MISSISSIPPI MUSEUM OF ART

POSITION: Chief Educator

REPORTS TO: Director of the McNair-Davis Planetarium

STATUS: Full-time

About this Opportunity
The Mississippi Museum of Art is looking for a dynamic and experienced STEAM educator that can inspire learners of all ages. This person will be instrumental in working with the Director to shape the educational mission of the McNair-Davis Planetarium as a dynamic and community-driven hub for learning. Not only will they develop programming for a range of learners to foster curiosity and a love of science exploration, but they will also build relationships with local and state-wide schools and universities to engage teachers and students from pre-K to college.

The McNair-Davis Planetarium is a not-for-profit entity that is owned by the City of Jackson and is currently under the management of the Mississippi Museum of Art (MMA) for the next three years. Planetarium staff are part of the Mississippi Museum of Art's staffing structure, payroll system, benefits package, and employment policies. The Chief Educator will report to the Director of the McNair-Davis Planetarium and will work closely with both Planetarium and MMA staff to plan the much-anticipated public re-opening. Planetarium and MMA staff will continue to collaborate through programming and day-to-day operations throughout the year to provide meaningful visitor experiences to both organizations and the 1.3 acres garden that naturally connects the buildings. MMA anticipates hiring the Chief Educator by or before December 1, 2026.

Job Summary
The Chief Educator ensures the integrity and efficacy of all daytime educational use of the planetarium and exhibits. Their primary mission is to develop and implement educational STEAM related programs for preschool to college level students, emphasizing Astronomy, Earth Sciences, and Space Sciences curriculums. They will book group reservations and assist with logistical aspects of programming, including materials and technology management and on-site preparation. The Chief Educator will collaborate with the MMA education staff to coordinate a robust and meaningful school group visit to both institutions, connecting art and science through STEAM initiatives. In addition, they will collaborate with MMA staff to plan joint art museum and planetarium programming, such as Family Days and guest lecture experiences.

The Chief Educator's goal is not to duplicate classroom experiences. Instead, this educator will use the simulation capability of the planetarium to present concepts that are difficult, if not impossible, to present in a standard classroom. In other words, the Chief Educator is

not a formal classroom instructor. They will use the techniques and best practices of informal education to inspire life-long learners.

Essential Functions

Role #1: Implement astronomy educational programming to diverse school and public audiences

- Design educational content that aligns with current astronomical knowledge, age-appropriate learning goals, and effectively connects dome shows and Planetarium programs with school curriculums
- Develop inspiring and engaging educational programming that engages a diverse range of learners and encourages participation through the use of a variety of informal teaching techniques
- Present on-site planetarium programs for school and public audiences to foster curiosity and learning and to promote and expand the reach of the Planetarium and its important impact as a community hub of learning
- Build and sustain relationships with pre-K through 12 teachers and college professors
- Oversee the scheduling of all public school, private school, and home school group visits, collaborating with MMA staff on campus-wide tours and experiences
- Assist in visit preparation and other logistics for education programs
- Participate in editing and/or program development collaborations with other colleagues

Role #2: Public engagement and science learning programs

- Work closely with MMA staff to plan and promote joint programming, providing creative and innovative STEAM experiences for a wide range of audiences, including evening and weekend programs
- Plan science camps at the planetarium for the summer and school holidays to meet or surpass in earned revenue goals
- Expand the Planetarium's reach, impact, and audience by participating in offsite community events
- Conduct formal astronomy and space science workshops for teachers so that they are more effective classroom science teachers
- Work with area colleges and universities to develop school credits for teacher workshops that may be applied toward teacher accreditation

Role #3: Collaboration, logistics, and training

- Stay up to date on astronomical and science methodologies, current events, and best practices for STEAM-based curriculum
- Cross-train with other staff members and be prepared to represent the Planetarium to the community, host dome shows, and manage all operations of the Planetarium, when needed
- Learn to operate Planetarium equipment and systems, including the dome, sound systems, projectors, and interactive exhibits
- Work closely with other staff members to plan and set up the logistical aspects of programming, including materials and technology management
- Provide mentorship and support to other members of the planetarium staff and volunteers, fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment
- Work with the Show Presenter and Technology Director to train part-time staff and volunteers on Planetarium systems and to lead group tour experiences for all ages
- Ensure the safety and comfort of all visitors to both the planetarium and exhibits

