

**NATURAL  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM**  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

# ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT

## ABOUT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUMS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) — comprising the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum, and the William S. Hart Museum — occupies an unrivaled position in the natural and cultural landscape of Los Angeles. As home to over 35 million specimens and artifacts, some as old as 4.5 billion years, the Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County has one of the largest natural and cultural history collections in the world. NHMLAC provides a range of indoor and outdoor immersive experiences across three sites, which served over 1.3 million visitors annually prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Natural History Museums’ diverse audiences include people of all ages and ethnicities, as well as families with children, schoolchildren with teachers, young adults, seniors, and visitors from all over the world. Located in Exposition Park in central Los Angeles, the Natural History Museum is currently joined by other major cultural and athletic facilities including the California Science Center, California African American Museum, Lucas Museum of Narrative Art (opening in 2023), Memorial Coliseum, Swimming Stadium, Banc of California Soccer Stadium, and one of the largest rose gardens in the nation. NHMLAC is a public-private partnership between the nonprofit Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Foundation and the County of Los Angeles and continues to remain in a strong financial position despite the pandemic, due in part to their long-standing support and operational revenue by a contractual agreement with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and private funding in the form of philanthropic gifts, grants, and museum enterprises.

When it opened in 1913, the Natural History Museum was the first public museum building in the city of Los Angeles. Now, over a hundred years later, NHMLAC remains a global, community, and research institution like no other, where Earth’s history and future, environment and culture, and city center and diverse neighborhoods all come together. The Natural History Museums’ collections are an unparalleled global resource that must be studied, enhanced, protected, and experienced to advance the discovery

### Key Facts

- 375 foundation staff and 8 county staff
- \$42 million operating budget (FY 2021)
- \$218.3 million endowment (as of October 31, 2021)
- 33 advancement staff positions
- \$5.8 million raised in FY21
- Member households: 16,384 (2021)

### Vision & Values

#### VISION

*To inspire wonder, discovery,  
and responsibility for our  
natural and cultural worlds.*

#### VALUES

*Adventurous, Inclusive,  
Authentic, Intentional*

### Visit



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and understanding of the natural and cultural worlds in the past, present, and future. The scientific community is using NHMLAC's collection daily for groundbreaking, world-class research and studies about the solar system, the geology of our planet, and the biodiversity of life on Earth. The Museums curate specimens and objects, share the stories behind them, and provide innovative, immersive exhibitions like *Becoming Los Angeles*, *Dino Hall*, *Age of Mammals*, and *Nature Gardens*, showcasing the interconnectedness of the natural and cultural worlds. NHMLAC's global partnerships and collections enhance recent special exhibits such as *Brilliance: The Art and Science of Rare Jewels* and *Ichthyosaur: Discovering a Fossil Giant*, while collaborating with other like institutions on other exhibits like *Becoming Jane: The Evolution of Dr. Jane Goodall*. NHMLAC's Mobile Museums, specially designed semi-truck trailers that travel to school sites, allow students to learn and engage like scientists by asking questions, studying specimens and artifacts, and sharing their own discoveries.

Located on Museum Row, La Brea Tar Pits and Museum contain the most important and the only consistently active and urban Ice Age fossil excavation site in the world. Adjacent to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Museum displays Ice Age fossils, including saber-toothed cats, dire wolves, and mammoths found in asphalt deposits. A scientific wonder and unique archeological experience, a range of fossils trapped in the seeps of 10,000 to 40,000 years ago are discovered, excavated, prepared, and displayed altogether in one place. Research on the collections is critically important for our understanding of climate and ecological change. The William S. Hart Museum is the former home of silent screen actor William S. Hart. Hart left his estate and mansion in Newhall, California, to the County of Los Angeles to be converted into a public park and museum. The museum occupies a 22-room mansion on a 265-acre estate, filled with Western art, Native American artifacts, bison, barnyard animals, hiking trails, and early Hollywood memorabilia.

Los Angeles, an ethnically diverse metropolitan city known for its incredible biodiversity and year-round warm weather, is currently on the verge of a once-in-a-generation transformation with the rise of light rail transportation, new museums, and gleaming stadiums that will welcome soccer teams and Olympians alike. These new facilities will bring new waves of visitors to Exposition Park which has attracted about four million visitors per year. Exposition Park will become the Central Park of tomorrow's Los Angeles, a globally prominent hub for culture, sports, science, and history. Between the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, Los Angeles Football Club, and the 2028 Summer Olympics, over \$2.5 billion is currently being invested in the park first anchored by the Natural History Museum. In addition, the La Brea Tar Pits will benefit from recently opened Academy Museum of Motion Pictures and the \$750 million expansion of LACMA which is now in its final stages. In the coming years, the visitor level is expected to increase exponentially in both locations significantly for many years.

