

Moffatt-Ladd House and Gardens  
154 Market St.  
Portsmouth, NH 03801



**March 1, 2021**

### **Director, Moffatt-Ladd House and Gardens**

The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of New Hampshire (NSCDA-NH) seeks an experienced and visionary full-time Director for its Moffatt-Ladd House and Garden (MLH), a National Historic Landmark and a member of the Great American Treasures (GAT) program of NSCDA. The Moffatt-Ladd House is a magnificent Georgian-style mansion with intact original architectural detail, fine collections and a renowned historic garden. The MLH is located on the waterfront in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a vibrant city with a population of nearly 22,000 people. Large numbers of tourists visit the city's historic sites, distinctive shops, and famous restaurants in all months of the year.

Since 1912, the MLH has operated as an historic house museum interpreting American, New Hampshire, and Portsmouth history between the years 1764 and 1912, focusing on the stories of five generations of the Moffatt, Whipple, and Ladd families and their enslaved and free servants. Primary themes include family life, slavery, community involvement, architectural and garden design, material culture, and historic preservation, in addition to transatlantic commerce, Caribbean sugar plantations, the mast trade, and the development of interior settlement in New Hampshire. Most significant are the stories of the political activism in the 1770s by both William and Prince Whipple, the former a member of the Continental Congress and Signer of the Declaration of Independence, the latter his enslaved servant, a co-author of the 1779 Petition of Freedom who appears to have been freed in 1781.

The restored and fully furnished 1764 Moffatt-Ladd House is operated as an historic house museum open to the public during a May – October season. Other original buildings include the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Counting House, now used as a visitor center and gift shop, and a restored 18<sup>th</sup>-century Warehouse and Store moved to its current location circa 1840. The Warehouse has a large open space used for meetings and public programs as well as collection storage and support space for garden maintenance. The MLH hosts and participates in a variety of events including a film festival, children's day, and the occasional garden wedding. The Garden is cared for by experienced staff members and a host of volunteers, who work under the supervision of a NSCDA-NH Committee Chair. NSCDA-NH also owns and cares for an adjacent mid-18<sup>th</sup> century house now converted to income producing apartments. The property faces the tidal Piscataqua River, where the original Moffatt Wharf is rented by a successful restaurant and used as an outdoor dining space.

*Director Search  
Moffatt-Ladd House & Garden  
Portsmouth, New Hampshire*

## **Job Description**

The new Director will work closely with the NSCDA-NH Board of Managers and members, museum staff, and volunteers to advance the MLH mission of education and preservation by enhancing the management, preservation, presentation, and interpretation of the property and its collections. The NSCDA-NH is a small but very active volunteer society, engaged with all aspects of the operation and maintenance of the property. The Director will work closely with NSCDA-NH Committee Chairs on matters of building restoration, maintenance, collection management, finance and fundraising. The Director is responsible for all aspects of daily operations, hiring, training, and managing the museum staff, conducting research, developing interpretive content and strategies, planning and presenting public programs, publications, and exhibitions, creating and supervising a variety of school services, workshops, and on-line programs, and also implementing marketing strategies and maintaining a vigorous on-line presence. The Director will have the opportunity to re-envision the visitor experience, working with experienced guide staff to expand interpretation, highlight provocative objects, add reproductions or other devices to enhance understanding and further engage visitors of all ages.

Restoration and reinterpretation of the MLH rooms have been done in a series of independent projects over the last fifty years, each utilizing documentary research and best practices at the time. Most recently, the back parlor was restored to a high standard, based on far-ranging research and state-of-the-art materials and techniques. This has prompted interest within NSCDA-NH to undertake a similar project in the Yellow Chamber, where large samples of original textiles and wallpapers survive and furnishings are documented in several inventories taken in 1768, just four years after the house was built, and then again in 1786. These were years that saw great change in Portsmouth and in the lives of the occupants of the MLH. The new Director will have an opportunity to make this a signature project, once again using state-of-the-art restoration techniques, extensive research, and innovative interpretive strategies.

