



# NANAIMO MUSEUM

## GENERAL MANAGER POSITION

### POSITION SUMMARY

The Nanaimo Museum was founded in 1967 as a centennial community project and today operates as a charitable non-profit generously supported by the City of Nanaimo. Exhibitions and programs encourage conversations about our community's history and culture. The permanent gallery shares significant Nanaimo stories and is complemented by a dynamic feature exhibit schedule capable of accommodating travelling exhibitions from national museums and galleries. The Nanaimo Museum also manages and interprets the Bastion, an 1850s Hudson's Bay Company fort and one of the oldest buildings in the province.

Led by the outgoing General Manager, the museum underwent a re-visioning in 2005 before re-opening three years later with twice the gallery and gift shop space as the community component of the Vancouver Island Conference Centre in downtown Nanaimo. Since opening 2008, the Nanaimo Museum has experienced annual growth in attendance numbers, community support and awareness, and earned revenue. Combined museum and Bastion "through the door" attendance numbers rival cultural institutions in BC that boast considerably larger staff teams and operating budgets.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the new General Manager will build on this stable foundation to bring the museum to the next level through active strategies related to continued attendance growth, public awareness, operations, fundraising and other revenue generation. Working closely with key stakeholders, including the City of Nanaimo, the General Manager will lead a staff team of 10 and oversee a budget of approximately \$700,000.

The ideal candidate is a business-focused and entrepreneurial senior executive with a proven track record of sound financial management and demonstrated ability to engage community partners. This experience may be in the cultural sector or a non-profit organization with parallels to Nanaimo Museum, such as one that emphasizes increased growth in attendance numbers or community engagement. Experience working with groups of volunteers, especially a Board of Directors, is integral to this role. Successful operation of a non-profit, cultural facility is an important asset.

This is a high-impact management role for an individual who is eager to advance this stable and successful museum to the next phase. Remuneration is commensurate with experience and qualifications. Organizational Profile, GM Role Profile & Selection Criteria are attached below – please review carefully to ensure you meet the necessary qualifications.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

Please submit your application including cover letter, resume and related documentation to [postings@nanaimomuseum.ca](mailto:postings@nanaimomuseum.ca) by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Applications will be reviewed the first week of April 2018 and only those shortlisted for position interviews will be contacted. Projected start date will be June 2018.



# NANAIMO MUSEUM

## ORGANIZATION PROFILE

The Nanaimo Museum is a dynamic community facility offering diverse interpretive programming encouraging visitors to *Make a Discovery* while exploring the history and heritage of our area. The Society celebrated 50 years in April 2014. We are preparing for our 10th anniversary in our new space this summer. The museum has experienced increased numbers and earned revenue every year since opening in our new space in 2008. The new museum was created with the vision statement: The Nanaimo Museum will enhance cultural quality of life, anchor our community and enlighten visitors while nurturing the flow of inspiration through interactive presentation of stories and objects spanning Nanaimo's history. The museum also operates the HBC 1853 fort, The Bastion, an icon in the community and 3rd oldest building in BC.

The Bastion is a unique example of a defense fortification built by a company that played a major role in Canadian history. The Bastion represents British Columbia's earliest known case of historic preservation. Originally, the Bastion stood on the other side of Front Street and was moved in 1891 after its original site was sold. In 1974, it was moved to its present location in another preservation effort. The building has always overlooked Nanaimo's harbour. As Nanaimo's premier landmark, the Bastion is a municipally designated heritage site and is listed on the Canadian Register of Heritage Properties. The Bastion is owned and maintained by the City of Nanaimo and managed by the Nanaimo Museum.

Our Mission is to engage the community and visitors in meaningful experiences relating to the cultural heritage of what is now the City of Nanaimo and surrounding district (i.e. School District #68), as well as to provide a learning environment through which the public can experience links between the past, present and future. Our mandate includes:

- Expand collections while continuing to ensure they are relevant, well researched and accessible.
- Engage as many “communities” as possible through exhibits, events and programs.
- Make exhibitions stimulating, involving, and related to Nanaimo's unique history and development.
- Use our expanded, purpose-built facility to the best advantage to meet our goals.

The museum has always placed a positive and accessible visitor experience at the forefront of operations. We strive to be welcoming and friendly with informed volunteers and to ensure programming and exhibits are informative and accessible for all residents and visitors alike. We encourage diversity and are a Safe Harbour designated facility. Our First Nations collection is held in trust for the Snunéymuxw First Nation with whom we work closely to interpret their story. 2014 saw the addition of stories to this exhibit in partnership with the Snunéymuxw First Nation Elder in Residence VIU Geraldine Manson. Geraldine began her involvement with the museum in 1991 during an archaeological dig at the St'lilup village site.

