

Cornell University®

JOHNSON

MUSEUM OF ART

# The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University

*Richard J. Schwartz Director*

## Position Specification



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# Position Specification

## The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art



The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art opened in 1973. Designed by I. M. Pei & Partners, it is named for benefactor Herbert F. Johnson, a distinguished graduate of Cornell's Class of 1922, the late president and chairman of S C Johnson of Racine, Wisconsin, and a Cornell University Trustee.

Since its beginning, the Museum has been open to all without charge. Given Cornell University's land-grant status and its mandate to play an important role in the community, the Johnson Museum continually seeks to fulfill its cultural and educational responsibility to serve a broad and diverse audience.

Today, the Johnson Museum's permanent collection numbers more than 40,000 works, spanning six millennia and encompassing art from most world cultures. Among the strengths of the collection are the holdings of Asian art; prints, drawings, and photographs ranging from the fifteenth century to the present; modern and contemporary painting and sculpture; European art from ancient times to the present; African sculpture and textiles; and pre-Columbian sculpture and ceramics.

The collections are the foundation for all Museum initiatives in teaching, research, and the development of projects to connect people, art, and ideas in creative ways.

The Johnson Museum's mission is to welcome visitors to experience original works of art across a wide spectrum of global traditions, time periods, and media for education, inspiration, and delight. It connects to the vibrant intellectual and cultural life of Cornell University and a public audience through exhibitions, programs, teaching, and research, with free admission for all.

# Position Specification

## The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

The Museum is deeply integrated into teaching and campus life and presents a dynamic program of exhibitions. It plays a central role in object-based learning across disciplines, partnering with faculty to incorporate works of art into curricula. Through class visits, study sessions, and collaborative course development, the Museum supports experiential learning and critical inquiry for Cornell's 25,000+ undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

The Museum offers a wide array of public programs designed to engage diverse audiences, including lectures, artist talks, performances, film screenings, and community events. Additionally, the Museum creates informal and interactive experiences, such as drop-in art-making activities, wellness and mindfulness programs, and family-focused events.

Additionally, the Museum maintains a strong commitment to collections stewardship, conservation, and research. Ongoing efforts to document, preserve, and interpret the collection ensure its continued relevance for future generations. Scholars, students, and visiting researchers benefit from access to study rooms, archives, and curatorial expertise, making the Museum an active center for research and knowledge production.

The Johnson Museum has a staff of 32 FTEs and an overall budget of approximately \$6.5 million. More than 70,000 visitors come to the Museum each year.



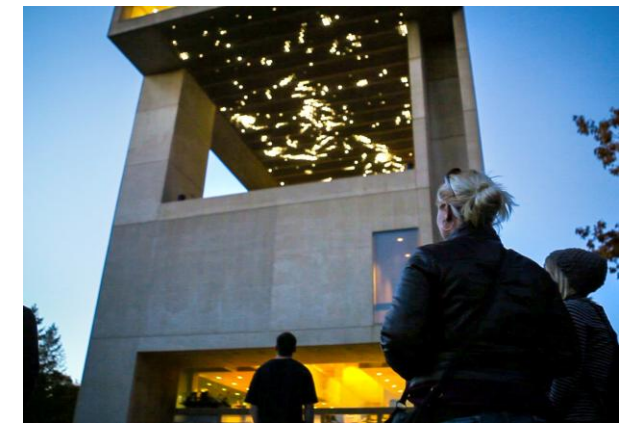
# Position Specification

## The Role

The Richard J. Schwartz Director will set strategy and vision, ensure effective management of teams and resources, and cultivate support for the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art. They will deepen a culture of collaboration and will ensure that Cornell faculty and students, as well as the broader Finger Lakes community, see and utilize the Museum as a vital learning resource. The Director has primary responsibility for all aspects of the Museum's operation, management, and resources. Working in close partnership with the University's development team, they will serve as the Museum's chief fundraiser and relationship-builder.