NHMLAC is governed through a partnership of public and private leaders, composed of dedicated individuals serving on the Board of Trustees and the County-appointed Commission of the Board of Governors. The Board of Trustees currently consists of 40 members: 15 Governors, elected by the County Board of Supervisors, and 25 museum-elected Trustees. Dr. Lori Bettison-Varga, NHMLAC's



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President and Director and the Board of Trustees are nearing the completion of the “Opening New Doors: The Campaign for the NHM Commons,” a \$100 million comprehensive campaign to raise money for capital support, annual funding, and endowment. To date \$61 million has been raised for the NHM Commons, beyond their original goal of \$60 million with the overall campaign projected to reach \$110 million in total support at the end of 2021. With expected additional cash and pledges, the historic campaign is on track to close around \$110 million by June 2022.

NHMLAC is unique in its ambition to become a true hub for discovery and dialogue around the natural and cultural worlds. Slated to open in summer 2023, NHM Commons will be a 75,000 square foot three-story facility with striking design of transparent glass creating vibrant indoor-outdoor gathering spaces and showcasing natural as well as cultural spaces and exhibitions. In addition to a new Welcome Center, the NHM Commons will house a state-of-the-art 400-seat multi-purpose theater for events, science exploration, and immersive engagement with the stories of Los Angeles—from town halls and symposiums to movie night, in-person lectures, and in-the-field teleconferences with leading scientists for their global patrons and school children. While NHMLAC completes this transformative campaign, planning is already underway to reimagine the experience at La Brea Tar Pits and Museum, which will magnify it further as a unique global destination for exploring natural history and culture. A master plan by award-winning architects, Weiss Manfredi, is complete and planning work is underway to secure community backing and initial funding from public and private sources. This ambitious capital campaign will have huge ramifications for science, Los Angeles and the world, as no other site in the world rivals the Tar Pits in scale and importance for understanding ecosystem evolution during a major period of climatic change. As the Miracle Mile undergoes a reinvention as a hub of science, culture, and the arts, with the new Academy Museum of Motion Pictures and a new LACMA under construction, there is no better moment to reintroduce the Tar Pits to the world.

We invite you to learn more at [www.nhmlac.org](http://www.nhmlac.org).

## THE POSITION

The Associate Vice President of Advancement role represents an exciting and distinctive opportunity to experience deep purpose and joy in leading the growth of advancement programs and operations that will positively impact the lives of thousands of kids, families, and patrons of the Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County, one of our nation’s best museums in natural history and culture. The Associate Vice President of Advancement, a creative strategic thinker, skilled manager, and exceptional relationship builder, will join a dynamic, committed, and talented team and will serve as a strategic partner to the Chief Advancement Officer and other executive and programmatic leadership involved in the NHMLAC’s fundraising. The Associate Vice President provides oversight and direction for NHMLAC’s Individual Giving, Advancement Services, and Special Events programs. This position reports directly to NHMLAC’s Chief Advancement Officer Paul Bessire and will work closely with the Director of Major and Planned Gifts to support the fundraising activities of the Chief Advancement Officer, Board of Trustees,



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and NHMLAC's President and Director. A goal-driven, empathetic manager of people, the Associate Vice President leads a talented team of 19 advancement professionals and provides support and counsel to the full team. The Associate Vice President serves as a high-functioning member of the advancement team and collaborates closely with the Executive Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.

As the Opening New Doors campaign reaches a successful close in 2022, NHMLAC will start planning its next dynamic phase of future growth, requiring the new Associate Vice President to be a strong strategic thinker, detail-oriented planner, and a gifted systems builder who can assist the Chief Advancement Officer in building robust advancement programs and operations. This dynamic, goal-driven leader will be expected to continue innovating and refining the Museums' advancement structure, systems, and programs cross-organizationally to support the needs for funding a range of scientific research, collections, exhibitions, and programs. This leader, an active listener with high emotional intelligence and a passion for organizational transformation, will focus on supporting the Chief Advancement Officer to build a best-in-class, achievement-oriented environment built on aspirational goals, accountability, and fundraising excellence.

