The Mattress Factory
Curator Job Posting/Description

 Founded in 1977 by artists, the Mattress Factory is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in site-specific installations, contemporary art, and acclaimed for pushing the boundaries of both artist and viewer.

The Mattress Factory supports artists working in residence to create site-specific installations. Over the last 42 years, the museum has presented and commissioned new installation and performance works by more than 750 established and emerging artists, often from places in a state of flux, such as Eastern Europe, East Asia, Cuba, India, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the Middle East. Through a residency program that provides leadership, guidance, resources, and opportunities, artists create work that is unconventional, challenging, and thought-provoking. There is a regular schedule of rotating temporary exhibitions and a permanent collection of work by James Turrell, Hans Peter Kuhn, Yayoi Kusama, and others; as well as the archives of Greer Lankton and a garden installation by Winifred Lutz.

Artists receive unparalleled support, while working in residence, often resulting in the production of extraordinary artwork that propels the artist’s career and significantly impacts the field of contemporary installation art. Exhibition reviews appear in publications like The New York Times, Art in America, Art Asian/Pacific, and the Wall Street Journal, among many others.

The museum’s mission is to 1) provide artists with an integrated residency and exhibition program, 2) educate and provide access so that everyone can appreciate the multi-disciplinary creative process of today’s artists, and 3) energize its urban community through artistic and education programs.

The Mattress Factory has three exhibition spaces:  
- The Main Building (a former mattress warehouse) hosts three floors of available space for temporary exhibitions. The Main Building also holds large works from the museum’s permanent collection, including a floor of James Turrell’s work;  
- The Monterey Annex, located one block from the Main Building, is a three-story row house. Monterey Annex shows typically feature between three and eight artists, showcased across multiple rooms, and range from three to nine months;  
- The Sampsonia Annex, located a half block from the Main Building, is a three-story row house. The two most recent exhibitions feature one artist across all three floors.

With the passing of the founder Barbara Luderowski in 2018, the museum has restructured and the curator position as envisioned is a newly created role within the museum. This provides an opportunity for a visionary and entrepreneurial professional to build on the legacy of Barbara
Luderowski and Michael Olijnyk, maintain the tradition of promoting the artists’ vision and freedom of expression as a priority, and expand the role of the Mattress Factory as a leader in the field of contemporary and installation art.

**Position Overview:**
The curator provides leadership and vision for all exhibitions, including creating, implementing and managing the installation of exhibitions and associated exhibition programs, conducting research, overseeing conservation, and developing curatorial publications. The curator maintains professional relationships with artists, peer organizations and thought-leaders and establishes the reputation of the Mattress Factory broadly. The curator works collegially and collaboratively with the other departments including Development, Education, Marketing, and Finance. The curator develops and monitors curatorial department budgets, and supervises the Curatorial Department.

The curator serves as a spokesperson for the Mattress Factory, particularly on curatorial matters, including communication with various groups such as the Pittsburgh arts community and national and international constituents. The curator assists as necessary with donor events, patron cultivation, and board and member engagement. The curator values diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in artistic expression, the visitor experience, and all major initiatives.

The curator reports to the (Interim) Executive Director and is part of the museum’s senior management team.

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:**

**Curatorial Responsibilities and Relationships:**
- Conceives and develops an inventive and creative exhibition program of site-specific works that supports the museum’s vision; maintains the tradition of unconventional, challenging, and thought-provoking work, which takes advantage of the range of exhibition spaces in the museum’s various facilities; and, evidences successful intellectual leadership;
- Utilizes a variety of methods of artist selection and exhibition development, including commissions, open-calls, guest curators, and other;
- Has successful experience working with artists in a residency situation;
- Has the experience and ability to assist in the creation of new works;
- Produces and/or oversees proposed exhibition layouts and installation and de-installation schedules, all site-specific technicalities, installation staff, and has the ability to creatively problem-solve and adjust as needed;
- Maintains professional relationships with local, national, and international artists and peer organizations in the arts;
• Stays abreast of trends in the field and enhances the reputation of the Mattress Factory as a leader in the field of contemporary and installation art;
• Builds partnerships as appropriate to achieve strategic goals of the museum;
• Oversees the conceptualization and implementation of curatorial public programming, and collaborates with other department in the development of interpretive and public programming;
• Presents gallery talks and public lectures on the museum’s exhibitions and collection;
• Creates and/or oversees the creation of budgets and estimates, project schedules, agreements, checklists, short and long narratives, presentations, and other materials, proposed programming calendars, and artist biographies.

Management and Oversight
• Prepares, monitors, manages, and evaluates the annual Curatorial Department budget;
• Coordinates with HR and Executive Team for needs within the Curatorial Department;
• Hires, manages, and motivates department staff;
• Meets regularly with Executive, Education, Marketing and Development Teams to plan and coordinate key programs and initiatives;
• Provides relevant programming data and program specific content for proposals and reports in assistance of fundraising efforts.

Communications and External Relationships
• Assists with presentations to relevant funders and donors, sharing program information and coordinating visits;
• Evidences excitement to propel, communicate, and advance the Mattress Factory’s mission and vision with passion and sensitivity;
• Actively and effectively engages in fundraising and cultivation activities.

Interpersonal Skills
• Excellent interpersonal skills with a proven ability to work well with colleagues, other employees, artists, donors, and other internal and external constituents.

Other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:
• M.A. in art history or related field; M.F.A.; or B.A. with comparable experience as noted below;
• Five to seven years’ experience organizing and curating museum exhibitions, with a primary focus working with contemporary artists, a portion of those years in a proven leadership role;
• Extensive knowledge of international contemporary art, art history, and theory;
• Experience working with artists in a residency situation, and assisting in the creation of new works, particularly with installation art;
• A passion and vision for the role of contemporary art in civic life and a diverse community;
• Ability to convey a vision of the Mattress Factory through excellent public speaking, writing, editing, leadership, and management skills;
• Works effectively as part of a team and values a range of perspectives; and
• Strong organizational abilities, including the ability to create and manage project budgets, and proficiency in the full Microsoft office suite.

• Proficiency in a language other than English encouraged.

To learn more about the Mattress Factory, please visit https://www.mattress.org/

The Mattress Factory is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The museum is committed to workplace diversity and to providing employment opportunities to all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or protected veteran status.

To Apply
Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, CV and contact information for three references to jobs@mattress.org by February 10, 2020. Please put “Curator” in the subject line. No calls, please.