The Director sets the artistic direction, exhibition strategy, educational approach, and acquisition plans for the Museum. They serve as an advocate for the knowledge that can be gained from the direct study of and engagement with works of art and material culture. They are responsible for the management and development of the University's art collection, and for driving the acquisition of new objects.

As a key leader for the arts on campus and beyond, the Director reports to the Deputy Provost of Cornell University, and works closely with the Johnson Museum Advisory Council. In collaboration with academic and administrative departments on campus, the Director proactively engages students through teaching and exhibition and related programming. They are also responsible for art education programs for approximately 8,000 K-12 students throughout the region. Importantly, they represent the Museum to various external constituencies, including faculty and students, alumni and friends of the arts at Cornell, public audiences throughout the region and across the country, and the museum profession at large.



# Position Specification

## Candidate Profile (page 1 of 2)

The ideal candidate will be an inspiring, strategic, and collaborative leader who brings a deep commitment to the role of the university art museum as both an academic resource and a public-facing cultural institution. They will be energized by the opportunity to build on the Johnson Museum's strong foundation while advancing its visibility, impact, and long-term sustainability. The Director will bring a thoughtful and forward-looking perspective on the evolving role of museums within higher education and society, along with a demonstrated ability to lead organizations through times of change. They will have a track record of successful fundraising and external engagement, as well as experience managing teams and resources of relevant scale. They will work closely with the Johnson Museum Advisory Council, as well as with the Office of the Provost and other key administrators across campus. Importantly, the successful candidate will embrace the Cornell and Ithaca communities professionally and personally, enjoying the opportunity to live in such a robust and stimulating regional setting.

*In terms of the performance, personal competencies, and experience required for the position, we would highlight the following:*



### Personal Attributes and Competencies



#### Strategic Leadership and Vision

The successful candidate will demonstrate the ability to articulate a clear vision and translate strategy into action. They will bring experience setting direction within complex organizations, along with a creative and entrepreneurial mindset. They will exhibit sound judgment, informed by data and stakeholder input, and comfort navigating academic, curatorial, and operational priorities.



#### Influence and Relationship-Building Skills

An exceptional relationship-builder, the successful candidate will demonstrate the ability to build trust and collaborate with faculty, students, staff, alumni, donors, and community partners. They will be a strong communicator who can synthesize diverse perspectives and build alignment, and who can clearly and effectively represent the Museum to a range of audiences. Importantly, they will partner with key constituents including University administrators and the Johnson Museum Advisory Council.



#### Fundraising and Resource Development

The successful candidate should have a proven track record of securing financial support and diversifying revenue streams. Ideally, they will bring experience with capital campaigns and/or significantly growing an institution's resources in other ways. A collaborative fundraiser, they will possess the skills necessary to partner with the University's central development team.

# Position Specification

## Candidate Profile (page 2 of 2)

### Personal Attributes and Competencies



#### Talent Management and Team Building

The ideal candidate will bring the ability to retain, empower, and recruit an exceptional, diverse team. They will bring the business acumen and organizational awareness to ensure the Museum has the appropriate infrastructure to accomplish lofty goals. Importantly, they will demonstrate a leadership style grounded in humility, transparency, and collaboration.



