

DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING MANAGER



Background

- **The Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community (Bridgeport, Connecticut)**

Founded in 2009, The Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community, Inc. owns the Mary & Eliza Freeman Houses (circa 1848) in Bridgeport, CT's South End. The homes, under restoration (with support from the CT Department of Economic and Community Development, the National Park Service, HUD, the City of Bridgeport, the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation CT and donations) are listed on the National Register of Historic Places for significance to African Americans and women. Leveraging restoration of the Freeman Houses, the Center plans to create a national African American historic site consisting of a museum, education and digital research center, and housing. Our mission is to restore, preserve, and ensure the viability of the Freeman Houses; teach the history of Connecticut African Americans; revitalize the surrounding community; and facilitate the preservation and revitalization of other African American, and greater Bridgeport historic/preservation communities. Our work is driven by commitment to preserving African American historic places, empowering Black and Indigenous people by restoring their narratives, healing through history; and a commitment to Preservation-based Equitable Development. It is also driven by love of our culture, our story, our neighbors; and the belief that even the most marginalized deserve resources to narrate their own stories, in community, on land they deem hallowed ground. The Center is mission-driven and works to accomplish a sequence of strategic priorities. It is in the late "start-up" phase.

- **Little Liberia and the Freeman Houses**

Little Liberia (known as Ethiope then Liberia in the 1800s), a seafaring community of free people of color, boasted a luxurious seaside resort hotel for wealthy Blacks (cited in a letter to Frederick Douglass), Bridgeport's first free lending library, a school for colored children, businesses, fraternal organizations, and churches. Of about 36 structures that comprised Little Liberia, only the Freeman Houses survive on original foundations. Mary & Eliza Freeman (of African and Paugussett heritage) were accomplished business women. When Mary Freeman died, the only Bridgeporter of greater wealth was showman P.T. Barnum. The National Trust for Historic Preservation placed the Freeman Houses on its "11 Most Endangered Places" list in 2018. They are on the CT Freedom Trail and were designated one of the state's first five Sites of Conscience. The architectural legacies of the Freeman sisters, Mary (1815-1883) and Eliza (1805-1862), enabled the memory of Little Liberia to survive into the 21st century. Important archaeological sites, these homes highlight legacies of freedom, entrepreneurship, and social innovation. Little Liberia was an Underground Railroad destination settlement and home to abolitionist leaders of Connecticut's Colored Convention Movement.

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The Development and Fundraising Manager reports to the President and CEO, and works closely with the Development Leadership Team. This team of volunteers consists of professional and civic fundraisers with a proven record of success. In collaboration with the Freeman Center Board of Directors and Development Advisor, a development and fundraising plan will be created. The Development and Fundraising Manager supports, coordinates, and monitors this process. They are also charged with executing day-to-day fundraising and development functions related to annual and capital fundraising campaigns, including database management and communications. They help further the Freeman Center's sustainability, capacity-building, and strategic partnership goals by researching strategies that increase earned income and diversify revenue streams. Grant research is also an important component of this job.

The Development and Fundraising Manager facilitates participation by the Board of Directors, community stakeholders, and volunteers. The Manager also supports the President/CEO, Development Advisor, and Development Leadership Team as they solicit

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major gifts and corporate sponsorships. Freeman Center historic preservation and Preservation-based Equitable Development projects require that candidates have some experience with community development projects (up to \$10,000,000), as well as experience developing grant budgets and writing business plans. Familiarity with historic and other tax credits, or willingness to be trained in these areas, is mandatory.

We are seeking a Development and Fundraising Manager with an understanding of the historic and present challenges in fundraising for African American community-based cultural organizations, as well as a working knowledge of the local and national landscape of donors and grants for African American humanities organizations.

The Development and Fundraising Manager should be an inspiring and effective leader and manager, an articulate and persuasive communicator, a relationship-builder, and entrepreneurial. The Director must be a creative, inquisitive, analytical and observant, original thinker, who enjoys brainstorming and problem-solving with colleagues. They must be prepared to be “hands-on” when needed, and to give public presentations and workshops. Above all, the Manager must continue building expertise in their field. We seek a leader and mentor who readily offers expert advice and informed opinions. Freeman Center staff have overlapping skill sets (by design). They are expected to work collaboratively in project teams of varying configurations, with a designated project lead, to carry out the organization’s work and achieve desired outcomes. All staff are expected to have grant-writing experience and to provide research for grants as needed.

Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Qualifications

- Minimum of five years’ comprehensive experience in a non-profit community development organization, educational, or cultural institution, experience in the Northeast corridor or New York City metropolitan area is a plus.
- A Bachelor’s Degree (minimum) in a related field.

Required Skills

- Experience soliciting major or planned gifts with a track record of building donor relationships and success closing gifts in a six-figure range.
- Exceptional strategic, analytical, organizational and decision-making skills with a high attention to detail.
- Experience researching, writing, submitting and administering State, Federal, and private foundation grants.
- Experience leading a comprehensive development operation.
- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office. Proficient in the use of Blackbaud eTapestry or Raiser’s Edge (or willingness to undergo intensive training).

Abilities

- Must be an enthusiastic self-starter with ability to engage in self-evaluation with regard to leadership, performance, and professional growth, and ability to work independently with moderate supervision.
- Flexibility and capacity to make thoughtful, independent decisions in a fast-paced environment.
- Persuasive, articulate communicator; active listener with strong written and presentation skills.
- Excellent relationship-building skills, both externally and internally, and the ability to effectively represent the Center in all venues.

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Salary: \$65,000 - \$75,000, based on experience, plus healthcare
This position is fully funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation for the first three years.

Exempt Status: Exempt

Hours: Full Time, 40 hours a week, with some weekend and evening work required.

Job Location: Bridgeport, Connecticut

Start Date: Immediately

To Apply: Cover letters and resumes and/or CVs can be emailed to maisa@freemancenterbpt.org, or mailed to The Freeman Center; 1019 Main Street, Suite 210, Bridgeport, CT 06604

- *The Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community has mandated COVID-19 and influenza vaccines, as applicable.*
- *Driver's license required.*
- *Background check prior to hiring*
- *We are committed to an inclusive workplace and actively seek to employ a diverse group of people who embody our organizational values. We welcome and encourage individuals of all backgrounds to apply and are proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, familial status, gender identity and/or expression, genetic information, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other protected status.*