

## DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

Priority Application Deadline: 24 Feb 2023

Start Date: 10 Apr 2023



### 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, 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, and healing through history; as well as a commitment to Preservation-based Equitable Development. Our work is also driven by love for 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.

## DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING

The Director of Development and Fundraising reports to and works closely with the President and CEO; and will spearhead the design and completion of strategic and business plans for departments within the Freeman Center, aligning them with the organizational strategic and business plans - designed and implemented by the Development Director in collaboration with Freeman leadership and consultants. The Director is also responsible for monitoring and evaluating plan progress. Although the Director will assume responsibility for fundraising (annual and capital campaigns); long-term sustainability, capacity-building, and strategic institutional partnerships are priorities. Strategies that increase earned income and diversify revenue streams are to be researched and implemented. The Director of Development and Fundraising will be responsible for positioning the Center to work with outside consultants and major firms specializing in cultural resource development, and facilitating participation by the Board of Directors, community stakeholders, and volunteers in this process. The Director of Development and Fundraising will work closely with the Development Advisor to obtain major gifts and corporate sponsorships. Freeman Center historic preservation and

## DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

Priority Application Deadline: 24 Feb 2023

Start Date: 10 Apr 2023

Preservation-based Equitable Development projects require that candidates have experience raising funds for community development (projects up to \$10,000,000), writing business plans. Familiarity with historic and other tax credits is essential.

The Director of Development and Fundraising must have an understanding of the historical 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 Director of Development and Fundraising is an inspiring and effective leader and manager, an articulate and persuasive communicator, and a relationship-builder. 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 Director must be an expert 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

- Minimum of five years’ comprehensive experience in a non-profit community development organization, educational, or cultural institution, preferably with experience in the Northeast corridor or New York City metropolitan area.
- A Bachelor’s Degree (minimum) in a related field. A Master’s Degree is preferred.
- Demonstrated success in 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.
- Demonstrated experience leading a comprehensive development operation.
- Enthusiastic self-starter with ability to engage in self-evaluation with regard to leadership, performance, and professional growth who works independently with moderate supervision.
- Flexibility and the ability to make thoughtful independent decisions in a fast-paced environment.
- Persuasive, articulate communicator and 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.
- Must have the ability to travel both locally and regionally.
- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office and Blackbaud eTapestry or Raiser’s Edge is required.

**Salary:** \$70,000 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

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

## **DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING**

Priority Application Deadline: 24 Feb 2023

Start Date: 10 Apr 2023

- *The Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community has mandated COVID-19 and influenza vaccines, as applicable.*
- *Driver's license strongly recommended.*
- *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.*