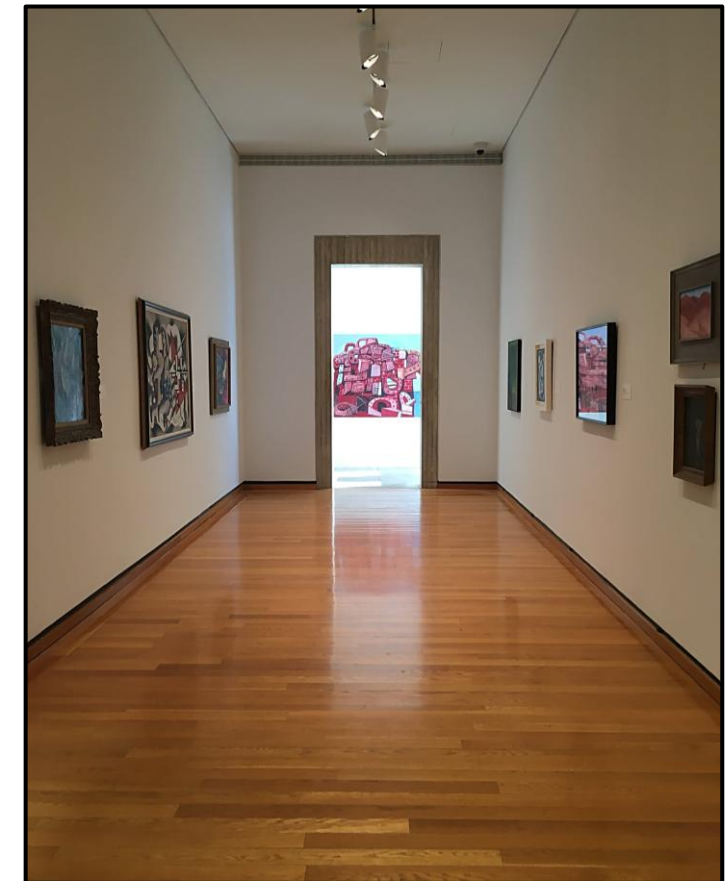
#### Financial and Operational acumen

The successful candidate will demonstrate strong operational and financial skills, including experience with budgeting, facilities, and collections stewardship. The candidate must bring the business acumen necessary to allocate resources wisely, balancing strategic risk-taking with fiscal responsibility. Ideally, they will bring experience navigating capital projects or addressing facilities needs, as well as working within a broader institutional environment.



#### Mission-Alignment and Programmatic Fluency

The successful candidate will demonstrate a deep appreciation for the role of art in teaching, research, and public engagement. They will possess the artistic vision necessary to chart a course forward for the Museum and partner with the curatorial team. They will bring a commitment to object-based learning and interdisciplinary collaboration, along with the intellectual curiosity to engage across disciplines. Ideally, they will bring curatorial, collections, and/or other relevant experience with a deep knowledge of one or more of the major categories of art in the Johnson's collection. Importantly, they will understand the Museum's value within both the University and the broader community, and will be able to articulate that value internally and externally.



# Position Specification

## Contact

**Russell Reynolds Associates, the global leadership advisory and executive search firm, has been exclusively engaged to lead this search.**

Russell Reynolds Associates has been exclusively retained for this search, and prospective candidates are invited to contact Russell Reynolds Associates directly. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential. For more information or to apply for the role, please reach out to [JohnsonMuseum@russellreynolds.com](mailto:JohnsonMuseum@russellreynolds.com). All applications should include a resume and a brief statement of interest.

**We welcome nominations and expressions of interest to the Russell Reynolds team. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.**

### Olivia Stam

Russell Reynolds Associates  
2001 K Street NW | Suite 300  
Washington DC 20006

### Kat Armstrong

Russell Reynolds Associates  
One Post Office Sq. | Suite 4000  
Boston, MA 02109

### Michael Singleton

Russell Reynolds Associates  
277 Park Ave | Suite 3800  
New York, NY 10172

## Compensation

Cornell's goal is to compensate for this position at a competitive level. The estimated compensation package is expected to be in the range of approximately \$250-280K. That said, the final salary and total compensation of the candidate selected for this role will take into consideration various factors, including, but not limited to, scope of role, level of experience, stature in the industry, professional accomplishments, internal equity, the organization's budget and will be subject to Fair Market Value evaluation. In addition to salary, the selected candidate will be eligible to participate in Cornell's standard benefit package. Additional details regarding benefits are available upon request. The approximated range listed is a good faith determination of potential base compensation as a component of the total compensation for the role and may be modified in the future.

