

Organization

The Folger Shakespeare Library (the Folger) is home to the world's largest Shakespeare collection and a premier center for exploring the early modern world. Founded in 1932 as a gift to the American people by Henry Clay Folger and Emily Jordan Folger, the Folger houses a vast archive of rare books, manuscripts, and works of art in addition to its unparalleled Shakespeare holdings. It is a vital cultural organization that welcomes millions of people each year through exhibitions, education programs, performances in its historically informed theater, and scholarly research opportunities. The Folger's mission is to preserve and enhance its collections, make them accessible to scholars and the public, and advance understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare and his world.

After a transformative renovation, the Folger has fully reopened with more than \$80 million invested in expanding its public spaces and revitalizing its historic building in Washington, D.C. The redesigned campus now features welcoming new exhibition galleries, a vibrant learning lab, modern research facilities, a café, gift shop, and fully accessible entrances and gathering spaces. The renovation enhances the visitor experience while reinforcing the Folger's role as a national destination for literary and cultural engagement. The renewed building reflects the founders' original vision while embracing a more inclusive and accessible future.



Looking ahead, the Folger will continue to deepen its commitment to education, community, and scholarship. Through the widely adopted Folger Editions of Shakespeare's plays and the Folger Method—its signature pedagogical approach—the Folger reaches more than two million teachers and students annually with resources that promote active learning and critical inquiry. Its programming integrates performance, scholarship, and public dialogue, offering theater productions, readings, lectures, and family events that connect early modern texts to today's most pressing conversations. As the Folger moves into its next chapter, it remains a dynamic institution dedicated to fostering curiosity, inclusion, and discovery. The Folger's vision is to lead a national conversation for

all ages about the importance and utility of the humanities in a healthy democracy. It will seek to surface and demonstrate the ways in which the close study of Shakespeare can develop critical thinking and strengthen the capacity to interpret information.



The Folger is governed by a 23-member Board of Governors chaired by D. Jarrett Arp. The organization is led by Director Farah Karim-Cooper, who joined the Folger in October 2024. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, the Folger reported revenue mix was 79% from endowment distribution, 11% from contributions and grants, and 10% from interest and other revenue. Total operating expenses were approximately \$25 million.

Sources: edited from folger.edu; Annual Report | 2023-2024

Community

As the capital of the United States, Washington, D.C. is a vibrant and dynamic city with a rich blend of history, culture, and innovation. The city is home to dozens of national monuments and museums, many of which are located on or near the National Mall. With its historic neighborhoods, diverse architecture, and iconic landmarks—including the U.S. Capitol, White House, and Supreme Court—Washington offers residents and visitors a deep connection to the country's democratic heritage.

D.C. is recognized for its cultural vitality, with more than 70 museums, dozens of theaters, and a wide array of galleries and performance venues.

The Smithsonian Institution operates many of the city's museums, which are free to the public, and organizations such as the Shakespeare Theatre Company and the National Theatre contribute to a robust performing arts scene. The city's culinary landscape has expanded in recent years, earning national recognition for its diversity and innovation, from Michelin-starred restaurants to a variety of international food corridors.

The city has a population of approximately 700,000, with a metropolitan area exceeding six million people. Washington, D.C., is a majority-minority city with a diverse racial composition: approximately 45% Black or African American, 41% White, 12% Hispanic or Latino, and 4% Asian, according to recent U.S. Census estimates. The median household income is around \$93,500, though income inequality remains a challenge, with significant disparities across wards (local political districts used for city council representation and planning). The city is also among the most educated urban populations in the country, supported by numerous universities, including Georgetown University, The George Washington University, Howard University, and American University. The public school system has seen marked improvements in recent years, and the region hosts a variety of public, charter, and private school options. Washington, D.C. is also known for its green spaces and access to outdoor recreation. Rock Creek Park, spanning over 1,700 acres, offers miles of trails, picnic areas, and historical sites, while the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers provide opportunities for kayaking, paddleboarding, and riverside biking. The city's economy is bolstered by a strong mix of government, nonprofit, tech, and professional services sectors, with a growing presence of startups and Fortune 500 companies.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; National Park Service; Destination DC; Smithsonian Institution; Washington Post; Washington Business Journal.

