

PLANET
WORD



Director of Marketing & Communications

Washington, DC



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Planet Word

Planet Word is an interactive museum that brings language to life with unique, immersive experiences for people of all ages. Established by philanthropist and educator Ann Friedman, the museum resides in the Franklin School, a newly restored National Historic Landmark at the corner of 13th and K Streets, NW, in the heart of Washington, DC. The museum has architecturally significant high-tech and media-intensive exhibits and installations. Opened to visitors in October 2020 during the global health pandemic, the museum quickly developed engaging online public and education programming. Planet Word is still at the earliest stages of growth and development as an organization, working to realize the enormous potential of its exhibits and experiences. They anticipate annual visitorship to the museum to be around 150,000 people.



Where It All Began

Ann B. Friedman had just retired from teaching first grade reading when the idea of Planet Word struck her. Reading about the Museum of Mathematics in New York City, she learned how it used hands-on activities to make math fun. If there's a museum for math, she thought, why not a museum for words?

Just like the museum for math celebrates math, words in their endlessly evolving variety should be celebrated, too. Whether signed, spoken, written, or sung, language connects us and shapes our most significant moments. Our words and language reflect who we are, how we interact with others, and how we interpret our world.

There should be a place to explore the power, fun, and beauty of words, she decided. And, since such a place didn't yet exist, she set out to bring her vision to life.

Planet Word was born.



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We believe first-rate literacy skills are essential

The strength of a democracy depends upon a literate population to understand and address complex issues of the day. But in the U.S., literacy trends are moving in the wrong direction. Too many adult Americans can't read at a functional level; students are falling behind in reading skills; and our political discussions too frequently descend into diatribe rather than dialogue.

32 million

adults in the U.S. can't read.

34%

of 4th graders couldn't read at a basic level on national tests in 2019.

We show — we don't tell

Planet Word explores how language is used, rather than dictate how it should be used. Linguists would call it a “descriptive” rather than a “prescriptive” museum. We won't tell you what's right and wrong. We're just here to celebrate the power, fun, and beauty of language!

We are committed to our community

As a museum for the entire community, we're collaborating with partners who share our core belief that literacy is the foundation of a strong democracy. Our partners serve children and adults with low literacy, people without access to educational resources, and those experiencing homelessness. Together, we're working to ensure that Planet Word is a welcoming place, serving a diverse audience, and making a difference in the life of the community.

Among the amazing interactive exhibits in Planet Word's 50,000 square feet of exhibit space are:



Speaking Willow murmurs in hundreds of languages as you pass under the branches of this unique sculpture.



The Spoken World introduces speakers and signers from all over the world, who tell what's unique about their language.



Word Worlds allows visitors to dip a brush into *verdant*, *surreal*, or *luminous* and paint the room with color, sound, and motion.



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The Opportunity

Planet Word is searching for a creative and outgoing individual to help us establish our brand, maximize media exposure, and grow attendance to the museum and participation in its programs. The Director of Marketing & Communications will be a trusted thought partner, responsible for delivering creative strategies across all areas of marketing and communications.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Marketing & Communications is responsible for strategizing, directing, designing, and implementing effective marketing and identity programs and campaigns across diverse media that convey a strong brand. Using the rich datasets Planet Word has captured since before the museum opened, the successful Director will create a data-driven plan to increase earned media, onsite attendance and digital engagement, and public and industry awareness. The Director reports to the Executive Director and works closely with the museum's CEO and Founder.

The Director's primary responsibilities include:

- ❖ Develop, execute, and evolve an integrated, multi-platform communications strategy and global promotional campaign in support of the museum's visitor experience, programs, initiatives, and overall brand, including advertising, banners, website, calendar, and public speaking remarks.
- ❖ Secure robust local, regional, national, and international media coverage of the museum's visitor experience, public programs, virtual programs, fundraising activities, and other initiatives.
- ❖ Ensure the successful promotion and marketing of all museum visitor experiences, special exhibitions, and programs, engaging a diversity of audiences and supporting strong revenues, membership, and fundraising.
- ❖ Develop, shape, and lead decisions about communications content consistent with the museum's mission and its vision to be a leader in the language and cultural spaces.
- ❖ Establish and maintain relationships that further the museum's communications and marketing reach, including with groups such as the local Business Improvement District, tourism groups, group tour operators, area attractions, area hotels, and others.



Qualifications & Skills

- ❖ At least 10 years of experience in marketing and communications leadership, including management/supervisory experience.
- ❖ Background in and passion for language in all its forms and iterations. A playful approach to using words in a sparkling, vivid, original way as befits a museum of words and language.
- ❖ Proven track record in creating and guiding sophisticated communications campaigns, including delivering cogent brand messaging to raise an institution's profile.
- ❖ Ability to implement, manage, and optimize a cost-effective, multi-channel marketing campaign rooted in data, best practices, and innovative strategy.
- ❖ Proven relationships with national and local media, with demonstrated ability to regularly obtain media coverage; existing relationships with cultural/education/current affairs editors, journalists, and social media influencers is preferred.
- ❖ Proven experience managing vendor relationships, providing clear direction and ensuring quality of work from design, print, communications, social media, or other professionals who may do creative work for the museum.
- ❖ Exceptional writing and editing skills; demonstrated ability to generate compelling and effective copy.
- ❖ Extraordinary verbal communication and presentation skills; ability to effectively and authentically exchange ideas with a broad range of constituents.
- ❖ Excellent interpersonal and diplomacy skills; ability to develop and maintain highly productive working relationships with museum colleagues, Board members, donors, volunteers, contractors, and area marketing partners (BID, hotels, etc.).
- ❖ Ability to prioritize, manage a variety of tasks, and meet deadlines with changing priorities, frequent interruptions, and conflicting deadlines.
- ❖ Ability to work evenings, weekends, and off-site as appropriate.



About the Facility

Planet Word's home is in the Franklin School in our nation's capital. Originally opened in 1869 and completely rehabilitated between 2018 and 2020, the 50,000-square-foot, five-story historic icon is located on Franklin Square in Northwest Washington, D.C.



Renowned architect Adolf Cluss designed the Franklin School as the flagship of eight modern urban public school buildings in Washington, D.C. The building served as a

model for the modern public school system and offered free education to as many as 900 white boys and girls per year (D.C. schools were segregated at this time).

International architectural firm Beyer Blinder Belle was hired by the museum's Founder, Ann B. Friedman, to rehabilitate and restore the building to its original "Modern Renaissance" glory.

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Candidates may submit applications at
<https://driconsulting.com/available-positions/>

Planet Word's policy is to provide equal opportunity employment (EOE) to all persons. Planet Word recruits, trains, compensates, and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, veteran status, and other protected status. Planet Word's commitment to promoting diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion is clearly reflected in the stories we tell. At Planet Word, we strive to provide a forum for civil discourse and to be a place where community, in all its vibrant diversity, can gather to share the words that bridge differences and forge solutions.



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