POSITION PROFILE

Chief of Education & Learning
California Academy of Sciences
San Francisco, CA
With a mission to “regenerate the natural world through science, learning, and collaboration,” the California Academy of Sciences – based in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park – is a global voice for biodiversity science, environmental learning, and collaborative engagement. The Academy is focused on leveraging its museum, scientific discoveries, and global education programs to inspire hundreds of millions of people to understand, care about, and act on behalf of the natural world (including humans).

Since re-opening in the Renzo Piano designed and LEED Platinum Certified building in 2008, the Academy has welcomed more than 18 million visitors and discovered nearly 2,500 new species.

The Academy staff consists of about 600 employees, supported by a volunteer team of about 400. The organization’s consolidated budget, including restricted programs and capital expenditures, is about $100M. The endowment for the California Academy of Sciences is currently over $200M. Fundraising is augmented by grants from federal, state, and international agencies, as well as from private foundations.
IMPACT AND LOOKING AHEAD

From the more than one million visitors who walk through the doors each year to the 46 million scientific specimens in its collection, the Academy’s impact begins at the museum. However, this impact reaches across the globe through scientific research, public engagement, environmental learning programs, digital media, and our regeneration initiatives.

Rooted in our new mission—to regenerate the natural world through science, learning, and collaboration—the Academy’s strategic plan recognizes that solutions to the ecological crisis must begin with a radical reimagining of our relationship to nature. The Plan’s three initiatives—Hope for Reefs, Thriving California, and Islands 2030—leverage biodiversity science, environmental learning, and collaborative engagement to regenerate biodiversity hotspots around the world. Learn more at www.calacademy.org/about-us/major-initiatives.

The Academy cultivates an inclusive environment that champions diversity in our staff and board, human communities, and the broader natural world. Diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and accessibility (DEIA) are core to the Academy’s values and approach. Scientists within the Institute for Biodiversity Science and Sustainability (IBSS) created this statement aimed at making science at the Academy equitable and actively anti-racist.

ABOUT THE EDUCATION AND LEARNING TEAM

The Education and Learning Division is responsible for leading the Academy’s extensive education and engagement programs. Each year this team reaches hundreds of thousands of students and youth, thousands of educators, and over one million museum guests—plus millions more online. The division is composed of three departments: 1) teacher professional development and student education; 2) youth programs and out-of-school time learning; and 3) museum guest engagement and volunteer programs. This division also oversees several museum spaces, including an outdoor education space, an early childhood space, and a hands-on interactive science space.
CANDIDATE PROFILE

The ideal candidate will possess the following attributes and competencies:

**A Visionary Educator**
The Chief of Education & Learning will have a deep understanding of environmental learning, including place-based learning, nature-based learning, nature connection, and experiential approaches. They will have a track record of building and leading educational programs through this lens. They will understand ecosystems and biodiversity and have a track record that aligns with the Academy’s goal to create educational and learning opportunities that connect people of all ages with the natural world.

**An Inspiring Team Leader**
An inspiring and engaged leader, the Chief will have proven experience building and leading a team of professional educators with a diverse set of skills and experience. They will demonstrate the ability to lead on values, initiatives, and organizational culture. They will lead their team to achieve organizational impact by successfully leveraging individual creativity, strengths, and cross-functional teamwork. They will have exceptional interpersonal, public speaking, and writing skills, together with an ability to inspire and influence diverse colleagues and partners. They will provide their team with a mission-driven work environment and professional growth opportunities. Serving as an internal champion, the Chief will foster a positive environment for participation, collaboration, and innovation, with the goal of creating impactful learning opportunities for all.

**A Skilled Collaborator**
This leader will inspire meaningful teamwork and collaboration around a shared purpose. With a high level of emotional intelligence, they will have demonstrated experience partnering and networking with communities and organizations for change. They will have proven experience engaging in deep listening with colleagues and communities, and the ability to engage multiple, cross-divisional voices to share expertise and build consensus. A confident communicator, the Chief will be comfortable cultivating, growing, and managing external strategic partnerships. Ideally, they will have experience with fundraising and complex budget management. A demonstrated interest and passion for science and nature will help the Chief authentically lead and collaborate with key stakeholders.

**A Passion for the Mission**
Fully embracing the mission, vision, values, and strategy of the Academy, the Chief of Education & Learning will be passionate about working in partnership with the leadership team to advance the Academy’s mission and vision. The Chief will leverage the purpose of the Academy (regenerating the natural world) and communicate its importance to students and visitors. They will have cultural humility, awareness of racial and environmental justice issues, and sensitivity to the lived experiences of people who have been historically excluded from science and museums. Ideally, they will have cultural fluency and connections within the Bay Area and/or California.

Prior museum experience is preferred, but not required. However, the successful candidate will have experience in formal and/or informal environmental science education. A degree or academic background in education is preferred, as is broad knowledge and demonstrated experience in the areas of racial and social justice.

