



## Contact

Chicago Collections Consortium  
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## Guest Curator Position (02/03/2017)

### OVERVIEW

Chicago Collections is seeking Guest Curator applications for the organization's digital exhibition to be launched in the late summer/early fall of 2018 that looks at Chicago's long tradition of social and cultural change and protest from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Tentatively titled "The Long Tale of Protest: Chicagoans Raise Their Voices," this exhibition aims to tell the stories of individual Chicagoans who advocated, protested, resisted, or simply lived through events that convulsed and transformed the city. Selections will be guided by their contribution to presenting the causes and issues surrounding these episodes of unrest and their enduring social, cultural, and economic change; the exhibition must include unexpected and unknown voices to tell the stories of everyday lives during periods of upheaval. Utilizing materials from [Chicago Collections member archives](#), the years of coverage are flexible, and would depend upon curatorial interpretation, though we expect the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1968 Chicago DNC to be included. This is a part-time contractual position reporting to the Executive Director/Board of Directors beginning this spring.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop exhibition themes and narrative in coordination with, and approved by, the Chicago Collections Exhibit Sub-Committee and Executive Director on an established timeline;
- Collaborate closely with the Exhibit Designer to develop all aspects of the online exhibit, including site architecture and selection of graphics to ensure successful integration of form, theme, and content;
- Conduct all necessary research to identify appropriate items at member institutions;
- Select items, taking into consideration factors such as suitability for digitization and broad institutional representation;
- Write captions/text for review by Executive Director and/or Exhibit Sub-Committee;
- Generate content for associated materials (e.g. grant applications, brochures, promotional releases, and other related exhibit collateral);
- Provide a minimum of three curator talks about exhibit-related themes; and
- Attend Content and Programming Committee and/or Board meetings as requested by the Executive Director.

### QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrated exhibition curatorial experience, including conceptualizing, shaping, and refining the themes; item selection; and writing of narrative text and object labels;
- Demonstrated experience producing digital projects such as websites, digital exhibitions, and digital collections;
- Familiarity with online tools used to produce digital exhibitions;
- Strong academic background in U.S. history;
- Experience using rare books, manuscripts, and archives for research; experience using audio and visual resources for research preferred;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills; and
- Strong organizational, interpersonal, collaborative, and management skills.

## **ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

Chicago Collections is a consortium of libraries, museums, and other institutions with archives that collaborate to preserve and share the history and culture of the Chicago region.

EXPLORE Chicago Collections ([explore.chicagocollections.org](http://explore.chicagocollections.org)), which launched in October 2015, is the organization's foundational digital initiative and is the cornerstone of this unique collaboration of academic, public, and special libraries, archives, and historical societies. Delivering access to over 104,000 digital images and 4,400 archival collections in its first release, EXPLORE provides unparalleled access to primary source materials held in Chicago archival collections, great and small. In its first month, EXPLORE was described in the *Chicago Tribune* as "one-stop shopping for researchers" and by *Chicagoist* as a "game-changing new archive." After one year live, it has received over 79,000 visitors from more than 150 countries and from all 50 United States.

Also in the fall of 2015, Chicago Collections held its inaugural exhibition, *Raw Material: Uncovering Chicago's Historical Collections*, in the Special Collections Gallery at Chicago Public Library's Harold Washington Library Center (HWLC). The exhibit highlighted notable archives, manuscripts, and objects from the collections and archives of Chicago Collections member institutions, and was accompanied by opening events, curator talks and tours, the organization's inaugural lecture, and a mini-curators program.

Based on the access to primary source materials made possible through EXPLORE, the organization continues to develop services and public programs to help ensure that the region's heritage is available for all to explore—freely, easily, and openly. For more on Chicago Collections current programming, activities, and members, visit [www.chicagocollections.org](http://www.chicagocollections.org).

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Interested candidates should submit the following items to the Executive Director by March 3, 2017.

- CV outlining relevant educational and employment background, especially previous exhibition experience;
- Preliminary ideas for suitable exhibition;
- Three professional or academic references;
- Confirmation of availability and ability to meet timeline; and
- Cover letter.