## **Responsibilities**

**The Director will work collaboratively with the Board of Managers and Committee Chairs to ensure everyone is working as a team and:**

- Oversee all aspects of daily operations and work closely with staff to assure that the facility is well maintained, and that the collections and exhibits are interpreted and preserved to the highest and best professional standards.
- Attend Board of Manager meetings as needed.
- Regularly report to the President and Board of Managers.
- Manage and provide on-site supervision for building maintenance and restoration projects.
- Follow established best museum practices for handling and protecting objects both in storage and on exhibition.
- Manage staff including hiring, oversight, and providing timely feedback and reviews

- Engage and work well with volunteers.
- Create historically relevant and significant content for MLH audiences, both in-person and on-line.
- Plan and coordinate special events, community programs and outreach.
- Provide recommendations of loans, accessions, and deaccessions.
- Set annual goals and related budget requests in collaboration with committee chairs to present to Treasurer and Finance Committee.
- Provide timely and regular input to Treasurer and Finance Committee for annual budget which may include salaries and special projects.
- Present bids to Treasurer and Finance Committee for special projects, oversee these projects and approve payment. Treasurer's budget to actual reports presented to the Director monthly.
- Actively involved in all aspects of fundraising including successful grant writing.
- Develop marketing and PR campaigns.
- Represent the MLH within the Portsmouth Historic House Associates, the Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, New Hampshire Tourism agencies, and other similar groups.
- Other duties as assigned.

## **Requirements**

- Minimum of a Masters degree in a related field such as museum studies or history.
- Minimum of 4 years of museum or historic site experience with demonstrated progressive leadership experience and staff management.
- A passion for and demonstrated knowledge of and interest in New England material culture, decorative arts, historic architecture, and history.
- Solid background in all aspects of museum work and historic house management.
- Knowledge of non-profit museum and collection management standards and techniques.
- Experience in interpretive and public program planning.
- Awareness of changes in curatorial and interpretive work and the nature of house museums, reflecting inclusiveness, flexibility, innovation, and creative strategies.
- Experience identifying grants and writing successful grant applications, and both administering and fulfilling reporting requirements.
- Possess strong financial acumen.
- Present a professional appearance, attitude, and demeanor at all times.
- Possess excellent interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills.
- Demonstrate effective organizational and time management skills with the ability to prioritize, delegate, and multi-task efficiently.
- Capable of working independently yet collaboratively with a diverse membership and community.
- Strong computer skills with working knowledge of Quickbooks, Microsoft Office, social media platforms, and collection management software such as PastPerfect.
- Ability to speak, write, and read English. Other languages are a plus.

- Driver's license - need to be able to attend meetings, present and participate in programs in places within a 120 mile distance from Portsmouth.

### **Work Environment/Physical Demands Summary**

- Walking and climbing (stairs) and to oversee, observe and interact with guests and employees.
- Standing to address guest issues or assist staff in assigned areas.
- Sitting for long periods of time (4-6 hrs.).
- Carrying, lifting items and supplies up to 20 lbs. shoulder high.
- Bending, kneeling and reaching to retrieve supplies.
- Sight, reading, wrist movements, feeling to operate computer terminal, cash register, etc.
- Talking, hearing to instruct employees and assist guests in person and over the telephone.
- This position involves working in both a climate-controlled office environment as well as both indoors and outside exposed to various weather conditions and changing temperatures.
- In the off season the house's only heater in the basement is kept at 50 degrees Fahrenheit. The staff offices are heated.
- Occasional weekend and evening work availability required.

### **Compensation**

- Negotiable and commensurate with experience.
- 3 weeks of vacation annually, preferably while the House is closed in the off-season.

### **To Apply for the Position of Director:**

Please e-mail your cover letter, resumé, three references (with contact information), and salary requirements by April 10, 2021 to:

**[directorsearch.moffatladd@gmail.com](mailto:directorsearch.moffatladd@gmail.com)**

*The NSCDA-NH is an equal opportunity employer. As such, we offer equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, gender, religion, age, nationality, social or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, pregnancy, disability, veteran, or any other characteristic protected by law.*

*This job description in no way states or implies that these are the only duties to be performed by an employee occupying this position. Employees may be required to perform other related duties as assigned, to ensure workload coverage. Employees are required to follow any other job-related instructions and to perform any other job-related duties requested by their supervisor.*

*This job description does NOT constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the organizational needs and requirements of the job change.*