Supervisory Responsibility
- Some oversight of tour guides and volunteers

Salary Range
$40,000 - $50,000

Competency
- Bachelor's degree in Astronomy, Physics, or Science Education, or a closely related field and a minimum of 1 year of professional experience in planetarium education, or a related field
- Strongly prefer 2 years of professional experience in planetarium technologies or a closely related field

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
- Demonstrated expertise in all planetarium educational programming
- Experience working with culturally and age-diverse populations
- Excellent communication, presentation, and interpersonal skills
- Experience working with planetarium directors, technical directors, and show producers
- Experience developing and delivering engaging educational programs and exhibits for diverse audiences.
- Experience working with, training, and supporting part-time staff, program presenters, and volunteers
- Ability to write STEAM curriculum and adapt content for different audiences and age groups

Travel
Occasional travel may be required, particularly in the local metro area.

Physical Demands and Work Environment
The typical workweek is 40 hours a week during normal business days from Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. However, the Planetarium is open six to seven days a week. Full-time staff may be required to work some evenings and weekends to accommodate public programming, public operating hours, and supplement for part-time staff. All Planetarium staff are required to be cross trained to run the facility.

The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this position. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.
- Some duties may require long periods of movement as well as frequent reaching and kneeling, pushing, pulling, carrying, lifting and moving objects 5 pounds or more.
- Work may be performed both indoors and outdoors throughout the facility and grounds.
- A successful candidate must pass a background check secured by the Mississippi Museum of Art

About the McNair-Davis Planetarium
The McNair-Davis Planetarium is a not-for-profit entity that is owned by the City of Jackson and is currently under the management of the Mississippi Museum of Art (MMA) for the next three years. The building has recently undergone a significant $23 million renovation, featuring a redesigned theater with a state of the art 360-degree projection and 52-feet in diameter dome, interactive and immersive exhibits, a multi-use event and educational space, and a welcoming three-story foyer that features a built-to-scale model solar system. The Planetarium is named for Dr. Ronald McNair, a filmmaker, physicist, and one of NASA's first African American astronauts, and former Jackson Mayor Russell C. Davis.

About the Mississippi Museum of Art
The Museum is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment. The Museum is a private not-for-profit and is not a department or agency of the state or federal government.

The Mississippi Museum of Art is more than an art museum in Jackson, Mississippi. It is a museum *of* Mississippi – a museum that connects Mississippians to our culture, our history, our communities, and to each other. It is a museum informed by the legacy of our past and emboldened by a vision of a future without division.

We believe it our responsibility to the community to explore and examine every facet of the Mississippi story. The Mississippi Museum of Art is committed to curating a shared space for every Mississippian – a brave space where we can all find wonder, peace and a voice.

We pride ourselves in being a visitor and community-focused art museum and garden in downtown Jackson, Mississippi. The Museum employs a collaborative staff that works to ensure the exhibitions, programs, operations, and community outreach fulfill the mission, vision, and core values of the institution. We are committed to building a culture of inclusivity that includes continued professional development opportunities at all levels of the Museum.

Mission
The Mississippi Museum of Art connects Mississippi to the world, and the power of art to the power of community.

Vision
Committed to honesty, equity, and inclusion, the Mississippi Museum of Art is a leader in engaging art, artists, and participants in the critical work of reckoning with the past, connecting with each other in the present, and envisioning a future without division.

Core Values
- Warm Welcome + Inclusion. The Museum will model open hospitality for all people and will demonstrate inclusiveness at all levels of its operations and programs.
- Honesty + Diversity. Honoring diverse viewpoints, histories, and lived experiences, the Museum will be a place for honest conversations that respect difference in the service of increased understanding and empathy.
- Local Relevance + National Distinction. The Museum pursues deep investigations into Mississippi's cultural history and produces programs of high quality and relevance that

attract new national partners seeking to explore the relationship between Mississippi and the world.

- Artworks + Artists. Museum programs will honor the primacy of artistic objects as sources of meaning and will include, when possible, meaningful opportunities for participants to have personal experiences with visual artists.
- Excellence + Equity. Museum programs, exhibitions, and collections will place artistic value as critical, while simultaneously dismantling traditional hierarchies of genre and style.
- Trust + Authority. The Museum values academic scholarship and accuracy; and, at the same time, it trusts the voices of people who have lived experiences that deepen the meaning of its exhibitions.

To apply for this position, please send your current CV and cover letter to careers@msmuseumart.org by November 1, 2026.