



*June 21, 2021*

# Associate Director

Academic Engagement and Research, Research Center

## MISSION

The Art Institute of Chicago shares its singular collections with our city and the world. We collect, care for, and interpret works of art across time, cultures, geographies, and identities, centering the vision of artists and makers. We recognize that all art is made in a particular context, demanding continual, dynamic reconsideration in the present. We are a place of gathering; we foster the exchange of ideas and inspire an expansive, inclusive understanding of human creativity.

## ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

A hub for scholarship and training, the **Art Institute Research Center** connects museum staff, art researchers and emerging professionals to transformative resources and experiences. The Research Center's collections provide material means for the critical examination and dynamic reconsideration of artworks and their unique contexts, while globally networked tools and partnerships foster the exchange of ideas across diverse platforms. A robust engagement program ensures that knowledge is shared, new voices are heard, and accessibility is centered, expanding conventional notions of who conducts research and how. The Research Center's dedication to the care and development of these three resource areas — material, digital and human — ensures the vitality and relevance of museum research for present and future generations.

The expansive collections of the **Ryerson and Burnham Libraries** are the backbone of the Research Center, and the historic Franke Reading Room is its public face. The **Art Institute Archives** stewards the museum's art and architecture archives, institutional archives, imaging archives, and digital preservation efforts. Fellowships, internships, transformative grants and partnerships, trainings, and scholarly events

are managed by the department of **Academic Engagement and Research (AER)**. AER is also a partner on the museum's peer-reviewed digital scholarly journal, the *Art Institute Review*. Together, the three branches of the Research Center — Libraries, Archives and AER — care for and connect audiences to a broad range of vital resources, including books, serials, special collections, auction catalogues, artists' files, archives, extensive digital tools, and inter-generational human networks of diverse expertise.

#### ABOUT THE POSITION

Based in Academic Engagement and Research (AER), the Associate Director is responsible for cultivating the next generation of museum research and art professionals. The Associate Director designs and implements pathway programs for emerging professionals and creates opportunities for research development across departments internally and with institutional partners externally, creating a bridge between the museum's object-driven research, Research Center resources (in the library, archives and AER), and the broader scholarly community. The role works across this ecosystem to design programs, foster inclusive mentorship practices, host class visits, and facilitate collaborative projects that help to expand research access, methods or collections in innovative ways.

Working collaboratively with AER's Project Manager, the position takes a lead role in managing the museum's centralized support structure for internships and fellowships, sustaining cohesive, equitable programs across diverse funding streams. The Associate Director also co-manages special initiatives, including the Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship program, the Mellon Chicago Objects Study Initiative (COSI) and the McMullan Arts Leadership Initiative, assessing and shaping them for sustainability. Similarly, the Associate Director will have the opportunity to design and implement new initiatives to network professors, students, and scholars with museum staff.

With the Executive Director of the Research Center, the Associate Director works in a broad capacity to expand the diversity of the future museum field and foster a research community across the museum and beyond. The ideal candidate would have an academic profile (qualified to teach graduate students, and with an understanding of art research tools and methods) and a committed, anti-racist pedagogical framework. Candidates should bring to this role their own research interest in art history topics historically underrepresented in American museums. Through this lens, they will have the opportunity to contribute to collection development in the library and archives, forge new collaborations, and impact the museum's research program in this area.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

**Facilitate access:** Supervise existing pathway programs for emerging museum professionals; hone a critical framework for training that incorporates diversity and inclusion as part of its pedagogy. Innovate and implement refinements to these programs, as well as seek out new opportunities to build support in these areas. Supervise enrichment activities for interns and fellows across the museum and design training opportunities around Research Center resources. Establish relationships with college and

university communities, peer museums and other arts or community organizations to improve access to museum resources and museum career pathways.

**Collection research and support:** Contribute to the expansion of Research Center resources into new areas, in collaboration with the Director of the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries and the Director of the Art Institute of Chicago Archives. This may include advising on book or archival acquisitions, accessioning of special collections materials, connecting with new digital resources or serials, or liaising with curatorial teams to help expand research resources in areas currently underrepresented in the museum field or materials that fit the museum's other strategic priorities.

