



**Position: Folklife Specialist**

**Reports to Executive Director**

**Sandy Spring Museum:**

Sandy Spring Museum is a private, independently-operated museum located between Washington, DC and Baltimore. The Museum supports community-driven cultural arts and educational programs. Originally established as a history museum, we now focus on building a sense of place, serving as a catalyst for community-building by facilitating opportunities for creative engagement. Our goal is to become *the* community gathering place.

In 2014 the Museum began partnering with Maryland Traditions. Because of our commitment to folklife programming and support of folklife artists and organizations, in 2019 the Museum was selected to serve as the regional folklife center of Montgomery County, *Montgomery Traditions* (working name). We seek to continue this trajectory by bringing on a Folklife Specialist with experience in a community-focused organization, who brings energy, enthusiasm, a talent for relationship-building, an entrepreneurial approach to his/her work, and is creative and self-motivated.

**Job Description:**

The Folklife Specialist makes recommendations for and implements support systems in order to foster countywide folklife practices through the responsibilities listed. What is folklife? Folklife is community-based living cultural traditions handed down by example or word of mouth. Key to this position is working collaboratively with folklife practitioners, allowing for self-determination in the kind of support provided by the Museum, which could include exhibits, performances, space, classroom use, technical support, and more.

**Responsibilities:**

● **Outreach**

- ◇ Continuously work to expand the Museum's network of folk artists and organizations.
- ◇ Host periodic, regular meetings for folk artists in order to determine needs, get feedback, and provide networking opportunities
- ◇ Plan and conduct regional fieldwork to locate folklife practitioners, including visual and performing arts, artisans, culture, and history. Document the work of folklife practitioners through audio and video recordings and photographs.

● **Programming**

- ◇ As requested or in collaboration with folk artists, organize and implement cultural and performing arts programs and exhibits that showcase regional folklife, including visual and performing arts and cultural heritage.
- ◇ Serve as point person for artists and presenters, coordinate program logistics with museum event staff, and manage agreements.

- ◇ Contribute to the mission of the Maryland Traditions state folklife program by identifying and developing contacts with local and regional organizations; coordinating work with other MD Traditions partners, and collaborating with individuals, scholars, curators, producers, and government entities.
- ◇ Contribute to and maintain a database of traditional and cultural arts practitioners.
- **Marketing**
  - ◇ With Museum marketing director, write marketing materials for folklife programs as needed.
  - ◇ Contact community leaders and organizations associated with specific folklife programs in order to build audiences.
- **Planning**
  - ◇ Create a Montgomery Traditions Advisory Board consisting of artists, administrators, and potential funders to provide periodic feedback on the development and operations of Montgomery Traditions.
  - ◇ With the Museum's executive director and Advisory Committee, create a strategic plan for Montgomery Traditions that incorporates input from stakeholders and dovetails with the Museum's strategic plan.
  - ◇ Annually develop a written work plan that includes measurable goals (e.g. how many interviews to conduct) and qualitative ones (e.g. pertaining to building relationships, etc)
  - ◇ Prepare an annual report that documents all work accomplishments during the previous twelve months.
  - ◇ Write grant narratives and reports
- **Scholarly activities - as time allows**
  - ◇ Research and publish scholarly works on regional folklife practices.
  - ◇ Teach courses and workshops at academic and other institutions as opportunities arise.

**Required:**

- ◇ Must have access to a car. Public transportation options in Montgomery County are limited.
- ◇ Must have demonstrably good computer skills and a willingness to learn new applications.

**Preferred:**

- ◇ Preference will be given to bilingual candidates, especially those who speak Spanish or Amharic.

**Terms:**

This non-exempt position has a starting salary of \$32,960 for twenty-four hours per week (\$51,500/annually). We plan to increase hours to 3/4 time by fall 2020, and fulltime by 2021. While most hours are worked between 9am – 5pm on weekdays, it will be necessary to attend evening and weekend events, and conduct fieldwork outside of normal business hours. Benefits include paid sick leave, a SIMPLE IRA, and an employee-paid health insurance plan. Part-time employees receive paid vacation and holidays, prorated based on the number of hours worked.

**How to apply:**

Send a single PDF with a cover letter, resume, and three current references to [aweiss@sandyspringmuseum.org](mailto:aweiss@sandyspringmuseum.org). Also in a single PDF or with a website link, share some examples of your work.