Position Summary

The Director of Learning and Education Programs will lead the strategic development and implementation of educational programs that support local, national, and digital engagement with Shakespeare and the early modern world. Building on the Folger's tradition of excellence, they will shape innovative educational initiatives that integrate performance-based learning, expand national partnerships, and enhance the accessibility of the Folger's educational resources for K–12 teachers, students, and a broader public of life-long learners. The Director of Learning and Education Programs will guide the design and delivery of workshops, fellowships, festivals, courses, and online content that align with the organization's mission. They will also expand the reach of the Folger's educational offerings to families, youth groups, and individual students looking to enhance their understanding of Shakespeare and the humanities. They will work closely with Senior Directors and the Creative Programming Leadership Group to devise content collaboratively and strategically to enhance the Folger's reputation for public programming.

This role, in conjunction with four full-time staff and a varying number of contracted teachers, will oversee and ensure the continued growth and excellence of national and local programs, including professional development institutes, student festivals, life-long learners, and school-based workshops. They will build and maintain relationships with educational institutions, foundations, local schools, and cultural organizations while collaborating across other Folger departments to connect exhibitions, programming, and collections with dynamic learning experiences. The Director of Learning and Education Programs will represent the organization at conferences and in educational settings, manage a high-performing staff, and steward the department's budget and funding strategies in coordination with the Folger development and finance teams. They will work collaboratively with the team of Senior Directors and Board of Governors to create the Folger's next strategic plan, establishing the Folger's programmatic and organizational goals while ensuring its financial sustainability.

Roles and Responsibilities

Strategic and Programmatic Leadership

- Develop and implement a cohesive strategy for educational programming that reflects the organization's mission and performance-based and critical thinking-led approach to teaching Shakespeare.
- Advance national, local, and online programs that serve students, teachers, and lifelong learners through innovative and inclusive educational offerings.
- Assess current methodologies, revising and updating for current audiences; champion and integrate the Folger Method into new and existing educational resources and professional development experiences, ensuring high-quality learning outcomes.

- Strengthen the visibility and utility of the Folger's Shakespeare-focused educational programming by aligning it with broader institutional goals and public engagement initiatives.
- Represent the organization at educational and cultural forums to enhance strategic partnerships and thought leadership in the field.
- Co-lead with the Senior Directors on a strategic planning process, and co-steward financial and operational sustainability of the Folger facilitating its broader aims.
- Embrace other strategic and programmatic leadership responsibilities, as needed.

Curriculum and Content Development

- Sit on the Creative Programming Leadership Group, devising content for programs with collaboration and programming cohesion as key aims of the Group.
- Partner with the Senior Directors and others to develop new content and programs for the Folger's public spaces and exhibitions, with a focus on learning.
- Oversee the creation of print and digital K–12 resources, ensuring they are accessible, curriculum-aligned, and grounded in the organization's educational and wider vision.
- Guide and participate in ongoing assessment of current programs and methodologies.
- Collaborate with scholars, artists, and educators to produce content that bridges performance, research, and classroom practice.
- Supervise the development of teacher guides, online activities, and cross-disciplinary materials that connect with the Folger's other programming departments: Institute, Theater and Artistic Programs, and Exhibitions & Collections.
- Embrace other curriculum and content development responsibilities, as needed.

External Partnerships and National Initiatives

- Cultivate and maintain relationships with schools, districts, universities, foundations, and education leaders to support collaborative programming.
- Lead the planning and delivery of national programs, including the Teaching Shakespeare Institute and Summer Academy, ensuring academic rigor and participant engagement.
- Develop new partnerships with non-traditional educational leaders and organizations: e.g. Girl Scouts, Youth Groups etc.
- Identify opportunities for new partnerships and develop a plan for national visibility through strategic outreach and participation in professional networks.
- Team with the Director of Marketing and Communications on promoting educational programs and creating a strategy to develop the Folger's profile beyond DC.
- Embrace other external partnerships and national initiatives responsibilities, as needed.

