

PROGRAM CONSULTANT

Founded in 1999, Cool Culture addresses the achievement gap, by connecting low-income families to museum experiences that support early development and success in school. Prevented by cost, lack of information or the perception that museums are “not for us,” many low-income families and children miss out on the rich family and child focused programming available at arts and cultural institutions around the City. These programs are designed by top notch educators to develop young children’s curiosity and love of learning – and are just the kind of activities that prepare children to succeed in school.

Cool Culture partners with over 400 of the City’s Child Care, Head Start, Pre-Kindergarten and Title I Schools to give 50,000 underserved families free, unlimited admission to 90 participating museums, botanical gardens and zoos. We help early education programs to meet their goal of supporting families; cultural institutions to reach new and more diverse audiences – and most importantly, we enable children and families to experience and enjoy the rich educational programs available at the city’s cultural institutions.

Cool Culture is seeking a consultant with parent engagement expertise to help coordinate its Literacy Through Culture (LTC) programs in order to increase parent involvement in their children’s education through the use of family museum visits and parent facilitated visual inquiry activities. The consultant will work collaboratively with the project team which will consist of Cool Culture staff, Bank Street College of Education LTC consultants, and a consultant Neighborhood Network Project Coordinator, The consultant will report to Barbara Palley, Education Manager.

ABOUT THE LITERACY THROUGH CULTURE PROJECT

Literacy Through Culture (LTC) is a collaborative project with Bank Street College of Education which brings museum education programming to children and parents at six early childhood programs (three located in Harlem, two in the Bronx, and one in Brooklyn). The program pairs a museum educator with an early childhood team to create a classroom and family workshop curriculum which integrates museums’ collections. Parent meetings and family workshops take place in the community and at museums. LTC partners (museum, early education, Cool Culture and Bank Street partners) meet for network meetings throughout the year, to exchange successes and challenges in increasing parent involvement through education and museum programming.

New this year: LTC will offer a series of family workshops at museums: The Family Explorers Club workshops will engage parents with building familiarity, comfort, and skills for supporting family learning in the museum setting and include training in visual inquiry. It seeks to address the gap between attending a special one-time program at the museum, and going on one’s own.

Target outcomes for these programs include:

- (1) increasing parent involvement in their children’s education through family museum visits;
- (2) increasing children’s literacy development
- (3) enhancing the capacity of early childhood educators to integrate museums and art into their parent involvement programs;
- (4) increasing early educators capacity to integrate art into the classroom;
- (5) increasing museum educators’ capacity to program for audiences of color and low-income audiences, and to conduct community outreach to this audience.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work collaboratively with Cool Culture staff, and Bank Street College of Education consultants to plan and facilitate two partner convening meetings to consist of partners from across the LTC project (museum educators, preschool center directors, teachers and parent coordinators).
- Work with consultant team to plan and execute the Family Explorer's Club, a 5-part series of 2.5-hour parent trainings/family workshops that will take place at a museum on the weekends. Engage parents in expanding their comfort level navigating museums and in supporting their children's learning. Each session provides parents with an opportunity to try out their new skills to engage their children in fun, educational conversations and activities in museums. Parents will be recruited by the partnering early childhood centers.
- Oversee two early childhood centers' partnerships with two cultural institutions. Including: facilitating collaborative planning to integrate cultural institutions into classroom curriculum and parent involvement programs. Provide on-site technical assistance as needed, modeling behaviors that support parent involvement and early childhood learning.
- Work with Cool Culture staff and consultant team to develop a plan to for a 3-part professional development series for classroom teachers on the use of visual inquiry in the classroom and parent engagement strategies.
- Assist with implementation of the LTC program evaluation plan (to be executed by the early education programs with assistance from the consultant team).

Qualifications

- MA in Arts Education, Museum Education or Education required - focus on early childhood education preferred
- At least 3 years experience in Arts Education, Museum Education, Family Involvement, or Early Childhood Education
- Strong communication skills - bilingual Spanish/English *required*
- Ability to work with diverse constituencies and multiple partners
- Demonstrated experience handling multiple assignments and deadlines simultaneously
- Excellent organizational ability, attention to detail and accuracy a *must*
- Excellent computer skills - knowledge of MS Word and Excel
- Availability to work some weekends and evenings

We anticipate that this position will require, on average, 1 -2 days/week starting in January/February through June. Some weekends and evenings will be required.

Salary commensurate with experience and excellent benefits package included. Cool Culture is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Absolutely NO phone calls; but please feel free to visit us on the web at www.coolculture.org. To apply, please submit a cover letter, resume *and* curriculum guide sample to: hr@coolculture.org.