**Administrative management:** Manage departmental and special project funds, including budget design, expense tracking, and grant reporting. Supervise searches and position requisitions for internship and fellowship roles in collaboration with HR and the AER Project Manager. Supervises the Project Manager for Internships and Fellowships and their endeavors.

**Departmental support:** Assist with planning and management of Research Center–led events that engage a broader academic community, such as workshops, convenings, visiting scholars, class visits and seminars. Research best practices for internship/fellowship operational models at peer museums and build a resource network. Contribute to leadership team endeavors on Research Center projects as needed. Manage fundamental on-site operations and physical spaces as needed. Mentor departmental staff and contribute to training new Research Center staff, interns or fellows.

**Liaising and communication:** Collaborate cross-departmentally to identify opportunities and develop materials useful to staff where it concerns mentorship and equitable best practices for supporting emerging professionals. Foster external communities to inform the growth and sustainability of the Art Institute's endeavors and facilitate partnerships, including liaising with faculty or career services departments at colleges and universities or staff at community organizations or peer museums. Keep abreast of new projects and opportunities across the museum by staying attentive to planning conversations with curators, exhibition calendars, emergent research fields, new acquisitions, and long-term planning. This highly collaborative role is expected to foster generative relationships across the museum's eleven curatorial departments and within the Research Center departments, as well as with colleagues in Conservation and Science; Development; Inclusion and Belonging; Learning and Public Engagement; Publishing; the Director's Office, and more.

**Stewardship:** Maintain impeccable record keeping, including organizing data for funder reports and supporting an archive of internship and fellowship records. Liaise with Development colleagues and institutional partners on grant reports and funder communications as needed.

Participates in Research Center and museum-wide committees and task forces, and completes other duties as assigned.

#### QUALIFICATIONS

- A graduate degree in an art history, collections management or visual culture field (including but not limited to degrees in Art History, History, Museum Studies, Library and Information Science) and/or equivalent professional achievements is required; PhD-level training is desirable.
- Two or more years of experience in college-level teaching, mentoring or other pedagogy-centered roles that would support the museum's communities of emerging professionals, is required.
- Two or more years of professional experience in a supervisory role is desirable.
- Willingness to advance the museum's commitment to shaping an inclusive and equitable institution is required. Experience leading equity-centered evolutions in professional practice is preferred.
- Aptitude for leading collaborative teams, motivating others and working diplomatically across organizational boundaries and with diverse constituencies is highly desired.
- Some experience with design, budgeting, implementation, reporting and funder relations for transformative grant or gift initiatives, and donor relationships is desirable.
- The ideal candidate should have a broad art historical foundation and commitment to a global, equitable, and inclusive art world as they will be expected to engage in diverse projects across the Art Institute's global collections.
- A research interest in works on paper, rare books or archives is desirable but not required.

#### OUR VALUES

All staff members are expected to embrace the Art Institute's commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable institution and to adhere to the museum's shared values.

- Our museum reflects and deepens our collective humanity; the arts are integral to an inspired and just society.
- We respect and acknowledge each of our colleagues' contributions and expertise across all roles within our organization.
- We share in the responsibility to create an antiracist culture built on equity, inclusion, and justice for all, acknowledging that these efforts are intersectional and ongoing.
- We encourage and advance a culture of hospitality, empathy, and gratitude for each visitor, supporter, and member of our staff.
- We embrace innovation and foster change with a progressive understanding of—and obligation to reconsider—our past.

- We sustain an open and dynamic civic platform, inviting and advancing the diverse perspectives of our city, staff, visitors, and supporters.

*The Art Institute of Chicago is an equal opportunity, equal access employer fully committed to achieving a diverse and inclusive workplace. We believe in a staff culture that benefits from a wide range of experience, backgrounds, and career paths, and we encourage nontraditional candidates to apply.*

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