Local and Community Engagement

- Direct educational activities that serve local students and educators, including fellowships, festivals, and school-based workshops.
- Oversee the education-led training of teaching artists and docents.
- Build relationships with local partners to support student matinees, tours, working collaboratively with other departments within the Folger.
- Expand access to educational offerings for underrepresented and underserved communities in the D.C. area.
- Embrace other local and community engagement responsibilities, as needed.

Team and Operational Leadership

- Act in partnership on the execution of strategy, budgeting and organizational policy with the Senior Director team, under the guidance of the Director.
- Supervise, mentor, and evaluate the education staff and extended teaching community, fostering a collaborative, mission-driven work culture.
- Set clear goals, monitor progress, and support professional development across the department.
- Oversee departmental budget planning, grant reporting, and coordination with development and finance teams.

- Embrace other team and operational leadership responsibilities, as needed.

Traits and Characteristics

The incoming Director of Learning and Education Programs at the Folger will be an imaginative, forward-thinking, and collaborative leader who brings a deep belief in the transformative power of literature and the arts. They will value inclusivity, equity, and intellectual curiosity, with a passion for connecting complex ideas to diverse learners through accessible and engaging educational experiences.

The successful leader will demonstrate empathy, cultural competence, and an ability to navigate nuanced relationships with educators, scholars, artists, and community partners. They will possess strong planning and team leadership skills, with the ability to guide cross-functional collaboration across Folger departments and disciplines. The Director of Learning and Education Programs will embrace change, model lifelong learning, and foster a supportive and purpose-driven environment grounded in continuous improvement, thoughtful dialogue, and shared achievement.

Other key competencies include:

- **Leadership and Personal Accountability** – Demonstrates integrity and the ability to make responsible decisions that effectively shape the organization's strategic direction while organizing resources to maximize outcomes.
- **Creativity and Innovation** – Demonstrate the capacity to invigorate new approaches, systems, processes, concepts, and ideas while also analyzing hypothetical concepts and formulating connections that result in new insights and opportunities.
- **Teamwork and Diplomacy** – Skillfully navigates sensitive interactions with tact and diplomacy, enhancing team cohesion and fostering respectful and effective communication across diverse groups to build consensus and facilitate cooperation.
- **Time and Priority Management and Problem Solving** – Prioritizes and manages time effectively, using strategic foresight to creatively solve problems and ensure the organization's adaptability and success in evolving environments.

Qualifications

A minimum of seven years' experience in successful program leadership, development, management, and assessment for a national educational or cultural organization or the equivalent is highly desirable. A broad knowledge of national educational trends and a thorough understanding of Shakespeare are essential. The ability to build, organize, and lead staff through excellent management and supervisory skills is necessary, and teaching experience at the elementary or secondary level and experience providing professional development training is preferred. Experience with curriculum development is desirable, along with an understanding of when and how digital media may be productively introduced into teaching. Excellent communication skills and the ability to think and act imaginatively to connect the library's collection, activities, and resources to diverse audiences of teachers and students are vital. Skill in budgeting and managing resources is advantageous. A graduate degree in English or education (Ph.D. or Ed.D.) or equivalent experience is preferred.

If you do not meet all the qualifications but possess transferable or equivalent skills, experience, or education, we encourage you to apply and highlight those areas.

Compensation and Benefits

The Folger provides a competitive and equitable compensation package with a salary range of \$175,000 to \$185,000 with benefits that include an extensive range of health, dental, life, and disability insurance benefits; considerable retirement contributions through TIAA-CREF; educational assistance programs for staff members and their dependents; generous sick and annual leave; and other programs and services. Additional information is available [here](#).

Applications and Inquiries

To submit a cover letter and resume with a summary of demonstrable accomplishments, please click [here](#) or visit artsconsulting.com/opensearches. For questions or general inquiries about this job opportunity, please contact:

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The Folger Shakespeare Library (“Folger”) is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. It is the policy of the Folger to recruit, hire, train, support, and promote employees without regard for race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, genetic information, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, personal appearance, family responsibilities, student status, political affiliation, veteran status, or any other basis protected by applicable federal, district, or local EO laws and regulations.