

Vice President of Collections and Partnerships Terra Foundation for American Art

The Terra Foundation for American Art is searching for a Vice President of Collections and Partnerships. As a collaborative partner, the Vice President of Collections and Partnerships will contribute to the overall strategic and operational responsibility for key program areas of the Foundation's work. The position will be part of the Executive Leadership team that drives the overall strategy for the organization and represents the Terra Foundation on a local, national, and international basis.

The Terra Foundation is engaged in transformative work to expand narratives of American art and contribute to critical re-examinations of American art history. Recognizing current and historical inequities in the ways American art is presented and understood, we have adopted a new vision for our program portfolio. At the core of this vision is a commitment to supporting and sharing more expansive histories of American art. To enact this, we are focusing on projects that are guided by inclusive and equitable research and on initiatives that center artists and scholars who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC).

We are actively reviewing and revising our current programs and generating new approaches that will support questioning, broadening, and complicating stories of American art. Essential to this ongoing effort is collaboration, and we are engaging a range of partners worldwide in this process to ensure that we are listening to and reflecting a spectrum of communities and voices.

Shifting the foundation's organizational culture and internal processes also plays a key role in our work. We have sought to develop shared language and values that center equity and mutual understanding. We are establishing new review processes for grant proposals, developing additional opportunities for community engagement, and adopting models for power sharing and participatory grantmaking. Within all of our work, we are listening, learning, and practicing humility. We recognize that our internal and external priorities must work in tandem to achieve real change.

As a learning organization, we also know that we cannot do this work alone and that establishing new partnerships and pathways for feedback and dialogue is crucial. This is an iterative process, and our programs and approaches will continue to evolve as we form new relationships, as our partners' needs change, and as we continue to learn and grow. The newly conceived position of Vice President of Collections and Partnerships will play a leading role in advancing this vision. Core responsibilities of the position include collection oversight, partnership cultivation, program design and leadership, people management and culture-building, and a commitment to the foundation's DEAI values.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion

The Terra Foundation for American Art is committed to strengthening diversity, equity, access, and inclusion across all aspects of its work, including board engagement, workplace culture, programs and grantmaking, and community and institutional partnerships. We seek to transform and complicate how the story of American art is told—through the histories represented, diversity of artists featured, interpretive perspectives included, methods of collaboration used, audiences engaged, and intercultural dialogues convened. We encourage applications from candidates who may contribute diverse perspectives to the foundation and help advance its mission.

Who should apply? You should apply if you:

- Have experience in leading organizations in American art, American Studies, or related fields.
- Are interested in building and activating a diverse network toward the foundation's overarching mission, vision, and strategies.
- Are excited to engage in broad and creative thinking and discussion about how the story of American art is told more inclusively and equitably.
- Bring knowledge and experience in the fields of American art and an interest in engaging current issues and cultivating opportunities for future engagement and strategic direction.
- Have experience leading collection strategy, programs, acquisitions, and deaccessions.
- Can serve as a spokesperson or advocate at national and international levels for the foundation's commitment to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.
- Can build relationships with the foundation's Board of Directors and contribute to successful board engagements and meetings.
- Are interested in leading foundation-wide strategy and implementation.
- Are interested in recruiting, developing, coaching, and retaining values-driven team members, and empowering them to lead from their positions in the foundation.
- Are Chicago-based or willing to relocate to the Chicago area.

What will the Vice President of Collections and Partnerships do?

- **Collection oversight:** The VP of Collections and Partnerships will oversee the Terra Foundation's collection of more than 750 works of art and lead the collections team in building and executing program opportunities to engage the collection with Chicago, U.S., and global partners. In partnership with the collections team, the VP will also advance acquisitions, deaccessioning, and new initiatives related to the collection with the goal of sharing expansive narratives of American art locally and globally.
- **Partnerships:** As part of the Executive Leadership team, the VP will work with Program Directors and staff to sustain current partnerships, actively cultivate new relationships, and foster collaborations within the fields of American art in Chicago, across the U.S., and around the world. The VP will focus on building networks and relationships with organizations in the US that serve and reflect BIPOC communities and promote diversity in the fields of American art domestically and internationally.
- **Program design and leadership:** To advance the foundation's focus on expanding narratives of American art, the VP of Collections and Partnerships will advise on and/or oversee the exploration, design, and development of new programmatic areas of opportunity, including grantmaking. Reporting to the President and CEO, and in collaboration with the President, Executive Vice President, and Program Directors, the VP will work to align programmatic strategy with the foundation's overall mission, goals, values, and vision. The VP will also oversee the implementation, learning, and adaptation of the foundation's programmatic portfolio.
- **People management and culture-building:** The VP will play an integral role on the foundation's Executive Leadership Team and build collaborative relationships with members of the Chicago and Paris offices with an understanding of the transcultural aspects of the foundation's staff. The VP will manage Program Directors and other senior positions and will work across the organization to foster an inclusive, collaborative environment. The VP will also work as part of the Executive Leadership team to identify staffing gaps and opportunities and develop staffing plans.

What is the term, time commitment, and compensation?

- The position will be a full-time (35 hours a week) role with salary commensurate with experience, including benefits (health care, dental and vision coverage, 403(b) savings plans, 4 weeks' vacation, sick paid time off, and more). The Terra Foundation is currently operating on a hybrid in-office/remote work model.

To apply:

Submit resume/CV and letter of interest to hrdept@terraamericanart.org. The listing will remain open until the position is filled.

About the Terra Foundation for American Art

The Terra Foundation for American Art supports individuals, organizations, and communities to advance expansive understandings of American art. Established in 1978 and headquartered in Chicago, with an office in Paris, the Terra Foundation is committed to fostering cross-cultural dialogues on American art in Chicago, across the U.S., and around the world, through its grant program, collection, and initiatives.

The Terra Foundation supports projects that foster expansive narratives of American art. Recognizing current and historical inequities in presentations and understandings of American art history, we support projects that address these imbalances and exclusions. We prioritize projects that question and broaden definitions of American art; center the voices of artists and scholars who identify as Black, Indigenous and/or people of color; and present more inclusive models of curatorial practice—through the stories portrayed, diversity of artists featured, interpretive perspectives included, methods of collaboration used, audiences engaged, and intercultural dialogues convened. In addition, we aim to lend support for projects that build on existing initiatives engaged in transforming or complicating how the story of American art is told.

About the Terra Foundation Collection

The collection of the Terra Foundation for American Art is an inextricable part of the foundation's history and an active agent of its global mission. The collection includes more than 750 paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, and sculptures by 242 artists working between the 1750s and the 1980s. The foundation makes its collection available throughout the world through loans and exhibitions.

Started by Daniel J. Terra in the 1970s, the Terra Foundation collection has continued to evolve to the present day. We recognize that it reflects only part of the artistic and cultural heritage of the United States and reveals current and historical inequities in the ways American art is presented, exhibited, interpreted, bought, and sold. We are committed to working alongside our partners to challenge the biases that shaped the collection and its interpretation and to reimagine ways the collection can help us question and broaden stories of American art.