Our “through the door” 2017 numbers for the museum and Bastion combined were 66,800 which compared very well to other similar organizations, some with larger budgets and communities. In 2017 we offered 122 school programs, 118 other programming and guided tours and events and 3 feature or temporary exhibits including a Lawren Harris exhibit from the Vancouver Art Gallery in partnership with the Nanaimo Art Gallery. Venue rentals continue to bring new faces through the door, many that return for a program or longer visit.

The Nanaimo Museum was chosen as one of the two lead institutions for the provincial project to produce the first ever computerized inventory of Chinese historical records and artifacts for BC. Our strong Chinese collection and this project is one of our collection projects in progress.

The museum occupies 30% of the old museum space for workshop and non-critical artifact storage. The remaining 70% is occupied by the Vancouver Island Military Museum through a joint lease with the City of Nanaimo. Both museum buildings are owned by the City of Nanaimo which maintains all physical plant functions. We have a management agreement with the City of Nanaimo which includes physical plant maintenance since our inception in 1967 with an automatic 2% annual increase for our municipally owned 16,000 sq ft space that opened in 2008 within the Port of Nanaimo Centre. Our space includes an 8,000 sq ft gallery, 2500sq ft artifact storage, 600 sq ft display prep, 2400 sq ft lobby/reception/gift shop/Sports Hall of Fame space. The 700 sq ft program room is working well for public and school programs, meetings and venue rental to other community groups for meetings and seminars. Venue rental is extremely popular for these spaces.

A 10-member Board of Directors (elected by the membership) governs the museum and includes the following valuable community representation:

- Nanaimo Port Authority, Coastal Community Credit Union, Royal Bank, Snunéymuxw First Nation, local family 100 year business, legal profession, former City Councillor and the President of Vancouver Island University.

The Nanaimo Museum General Manager is one of the founding members of the Cultural Managers Working Group advising the City of Nanaimo Culture & Heritage Department which was created in 2014 after several years of lobbying from the main City funded cultural institutions in the City.

The museum is very efficiently operated with 8 FTE staff augmented in the summer with 3 students chosen from among the students at VIU focusing on history, education and tourism studies. We also manage and interpret the Bastion, one of the oldest buildings in BC. A valuable partnership with Tourism Nanaimo assists in staffing the Bastion through the summer. Between the 2 sites we welcomed almost 67,000 visitors in 2018. The museum could not deliver our interpretive programming without the assistance our volunteers to whom we are very grateful. They contributed 4852 hours last year. Our collection includes almost 15,000 artifacts and over 10,000 photographs.

Staff positions now consist of the General Manager, Curator, Program Coordinator, Communications/Rental Coordinator, Retail/Visitor Services Coordinator, Exhibit Technician, Maintenance and part time Bookkeeper. The General Manager manages the operation as a signing authority (CEO position).



## NANAIMO MUSEUM

### GENERAL MANAGER ROLE PROFILE

#### POSITION OVERVIEW

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the General Manager (GM) will provide strategic leadership and operational direction to the Museum and ensure that the organization's strategic goals and objectives are implemented. The GM will maintain relationships with the City of Nanaimo council and senior staff, key stakeholders and community partners and develop strategic linkages to maintain and further the growth of the Nanaimo Museum. The GM will provide leadership and support to the museum staff and volunteers to ensure the continued professional development and delivery of museum programs and services.

#### ACCOUNTABILITIES

##### BOARD AND MEMBER RELATIONS

- Provide regular updates and support to the Executive and Board on operational and financial performance of the museum
- Prepare and present strategic initiatives to the Board for approval
- Inform the Board of activities that significantly affect the organization or matters
- Support all board committees as needed
- Provide an annual report to the members of the Nanaimo & District Museum Society at the Annual General Meeting
- Develop business plans as appropriate for new opportunities, joint ventures etc.

##### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- Ensure and manage the ongoing stable financial management of the organization
- Ensure the integrity and viability of the organization's finances (including day to day financial operations), budgets, forecasts, investments, earned revenue diversification and audits
- Manage all aspects of our management agreement with the City of Nanaimo
- Ensure compliance and proper reporting to all municipal, provincial and national regulatory and funding agencies
- Ensure all grant applications, required budgets and reports are submitted successfully
- Prepare and present an annual budget to the Board and ensure variance reporting monthly

##### COMMUNICATIONS AND COLLABORATIONS

- Communicate and interpret the organization's vision with all stakeholders from Board and members to the community
- Liaise with and manage all reporting to the City of Nanaimo, BC Arts Council and BC Gaming and other funders

- Manage all advocacy efforts with the City of Nanaimo and other strategic partners
- Serve as the ambassador and representative of the organization both in our community and in the broader museum community provincially and nationally or internationally
- Maintain community collaborations
- Manage all advocacy efforts with elected provincial and federal officials, senior City staff and Council and others
- Identify and develop strategic marketing objectives and community collaborations
- Advise and mentor smaller museums and related organizations in the area
- Maintain connections with and draw on peer expertise
- Represent the museum on the Cultural Managers Working Group and other committees advising the city of Nanaimo Culture & Heritage Department, Commission and Council
- Where practical and if of benefit to the Museum, take a leadership role with national museum associations to further the profile of the Nanaimo Museum and provide an image of pro-activity within the industry

## OPERATIONS

- Ensure recruitment and ongoing professional development to maintain and grow a professional staff
- Evaluate and manage risks to the staff and volunteers, collection and space with appropriate safety procedures and adequate insurance coverage
- Ensure the ongoing success and operations related to the Sports Hall of Fame
- Ensure ongoing operations and liaise with the City of Nanaimo regarding all aspects of both museum buildings and Bastion building systems maintenance
- Manage all aspects of staffing
- Oversee collection development and interpretation, marketing and Shop operations

## GENERAL MANAGEMENT

- Maintain a culture of staff support, development and assessment
- Ensure a thorough recruitment process for part time, summer and full time staffing and maintain competitive compensation
- Ensure and maintain excellence in customer interactions through all operations
- Engage in professional development activities that broaden museum and business expertise
- Handle problem requests and visitors



# NANAIMO MUSEUM

## GENERAL MANAGER SELECTION CRITERIA

### BACKGROUND

The outgoing GM was hired in 1989 for her business administration experience and skills. The Nanaimo Museum Board of Directors at the time took a nontraditional approach when they chose to hire a GM who did not have the typical experience and/or training in history, a museum or other related field. Today, the top positions in Canadian museums are usually focused on business

administration skills. This is an important consideration when assessing selection criteria. The GM position does, however, need to acquire or have knowledge about the themes and logistics of museum programming in order to incorporate that specific knowledge into strategic planning and partnership development.

## **1. BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL ACUMEN**

The new GM should be experienced with all levels of accounting from day to day bookkeeping to complete management and maintenance of the \$700,000 operating budget. Preferably, the candidate should have organizational management experience at a cultural nonprofit society of a similar or larger size. Positive achievements in advancing an organization must be demonstrated.

The successful candidate will be capable of immediately assuming leadership with written suggestions about future possibilities for growing the museum and its presence in the community. The Nanaimo Museum is in an enviable position of financial security with a modest endowment and savings/investments that maintain a 3-4 month operating surplus. The Museum has earned respect in the museum field and is a recognized leader both regionally and provincially. Smaller institutions, especially on Vancouver Island, frequently consult the Nanaimo Museum for advice. Larger institutions have followed our lead and at least five have requested and replicated our Adopt an Artifact program. It is imperative that this baseline be maintained and expanded.

The single largest component of revenue is currently from Gift Shop sales. Experience in retail management (or any creative revenue diversification or social enterprise business experience) will be considered an asset. Venue rental is also important to the museum for sales, income, attendance numbers and, more significantly, for broadening our reach in the community. It is important that these two "non typical" museum functions are maintained and expanded.

Identifying new and maintaining existing grant and operating funding is an important part of maintaining economic stability. This process involves being in touch with provincial and federal funding opportunities and ensuring successful grant application and reporting processes.

### **Selection Criteria**

- demonstrates knowledge of the non-profit/charitable regulatory and reporting environment
- strong business/administration background contributing to a successful cultural organization
- knowledge and experience in all aspects of management accounting functions, including day to day operations and financial analysis and projections
- understands the importance of financial stability within a nonprofit cultural framework and the ability to identify, develop and manage diverse revenue streams
- Retail Management experience an asset

## **2. STRATEGIC PLANNING/IMPLEMENTATION**

Although the usual definition of the strategic planning process includes a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis, this process should be intuitive and not the main focus of resources. Sometimes the writing of a strategic plan takes more time than the implementation and uses limited resources that could be better used to act quickly when an opportunity presents itself. This has been the philosophy of the organization and it has always worked very well. The museum has grown significantly in the last 10 years (and the 10 years before that) and is ready for new leadership to take the Nanaimo Museum to the next stage of strategic planning and development.

