



MANITOGA / The Russel Wright Design Center: Collections Program Assistant Summary of Opportunity

Manitoga – the House, Studio and 75-acre woodland landscape of mid-century industrial designer Russel Wright (1904-1976) in New York’s Hudson Valley – is redefining the role of a culturally significant modernist site in the 21st century. With a creative vision that integrates nature, architecture, and design to a remarkable degree, it has become one of the great mid-century destinations within reach of New York City. An array of public tours and programs engage visitors whose numbers have tripled in recent years. The Russel & Mary Wright Design Gallery, featuring over two hundred of the Wrights’ groundbreaking designs for the American home, opened to the public in 2021. Substantial object donations from major collectors in recent years have advanced the organization’s goal to acquire a definitive collection of the Wrights’ designs. Ongoing preservation activities address pressing issues unique to this idiosyncratic and challenging modernist site. Programming opportunities abound and a vibrant Artist Residency Program presents the visual and performing arts in dialogue with Manitoga and Wright’s legacy. At this pivotal and exciting time, Manitoga seeks a highly motivated and skilled **Collections Program Assistant** to support and advance these initiatives.

About Manitoga and Its History

The story of Manitoga began in 1942 when the Wrights bought a former industrial property in Garrison, NY. After Mary’s premature death, Wright continued their vision of home, completing the House and Studio, *Dragon Rock*, in 1961. Over 34 years, he reclaimed the quarry landscape with design vision and ecologically sensitive methods, and in the early 1970s welcomed the public to the trails. In 2001, Manitoga / The Russel Wright Design Center embarked upon critical restoration and officially opened the site for seasonal public visitation in 2008. Today, M/RWDC ensures that the extraordinary “spirit of place” of Manitoga and the timeless vision that inspired its creation are preserved and shared. We celebrate good design and living in harmony with nature through tours, programs and events. For decades, the grounds and trails have been open and free to the public.

Collections Program Assistant Job Description

The Collections Program Assistant will support the Director of Collections, Interpretation & Historic Preservation in all areas: 1) management and care of the Furnishings, Design and Archival collections; 2) historical research and support for ongoing preservation activities; 3) development of materials and content to enrich public programming and for social media, press and publications; and 4) research and writing for use in funding opportunities. Additionally, the Collections Program Assistant will support the Executive Director in the planning, implementation and interpretation of the Artist Residency Program’s installations and performances.

The successful candidate will have a background in art or design and/or a minimum of three years related experience, proficiency in Microsoft Excel and database software, and a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in a related field. Prior experience with museum and collections management software is a plus. Keen attention to detail and excellent writing and communication skills are required. This position has potential for expansion and growth.

Key responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Assist with all aspects of the management and care of Manitoga’s Furnishings, Design and Archival collections including administrative tasks, cataloguing, preparing *Deeds of Gift*, inventorying donations, accessioning and loan requests, etc.

- Assume responsibility for maintaining a professional digitized collections database (Proficio Elements by Re:discovery Software).
- Support preservation activities for Manitoga's buildings and collections through research and coordination. Conduct materials investigation to identify original furnishings and finishes. Support preservation professionals in preparing studies and carrying out conservation treatment.
- Diversify methods and expand content for site interpretation that advance the integrated themes of architecture, landscape, and design at Manitoga. Help to develop programming for the new Russel & Mary Wright Design Gallery.
- Assist senior staff with the planning and production of exhibitions and the annual Artist Residency Program installations and performances both on-site and off.
- Research related funding opportunities (historic preservation, collections care/digitization), assist in drafting grant narratives and project budgets, track project progress, help prepare evaluations and final reports for funded projects.
- Lead specialized tours for the public, professionals and academic community that provide in-depth engagement with Manitoga's collections.
- Act as primary staff liaison to the standing Collections Committee which helps guide policy and recommends acquisitions to the Board of Directors.

This is a full time (40 hr/wk), year-round position with a salary range of \$40-43,500 annually. Availability for weekend programs is expected. Full COVID 19 Vaccination is required for employment.

M/WRDC is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

Please send a cover letter and resume to Vivian Linares, Director of Collections, Interpretation & Historic Preservation at vlinares@visitmanitoga.org