science photographers, and of photojournalists on the front lines of current events. The artists responsible for works exhibited are nationally and internationally recognized as artists and leaders in their craft.

Exhibitions and programs are shaped to invite viewers to question context, challenge subtext, and share perspective with others. Exhibitions bring the textured art of the photographer into sharp focus, and comprise exemplary images illuminating human experience, nature and science; photographs of the universal and personal; photographs of images static and moving, color and black & white, and hyper-real and impressionistic. Themes explored by the Space for Photography have included: wealth and poverty, gender and gender identity, refugees and what it means to be American, life at the macro and micro level, environmental degradation, Cuba, war, techno-art, beauty, how people internationally interpret the world, water, cityscapes, sport... among [other exhibitions](#) and [programs](#). Artists and photojournalists featured include a [who's who](#) of recognized and emerging photography visionaries. The new Director will shape cutting edge exhibitions and programs to highlight both the artistic qualities and information content of images.

The organization has a full time staff of 14 periodically assisted by guest curators and other experts engaged to advance programming. The exhibition and program budget is about \$6m, with the ability to also fund documentary films that accompany exhibitions and other special projects.

BASIC FUNCTION

Reporting to the Executive Director of the Annenberg Foundation, and coordinating with the Senior Director of Operations on a day-to-day basis, the Director will work closely with Foundation leaders to:

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- select topics and artists to be featured in exhibitions (some of which will travel);
- develop in-gallery and online experiences, programs and education that explore themes presented in exhibitions;
- manage the day-to-day operations of the organization, and
- establish the Annenberg Space for Photography as the international leader in highlighting the art of the photojournalist and the journalistic content of the art photographer.

More information on the Annenberg Foundation can be found [here](#).

The Director will ensure that the Space for Photography functions as a bridge between the Annenberg Foundation (its programs, grantees, initiatives, staff and board) and the world of photojournalism and art photography. This will involve close and appropriately scaled cooperation between the Annenberg Space for Photography and photographic artists, journalists, art museums with photography collections, galleries, archives, collectors, universities, and nonprofit and business entities that advance photography nationally and internationally.

The Director will play a key role in collaborating with the Foundation's Executive Director and Board Chair in setting a direction of the Annenberg Space for Photography that is consistent with the sensibility of the Foundation. The Director will develop and orchestrate exhibitions and programs in collaboration with others, and will function as a curatorial advisor when necessary to a) strengthen exhibition and management practices of the Annenberg Space for Photography, b) incorporate diverse curatorial voices and perspectives into the museum's programming, c) actively develop networks with contemporary photographers, collectors, gallerists, museums, archivists, photojournalists and others in the world of photography, and d) define and refine Annenberg Space for Photography's brand position as an international leader in thematic exhibitions of photography within the Los Angeles arts museum and gallery community.

PRIORITIES

The Director's immediate priorities will be to:

- Understand all facets of the Annenberg Space for Photography, including the Annenberg Foundation's and the Annenberg Space for Photography's culture, staff, finances, grantees and initiatives, planned exhibitions, programs, facilities, infrastructure and operations; understand the organization's local, national and international constituencies and supporters;
- Work with the Annenberg Foundation and the staff of the Annenberg Space for Photography to understand their contributions, strengths and concerns; instill a strong sense of partnership and cohesion across the organization; use open channels of communication to reinforce a culture of excellence at the Annenberg Space for Photography; facilitate collaborations between curators, guest curators, photographers and others at the Foundation;
- Develop broad networks among photojournalists and art photographers, photography curators, collectors, archivists, etc; be aware of exhibitions at other museums, galleries and showcases for photography internationally;

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- Serve as an articulate and persuasive spokesperson, representing the Annenberg Space for Photography to diverse internal and external constituents.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will have the following range of experience and qualifications:

- Management and leadership responsibility in an art museum, gallery, news organization, photo-intensive magazine or website, photo archive or associated institution that is known for exhibitions of photography, innovative programming, curatorial excellence, and strong ties with its community;
- An appreciation for sound exhibition and exhibition programming practices; experience in working in collaboration with others to develop exhibitions and related programming; the ability to work successfully with community leaders, artists, curators, educators, archivists, businesses and others to shape exhibitions and programs;
- Deep and current experience in marketing and raising the public profile of visual arts and cultural institutions and in branding nonprofit institutions;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills, including the means to address issues in non-confrontational and non-polarizing ways, but nevertheless with determination;
- A good listener and strategist; comfortable receiving input and guidance from many sources, and able to analyze and formulate disparate information into a sound, well-organized plan; a team player and team builder; a graceful communicator able to connect with a broad spectrum of people; a person who cultivates trust and engages the interest of constituents;

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