

**2020 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

**INTRODUCTION**

This position is located in the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The purpose of this position is to assist the Program Curator of a Smithsonian Folklife Festival program. Under the general supervision of the Curator, the incumbent coordinates all programmatic and logistical arrangements for the program area in preparation for its presentation at the annual Folklife Festival and helps to ensure its successful presentation at the Festival itself.

**MAJOR DUTIES**

**A. Program Coordination (50%)**

The incumbent is the Program Coordinator for a specific Folklife Festival Program area. In this capacity, s/he helps the Program Curator to implement aspects of the particular program to which assigned. Specifically, the incumbent performs the following functions:

1. Prepares and develops the layout and interior design of Festival tents and public spaces by determining the number of chairs, tables, display panels, shelves, and any other special supplies and requirements (such as running water or electricity) needed by Festival participants. This determination is made through correspondence and conversation primarily with Festival participants, but sometimes also with Festival fieldworkers and researchers.
2. Plans and develops schedules for each presentational area of the program based on the availability of participants, the needs of the program, and the number of available time slots. Works closely with presenters and Festival production staff to maintain these schedules or to make appropriate changes when demanded by unforeseen circumstances or the further development of program themes or goals.
3. Identifies local communities and resources that can enhance and further the goals of the program. These may include the development of volunteer resources and the identification of informational avenues for publicity.
4. Develops a draft plan and priorities for Festival documentation of the program (including performances, discussions, and demonstrations) and submits this plan to the Documentary Team. The plan and priorities for documentation are determined in part by the number of days that participants will be on site and the distinctiveness of their presentations.
5. Determines program's volunteer needs, submits needs to Volunteer Coordinator by the prescribed deadlines and works closely with Volunteer Coordinator to develop a volunteer pool that reflects cultural needs of participants. Assists volunteers assigned to

program area during the Festival. This involves orienting them to their specific tasks and to the program's area and goals, thereby helping them to ensure the comfort and effectiveness of program participants.

6. Assists in the daily set-up and strike of the program area during the Festival to ensure time efficiency, safety, and public awareness. Maintains constant surveillance of program area for potential security and safety problems. Provides assistance to fellow staff members, participants, volunteers, interns, and members of the general public in negotiating the Festival experience.
7. Maintains close contact with all support staff (technical, sound, volunteer, participant, supply, special events, design, logistics, administration) to ensure that program goals and production schedules are being clearly communicated and met.

Performs other programmatic duties as assigned.

### **B. Administrative/Clerical (50%)**

1. Assists the Program Curator in the selection and organization of information produced by Festival fieldworkers and researchers. This may involve searching in fieldwork reports and databases for relevant quotations and photographs relating to Festival participants.
2. Enters information relating to program scheduling, supply needs, and participant data into the Participant Tracking System database. This information is obtained through correspondence and conversation primarily with Festival participants, but sometimes also with Festival fieldworkers and researchers.
3. Based on knowledge of program and presentational goals, helps develop informational packets for Program, Production, Participant, and Volunteer staffs. This may involve the selection and compilation of data in order to make it more relevant for participants, volunteers, and fellow Festival staff members.
4. In consultation with Program Curator, plans for logistical and presentational needs of participants. This includes delineating the supply needs for participants, program and production staff, and submitting these lists to the Supply Coordinator in a timely manner and arranging for the shipment of necessary items to the Festival site.
5. Works closely with the Program Curator to monitor expenditures from the program budget by creating and updating electronic spreadsheets of all major program expenditures. Advises of any proposed changes immediately.
6. In consultation with Program Curator, prepares list of appropriate dignitaries to be invited to opening ceremonies, receptions, and other special events. Helps develop and compile list of special thanks for Festival publications by keeping track of all individuals and companies that have provided assistance to the program.
7. Maintains coherent files of all program developments and helps Program Curator prepare

all materials on program and participants for accessioning by the Archivist.

Performs other administrative/clerical duties as assigned.

### **KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION**

- Knowledge of management principles, practices, and techniques and the implication of same, as relevant to Folklife Festival programs, projects, and special diverse cultures
- Ability to communicate orally in English
- Ability to communicate in writing in English
- Preference for candidates who can speak, read, and write, in Portuguese
- Ability to work cooperatively with researchers, staff, participants, and dignitaries, many of whom may come from different cultures and backgrounds
- Ability to organize information and coordinate programs

### **SUPERVISORY CONTROLS**

Works under the general supervision of the Program Curator and shares responsibility for programmatic decisions under CFCH/Smithsonian guidelines. The supervisor makes assignments by outlining plans, objectives, priorities, and deadlines. The incumbent is independently responsible for carrying out the assignment, resolving most of the conflicts that arise and coordinating with others as necessary. The incumbent keeps the supervisor informed of progress. Problems and deviations are handled in accordance with instructions, policies, and guidelines. Completed work is reviewed for soundness of overall approach, effectiveness in meeting requirements or expected results, and accuracy.

### **GUIDELINES**

Guidelines are set down in SI memoranda and CFCH manuals and past standard procedures for managing Festival production. However the guidelines sometimes are general, and incumbent has latitude in deciding approach to specific problems within the established guidelines. Unusual issues that are not covered by existing guidelines are discussed with the supervisor.

### **COMPLEXITY**

The incumbent must be able to work on a variety of concurrent duties, such as coordinating a plan for a Festival program, arranging production logistics, etc. This job requires creativity, the ability to analyze and synthesize research, and the ability to coordinate a large Folklife Festival program. In deciding what must be done, the incumbent consults with the Program Curator, the Technical Director, the Production Manager, Festival participants, fieldworkers, volunteers, and

other Festival staff to ensure that the work is coordinated with all the various stakeholders. Difficulty may be encountered in coordinating competing requirements, needs, and preferences to a successful resolution between these stakeholders.

### **SCOPE AND EFFECT**

The purpose of the work is to coordinate and provide administrative support to various aspects of Folklife Festival programs. As part of one of the major programs of the Festival, the incumbent's work affects the total success of the Festival and more generally the Center.

### **PERSONAL CONTACTS**

Contacts with scholars, fieldworkers, participants, staff, and the general public.

### **PURPOSE OF CONTACTS**

To obtain and exchange information, to develop and produce the program, and to provide information to the general public.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Work requires some walking, standing, lifting, and carrying of items. Incumbent is often subject to pressures of short deadlines.

### **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Work is normally performed in an indoor office environment, but will be outdoors during the Festival period and may be in hot, inclement weather.