Reference Librarian – Researcher Services

Purpose:
The Reference Librarian for Researcher Services supports by prioritizing excellence in customer service throughout the readers services staff, ensuring the library program’s ability to meet current researcher needs, and providing reference assistance to onsite and remote researchers. This position is essential to public access to and the security of the Society’s collections.

Reporting Relationships:
This position reports to the Director of the Library

Supervisory Responsibility:
Supervises (1) Reading Room Supervisor, up to 5 Library Assistant I-Circulation, and up to 2 grant-funded undergraduate residents

Schedule:
This is a full-time (35 hrs/week) position. The Researcher Services Librarian works during the library’s regularly scheduled hours, which includes Tuesday evenings and Saturdays. This position is part of a Saturday rotation and works 1-2 Saturdays per month. This position is eligible for a hybrid work schedule of up to 20% of time spent working remotely with the approval of the Director of the Library with flexibility to ensure supervisory on-site coverage as needed.

The successful candidate will establish a regular work schedule in consultation with the Director of the Library. All Reader Services staff schedules are re-evaluated at regular intervals and may be adjusted to suit the needs of the department.

Major Responsibilities:
- Works with Director of the Library to develop departmental policies and practices that ensure all staff engage with researchers in consistent, equitable, service-centered ways
- Oversees training in all areas related to customer service and maintains style sheets/templates for written communication with researchers
- Collaborates with Reading Room Supervisor to connect with researchers in advance of planned visits
- Gathers data through surveys, direct interaction with researchers, and other channels to assess library services and to identify how to best serve researchers’ needs
- Sits on selection committees for various research fellowship programs and manages library liaison program for fellowship recipients
- Oversees undergraduate residency program, serving as primary supervisor and mentors to up to 2 residents annually, managing selection process and providing reports to Director of Library and other stakeholders on a regular and as-needed basis
- Contributes content to MHS blog regularly; may be asked to contribute content to other MHS publications (e-newsletter, annual report, etc.) or at All-Staff meetings
- Represents LRS on interdepartmental DEI team
Staffs the reference desk, providing reader orientations and assisting researchers in developing research strategies, navigating Portal1791 (Aeon), library catalogs, and collection guides, as well as directing researchers toward current scholarship and other reference materials.

Provides general assistance and conducts reference interviews in-person, over telephone, and on Zoom.

Researches and responds to reference queries that require a high level of professional competence and specialized knowledge in locating materials and suggesting resources within the MHS and in other area libraries.

Explains and enforces security procedures and policies.

Conducts regular formal and informal supervision to direct reports, providing supervisees with feedback, and coaching staff in best practices as well as areas of professional development; conducts regular performance reviews, and addresses performance and employee relations in a timely manner.

Keeps current in the best practices/trends in the field by participating in relevant professional development activities, reading professional literature, and following/participating in the work of professional associations.

Qualifications:

- Master’s degree in Library and Information Science, Archives Management, or similar from an ALA-accredited academic program required.
- Master’s degree in American history, American studies, public history, or similar strongly preferred.
- Three to five years of professional experience providing reference service in a special collections library, with at least three years in a supervisory position.

Skills:

- A high level of comfort working with the public and meeting new people.
- Ability to assess and anticipate needs and be a flexible problem solver, to work with the public with tact and patience, and to consistently enforce policies and procedures.
- Ability to clearly and effectively communicate, orally and in writing, with staff and members of the public.
- Ability to be empathic, patient, and supportive, while providing structure and an authoritative presence for junior staff, cultivating an environment of learning and professional development.
- Ability to identify, plan, and prioritize projects and tasks, determine and implement project timelines, effectively delegate, and supervise work of others toward project completion.
- Ability to confidently work with technology, including ability to learn new programs and basic troubleshooting of desktop operations.
- Strong research skills, including knowledge of standard reference sources, both print and online.
- High level of proficiency with OPAC and database searching.
  - Experience with Innovative-based catalogs and/or Aeon software preferred.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite.
- Ability to comply with all MHS policies and procedures, including emergency, health, and safety protocols

**Application Procedure:**

Please send by email a single PDF that includes a cover letter, résumé, and the names of three professional references to Director of the Library Elaine Heavey at eheavey@masshist.org. Applications that do not comply with this process cannot be considered.

Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, with a target hire date in September 2023.

**Compensation and Benefits:**

Annual Salary for this position starts at $60,000 per year and increases based on experience. The MHS offers a generous benefits package including:

- Medical, dental, and life insurance
- Medical and dependent care flexible spending accounts
- Vacation starting at three weeks plus 12–14 holidays per year.
- Unlimited sick time
- Retirement benefits with an employer match of up to 4%
- Pre-tax commuter benefits and a monthly public transportation incentive
- Reciprocal entrance to local education and cultural institutions

**Pre-Hire Requirements:**

MHS requires proof of a vaccination and up-to-date boosters for COVID-19 for all employees. As part of its offer process, MHS will conduct a reference and criminal background check for any finalist. We are not able to sponsor visas.

**Equal Opportunity Statement**

The Massachusetts Historical Society aims to be a diverse workforce that is representative, at all job levels, of the citizens we serve. Candidates of all backgrounds are welcomed and encouraged to apply. We are committed to creating a work place free from harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, color, ancestry, religious creed, gender identity and expression, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, genetic information, disability, military or veteran status, or any other category protected by law (also known as membership in a "protected class").

Candidates in need of accommodation in the application process should reach out to our human resources department with inquiries.

Nothing in this job description restricts management’s right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time.