



School of the Art Institute
of Chicago

Director, Video Data Bank

Full time, regular

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

112 S Michigan Ave

Job ID: 11383

Posted: 10/13/2021

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3. Review the job description and select the “Apply” button to begin your application.

Introduction

For more than 150 years, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) has been a leader in educating the world’s most influential artists, designers and scholars. Located in downtown Chicago with a fine arts graduate program consistently ranking among the top four graduate fine arts programs in the nation by U.S. News and World Report, SAIC provides an interdisciplinary approach to art and design as well as world-class resources, including the Art Institute of Chicago museum, on-campus galleries and state-of-the-art facilities. SAIC’s undergraduate, graduate and post-baccalaureate students have the freedom to take risks and create the bold ideas that transform Chicago and the world—as seen through notable alumni and faculty such as Michelle Grabner, David Sedaris, Elizabeth Murray, Richard Hunt, Georgia O’Keeffe, Cynthia Rowley, Nick Cave, and LeRoy Neiman.

Position Summary

Founded at SAIC in 1976, the Video Data Bank (VDB) is a leading resource in the United States for video by and about contemporary artists. The Video Data Bank is committed to fostering awareness and scholarship of the history and contemporary practice of video and media art, to serving the artists represented in the VDB collection, to providing access to the collection, and to ensuring the future of the collection for generations to come.

As part of a collaborative and dynamic team at SAIC's Library + Special Collections, the Director of the Video Data Bank (VDB) provides leadership in the development and design of all aspects of VDB, including collection development, promotion and distribution, programming, interpretation, care and use of the collection. Is responsible for budgetary management, space planning, and stewardship of collections. Advises, coordinates, and collaborates with colleagues throughout the Library + Special Collections, the campus, and the broader art community—national and international—to optimize and promote VDB collections and artists for exhibition, research, and other educational programs. Represents VDB in interactions and dealings with artists, grants organizations, and video art and special collections communities. Contributes to the development and management of the VDB website as well as other online systems appropriate to VDB and its educational streaming services. Assists in securing relevant statistical data and reports.

Supervises

Archives and Collection Manager
Digital Collections and Media Manager
Distribution Manager

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Leadership

- Provide leadership for the Video Data Bank, with an understanding of its mission, history, international presence in the field, and a creative vision for its future
- Oversight for VDB daily operations; develops, directs, and assesses the work of the VDB team; supervises titles as listed above, including the responsibility for the day to day enforcement of all policies and procedures; uses discretion to organize and monitor work processes, resolve operational issues, and implement new procedures
- Recruits, hires, trains, and evaluates all VDB staff, as listed above. This includes assigning and directing the work based on judgment relating to work priorities and skills needed.
- Develops long-term goals and strategic initiatives for VDB, including the cultivation of clients and institutional networks
- Manage VDB's annual budgets, income, track expenditures, review accounting reports, manage revenue, and donations
- Provides direction for programming, documentation, preservation, distribution, and care of the collections
- Collaborates with colleagues throughout the Library + Special Collections and across campus to optimize the user experience in relation to collections and resources

- Assists with recruiting, training, scheduling, and supervision of student workers, volunteers, and interns
- In collaboration with the VDB team, develops and maintains internal and external communications and statistical data

Collection Development, Management + Distribution:

- In collaboration with the faculty and staff, continues to develop collections and resources related to VDB to ensure materials and collection practices align with SAIC's diversity, equity, and inclusion mission and goals
- Leads all acquisition efforts, including developing priorities and strategic directions for the collections and distribution processes; correspondences with artists and estates, and all contract negotiation
- Collaborates with Archives and Collection Manager in all aspects of collections management and development
- Responsible for daily operations, including management of facilities and collections (both physical and digital) and interactions with all constituents including, artists, students, faculty, staff, and other scholars and researchers
- Engages and participates in the ongoing assessment of collections and distribution strategies, policies, and services
- Collaborates with other staff responsible for distribution activities to ensure timely and efficient completion of royalty reporting and other financial transactions
- Work with SAIC's Instructional Resources and Facility Management staff on collection storage needs and space planning

Communication + Marketing

- Promote VDB to both internal and external constituents to broaden client base, expand markets both in the US and internationally, and increase audiences for video art sales and rentals within educational institutions, museums, galleries, and other international media arts venues
- Develop overall marketing strategies for VDB, and oversee the production and distribution of promotional materials to potential users through a variety of communication outlets--including, but not limited to press releases, newsletters, and direct e/mail marketing
- Manage and maintain statistical data and market research; provides regular activity updates and reports to the Library + Special Collections team and others as requested
- Represents SAIC's Library + Special Collections by presenting our resources to all types of visitors, on-site and online
- Works with colleagues throughout the campus and SAIC communities to develop, maintain, and promote our collections and programs
- Represents VDB in the external media arts and special collections communities, maintaining strong working relationships with colleagues at other specialized resource centers within and outside of the Art Institute.
- Serves on internal and external committees or projects and participates in film festivals, media symposia, and other programs related to collections

Teaching + Learning:

- Plays an essential role in advising, coordinating, and collaborating with colleagues throughout the Library + Special Collections and the campus to optimize and promote the use of collections for teaching, learning, and research activities. Also engages the broader arts community to enrich opportunities for our students and faculty.
- Works closely and independently with SAIC faculty and students to support their research and teaching needs
- Proactively engages the School's agenda for student success.

Other duties may be assigned by the Dean of the Library + Special Collections at SAIC.

Qualifications

- Commitment to the educational mission of the School and respect for all members of the campus community
- Master's degree in Art, Art History, Arts Administration, Curatorial or Museum Studies, or a related field with substantial relevant experience working within the international media arts field
- Experience with and a deep understanding of international video art markets and distribution strategies
- Five or more years of professional experience in a similar setting, including at least one year of supervisory experience
- Deep and demonstrable knowledge of art history, especially contemporary art practices focused on video and other time-based media with a proven track record of leadership within the field including experience teaching, curating, and publishing
- Demonstrable knowledge of preservation theory and practices for all video format
- Experience in strategic planning and successful program development
- Knowledge of current systems and technologies utilized in the assigned areas of responsibility
- Experience developing business plans, as well as promotional and marketing strategies
- Proficiency using standard office software, web services, and networked environments
- Ability to work effectively as a team leader, as well as a team member. Ability to work effectively with faculty, students, artists, curators, and other researchers.

Preferred

- Significant and progressively responsible experience in a similar position at an arts organization or academic special collection, especially at an independent, non-profit college of art and design
- Experience with grant writing and fundraising

Benefits

We offer a competitive, comprehensive benefits package:

- 5+ weeks of paid time off
- Paid holidays (up to 14 days)
- Medical, dental, and vision insurance
- Generous parental, caregiver, and medical leave benefits
- Competitive retirement plan (up to 9% matching contribution)
- Tuition remission and Tuition Exchange Program
- Great employee discounts
- Complimentary general admission to participating cultural institutions

Closing Statement

Vaccination Expectation

Becoming vaccinated against COVID-19 is the most important contribution we as individuals can make to ensure our own safety and the safety of our museum and school community. All employees must complete an attestation and provide proof of their vaccination status, or request a medical or religious exemption within the first week of employment.

The Art Institute of Chicago is an equal opportunity, equal access employer fully committed to achieving a diverse and inclusive workplace.