We hope you are inspired by what the Academy does and are excited to contribute to the mission. The Academy is seeking candidates from a number of different backgrounds and experiences. We encourage you to apply even if you don’t believe you meet every one of the position qualifications.
THE POSITION

The Chief of Education & Learning (and Roberts-Wilson Dean of Education) will lead a world-class team of educators and serve as a member of the Academy’s Senior Leadership Team. This role oversees and builds upon the Academy’s extensive education programs, with a total team of ~80 staff and ~400 volunteers. The successful candidate will support robust community engagement, fostering bold ideas that advance innovation, programming, and action toward a thriving future.

The Chief of Education & Learning will report to the Managing Director/Chief of Strategic Partnerships and will serve as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Chief of Education & Learning will be committed to implementing the Academy’s new strategic plan, rooted in the concept of regeneration—healing communities of human and nonhuman nature. For the Academy, regeneration encompasses:

a) Reversing biodiversity and habitat loss

b) Rewilding critical ecosystems

c) Renewing the human-nature connection

d) Reshaping environmentalism to welcome diverse voices

The Academy believes that a place-based, nature-based, experiential approach to environmental learning is most effective. Ideally, this brand of learning encompasses heads, hearts, and hands, inspiring understanding of, caring for, and action on behalf of the natural world. This position is central to advancing the Academy’s commitment to anti-racist education.
KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide visionary leadership to the Academy’s education strategy, including the execution of environmental learning pathways within the strategic initiatives.

- Ensure that educational deliverables are effectively focused on the Academy’s purpose of regenerating the natural world, leveraging place-based and nature-based approaches to learning.

- Serve as spokesperson for the division, including presenting to funders the complete portfolio of education programs and resources.

- Strengthen science and environmental learning accessibility, delivery, and leadership on both the local and national levels.

- Inspire and empower the next generation of scientific thinkers and environmental stewards through youth learning, engagement, and innovation.

- Lead the division to fulfill the institution’s five-year strategic plan, stewarding existing programs and initiating new programs as needed.

- Align public engagement and education programming with the institution’s mission, core values, strategic initiatives, advocacy efforts, and DEIA and anti-racism work.

- Strategize with directors of the Division of Education and Learning to balance online and in-person offerings that maximize impact and respond to the evolving needs of our audiences.

- Provide thought leadership to the Director of Public Programs & Academy Volunteers to support their creation of a long-term volunteer engagement strategy for all divisions within the Academy.

- Help ensure that the Academy’s education teams have adequate resources to create programming that centers the learner, aligns with education standards, and earns recognition from public and academic communities.

- Collaborate with the philanthropy and government affairs teams to cultivate relationships with state and national government agencies to enhance the Academy’s fundraising capacities.

- Partner with the Academy’s finance and philanthropy teams to meet or exceed revenue goals, develop annual forecasts, and manage expense budgets.
Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. The compensation range for this role is **$220,000-$240,000**, with comprehensive benefits.

This position is based in San Francisco, California. This exempt, full-time position reports to the Managing Director, Chief of Strategic Partnerships. This is a hybrid role, and you are expected to work from the Academy offices at least 3 days per week, and remain flexible to be onsite other days based on people and business needs. Please do not apply if you are not able to work onsite. Candidates are required to have up to date COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of employment, absent qualifying exemptions in accordance with applicable laws. Individuals receiving a conditional offer of employment from the California Academy of Sciences will be provided the full text of the vaccination policy. The California Academy of Sciences is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace, to protect its colleagues, volunteers and guests.

**TO APPLY**

Koya Partners, the executive search firm that specializes in mission-driven search, has been exclusively retained for this engagement. Alex Corvin, Cheryl Stevens, and Maleka Pensky of Koya Partners are leading the search. Express interest in this role by filling out our Talent Profile or email Alex, Cheryl, and Maleka at calacademycel@koyapartners.com. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

Koya Partners is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals living with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual living with a disability and need assistance expressing interest online, please email nonprofitsearchops@divsearch.com. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

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The California Academy of Sciences will give full consideration for employment to all qualified applicants with criminal histories in a manner consistent with the requirements of the San Francisco Fair Chance Ordinance (SF Police Code, Article 49).

They are committed to ensuring that all employees and applicants shall receive equal consideration and treatment. All terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, placements, transfers, promotions, compensation, benefits, terminations, training, and social and recreational programs, will be on the basis of qualifications of the individual for the positions being filled. The Academy does not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees with respect to any terms or conditions of employment on account of any characteristic protected by state or federal law or local ordinance. Read our full Equal Opportunity Statement here.
ABOUT KOYA PARTNERS | DIVERSIFIED SEARCH GROUP

Koya Partners, a Diversified Search Group company, is the nation’s premier search firm dedicated to mission-driven leadership. Since its founding in 2004, Koya has had an exclusive focus on mission-driven clients and was founded on the belief that the right leader can transform an organization and have a deep and measurable impact on our world. Koya works with nonprofits & NGOs, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

Diversified Search Group is consistently recognized by Forbes on its top 10 list of "America’s Best Executive Recruiting Firms" and is an industry leader in recruiting transformational leaders for a changing world. The firm is deliberately different in its approach, with best-in-class teams who have decades of experience in cultivating inclusive leaders, understanding the dimensions of diversity, and building equitable teams.

Learn more about Koya Partners | Diversified Search Group via the firm’s website.