This process has several levels starting with planning at the Board level based on community opportunities and input, suggestions by the staff and volunteers at both the information gathering and implementation components of the planning process.

#### **Selection Criteria**

- Experienced in creating a vision for the future growth of the organization with demonstrated ability in moving an organization forward
- Commitment to build on current strengths, direction and planning and continue to strategically advance the organization
- Experience in overcoming obstacles, both internal and external, while implementing a strategic plan
- Demonstrated experience in having a major influence on moving an organization forward while problem solving with creative and positive results
- Demonstrated ability leading a staff and Board of Directors through a planning process from inception through to successful completion
- Displays a knowledge of creatively assessing cultural industry and economic trends and opportunities

### **3. LEADERSHIP (CLOSELY RANKED WITH #2)**

This would seem to be an integral part of all the qualities we are looking for. However, consensus is that this quality is important enough to be a standalone criterion when considering the new GM. Board/GM relations form an important part of the leadership approach. The GM must be able to build a trusting relationship with a variety of board members and stakeholders in order to assist the Board in effectively leading the museum to the next level. Simultaneously, the GM must be able to deal with the ups and downs experienced while moving forward. Getting the most from a talented but busy staff requires a strong leader.

#### **Selection Criteria**

- A visionary leader always looking to the future to identify potential growth opportunities for the organization
- Demonstrated leadership capability with the ability to bring out the best of the staff
- Demonstrated ability to successfully guide a Board of Directors as part of the leadership team
- Demonstrates a positive "can do" attitude and approach to problems with experience in taking an organization through a challenging situation to a positive resolution
- Experience in creating a proactive, positive environment where staff and volunteers play an active role in achieving planned results

### **4. PERSONAL QUALITIES/INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**

Many of the qualities we are looking for here are similar to other criteria areas, but again, were considered important enough to be a separate category. The current museum staff is a very capable and integrated team that works well together. The new GM must have the personality and approach that will enhance the museum family that includes staff, Board, long time volunteers, donors and life members. This position will deal with a very broad range of the public, City staff and elected officials, funding agency staff and museum colleagues who will engage with the museum through the GM position. For these key and many other reasons, interpersonal skills are very important.

### **Selection Criteria**

- Demonstrates effective, straight forward, honest communication approach that encourages trust
- Demonstrated ability to work as part of the staff team while leading staff by example
- Ability to develop and maintain positive relationships with various stakeholders in the community

### **5. POLITICAL/PUBLIC RELATIONS SKILLS (CLOSELY RANKED WITH #4)**

Our single largest funding source is the City of Nanaimo. Political relations with senior staff and City Council are a crucial aspect of the position. Political savvy extends to provincial and national associations, funding agencies and peer groups to further enhance respect for the Nanaimo Museum.

Donor identification and stewardship is another important GM role. Adopt an Artifact is an example of an opportunity that is in use not only generate a donation but to create a relationship with a donor.

The GM's role is to take care of any "issues" that arise level from anyone inside or outside the organization and deal with these situations positively, effectively and quickly to avoid any negative impact in the community or to the museum.

### **Selection Criteria**

- Demonstrated ability to work through difficult issues with key stakeholders internally and externally including funders, supporters and all levels of government
- Demonstrated confidence in managing stakeholders, funders and donors

### **6. COLLABORATIVE AND INNOVATIVE THINKING**

To be a visionary leader, the GM must always be looking to the future with the ability to inspire and direct staff while informing and supporting the Board of Directors when planning the museum's future direction. Effective team work between the GM and Board is the beginning of strong collaborations within the broader museum community and the Nanaimo area community. Thinking outside the box, especially outside the "museum" box will help form new partnerships to move the museum to the next level. The museum has always tried to present innovative exhibits and programming and other opportunities engaging a broad spectrum of local and visiting public. Growing this approach, especially through the continued development of partnerships, is a vital component of moving the museum forward.

### **Selection Criteria**

- Present examples of past experiences that demonstrate creative thinking
- Examples or suggestions of strategic partnership opportunities