Position Description

As a member of the Material Culture team reporting to the Director of Material Culture, the Conservation Manager is the primary person responsible for the care, preservation, and conservation of Ford House’s collections, which include furnishings, decorative arts, textiles, paintings, outdoor sculptures, vehicles, and architectural features and historic finishes both interior and exterior.

The Conservation Manager leads the conservation staff by performing a wide range of advanced conservation and administrative duties requiring specialized knowledge of the collection. As leader of the conservation team, s/he provides both strategic guidance and practical experience about the collections’ long-term preservation and oversees the day-to-day workload of the collections care team. S/he will also work with the Archives and Collections teams to assist in their conservation needs.

Responsibilities

Considering the unique needs and challenges of Ford House, whose collections are housed in historical buildings with features and finishes that are part of the historic fabric of the site, the Conservation Manager will be involved in the conservation and preservation of the collections.

- Manage all aspects of Ford House’s conservation program including implementation of a cyclical maintenance program for all collections, monitoring environmental conditions, overseeing the Integrated Preventative Pest Management program, etc. Works closely with Collections Manager & Registrar on these projects.
- Perform preservation cleaning and conservation treatments of collections and built interiors according to professional standards.
- Solicit proposals for conservation treatment(s) by contractors.
- Participate in disaster preparedness planning and any recovery efforts.
- Assess and prioritize the objects within the collection for conservation treatment.
- Create conservation proposals/treatment options for objects in need of conservation.
- Conserve collections items, adhering to the standards and practices set out by the American Institute of Conservation.
- Maintain all conservation and maintenance-related documentation.
- Develop, review, and manage the long-term conservation plan.
- Conduct object handing and collections-related safety training for staff.
- Maintain conservation supply inventory.
- Report on past and future conservation projects to internal and external stakeholders.
- Work with Historic Resources team members (Landscape, Facilities & Maintenance, Security, and Education) to ensure care and preservation of institution-wide collections elements, including but not limited to outdoor sculptures, historic buildings and structures, and use/hands-on objects.
- Maintain confidentiality of museum information.
- Assist in annual budget preparation for conservation activities and facilities.
- Work with Collections Manager and Archivist to ensure collections and archival items are documented and preserved according to institutional policies and museum standards.
- Assist with institution-wide projects, programs and events as needed.
- Represent Ford House at relevant professional forums and establish and maintain collaborations with appropriate institutions.
- Other duties as assigned.
Supervisory Responsibilities

- Directly supervises part-time Historical Buildings Housekeeper, volunteers, and interns.

Uniform Requirements

This position does not require a uniform, but the manager must present a clean, professional appearance. A uniform shirt will be provided to wear at specific events, and the shirt should be maintained by the Manager.

Training, Education, and Experience

- BA in art, history, or related field. MA in Conservation preferred.
- At least three years’ experience in the conservation of decorative or fine arts objects or historic preservation.
- Considerable knowledge of the theories, principles, and practices of conservation.
- Considerable knowledge of the techniques, tools, and equipment used in practical conservation of objects and historic finishes.
- Considerable knowledge of materials and current scientific processes used in conservation and restoration.
- Ability to identify and assess preservation needs for a variety of objects, architectural features, and historic finishes.
- Ability to plan future conservation and maintenance projects, and manage said projects.
- Ability to write accurate, clear, and concise proposals and reports detailing activities.
- Ability to train and supervise personnel engaged in preservation activities.
- Ability to work in a variety of mediums.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality in all professional matters.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate, orally and in writing.
- Good organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office suite.
- Familiarity with collections database software.
- Ability to work independently, as well as part of a team.
- Must be able to sit, stoop, stand for extended periods of time; lift heavy containers (up to 50 lbs.) and handle fragile items.
- Visual acuity and ability to work at a computer for extended periods of time.

Work Schedule

- This is a full-time position with benefits.
- Must be able to work evenings, weekends and holidays as necessary.
- Must be able to travel to various locations including Ford House and the off-site collections facility.

Other Job Requirements

- Successful completion of background and credit check.
- Physically able to sit for long periods of time, stand in the galleries as needed, able to use a computer, able to bend and/or stoop, climb, and lift up to 50 lbs. to perform tasks that may be required in the course of museum operation.

Email resume, salary requirements, and application to jobsearch@fordhouse.org. Indicate in subject line, “Conservation Manager.” Please, no phone calls.

*Ford House is committed to creating a diverse environment. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.*