## MAJOR OBJECTIVES

Within the first 12 to 18 months, the Associate Vice President of Advancement will achieve the following major objectives:

- Expand NHMLAC's membership program locally and regionally to be on track to exceed pre-pandemic levels.
- Develop a plan to revitalize the Fellows program, the Museums' premier leadership annual giving program, by engaging a greater range of diverse and younger households.
- Oversee a successful data migration of the NHMLAC's new Microsoft Dynamics and Donor Plus information systems.
- Develop and implement a robust plan to re-energize the annual giving program through improved systems, better donor segmentation, and creative, compelling messaging.
- Build strong, positive collaborative relationships with NHMLAC's Executive Leadership Team and department leaders to ensure cross-department fluidity and integration around all advancement activities.
- Lead a successful change management process to build an integrated and cohesive advancement team that operates on data-driven decision-making, accountability, and tracking progress based on metrics.
- Lead efforts to strengthen the team's staffing support for the President/Director and Trustees on high-level event and donor briefings.



## RESPONSIBILITIES

The Associate Vice President of Advancement will have the following primary responsibilities:

- Lead, manage, and mentor teams in a supportive and nurturing manner that ensures a pro-active, achievement-oriented environment.
- Support the Chief Advancement Officer's efforts to build an infrastructure that supports and helps to optimize the NHMLAC's fundraising opportunities.
- Work in close partnership with the Chief Advancement Officer in setting bold yet achievable goals, with clear strategies, tactics, and key performance indicators that ensure greater accountability.
- Develop and implement an integrated strategic cultivation, donor acquisition, stewardship, and communications plan that will generate significant gifts from individual donors, members, and treasured Fellows.
- Establish and strengthen department-wide organizational processes and management systems and participate in major gift donor strategy development and implementation.
- Serve as primary leader in the cultivation of high-capacity donors in the Museums' Fellow programs; manage a portfolio of approximately 50 high-level individual donors.
- Oversee the planning and execution of the Museums' signature and annual event fundraising activities.
- Oversee the creation and design of compelling donor communications materials for individual and institutional donors in close coordination with the Marketing and Communications division.
- Supervise the Advancement Services team ensuring timely, accurate record keeping, donor acknowledgements, and effective migration of the new donor database.
- Support the Chief Advancement Officer and other directors in staffing the President/Director and Trustees in their fundraising activities, including preparing and strategizing for fundraising calls and meetings, accompanying them on solicitations, and debriefing with them on donor outreach.
- Develop and maintain strong, collaborative working relationships that elicit trust with members of the Executive Leadership Team, Board of Trustees, museum staff, curators, educators, community partners, donors, volunteers, and external stakeholders.
- Represent the Museums at public functions and events to raise the visibility of the organization as a strong, viable philanthropic entity.
- Travel regionally as needed for donor solicitations and cultivation events.



## QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will bring most of the following qualifications and skill sets:

- A passionate, enthusiastic commitment to the vision and values of the Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County.
- A minimum of five to seven years of professional experience in managing high-performing advancement teams. Experience with a museum, cultural institution, or higher education institution would be an advantage.
- Proven ability to hire, manage, motivate, and retain a diverse advancement team that strives to achieve excellence and exceed goals.
- Proven drive and achievement in the successful solicitation of five-figure and greater gifts.
- Demonstrated success in building productive, long-term relationships with executives, teams, boards, volunteers, and donors.
- A proactive, goal-oriented, independent team builder with strong emotional intelligence and demonstrated abilities in strategic planning, creative design, and systems change.
- Excellent communication skills with a persuasive ability, including strong written, verbal, and presentation skills.
- A capacity to acquire an understanding of NHMLAC's work in natural science and cultural research with ability to translate this work into compelling reasons to give funding support.
- Solid financial management skills with experience in fundraising and budget analysis, forecasting, and managing bid solicitations, contracts, and external contractors.
- Experience with a range of prospect and donor management fundraising software applications.
- Ability to travel as necessary and attend program and fundraising activities as needed, including evenings and weekends.
- A bachelor's degree in a related field or equivalent professional experience.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) values diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (IDEA) within its organization and communities. We strive to provide a welcoming, safe and respectful environment in which all staff, including those who identify as Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color (BIPOC), neurodiverse, a woman, a person with a disability, a veteran, and/or a part of the LGBTQAI+ community, can thrive. As such, all employees are expected to be knowledgeable of and actively in alignment with NHMLAC's [IDEA Transformational Framework](#), which expects staff to be: antiracist, intersectional, accountable, equitable, and collaborative. These values must manifest not only



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in employees' conduct with one another and the communities they support but also in the work they perform.

**COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

The Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County offers a highly competitive salary and a wide range of benefits as part of a total compensation package. Benefits include Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance; Commuter Transit Benefits; Basic Life, AD&D and Long-Term Disability benefits; Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) with travel assistance; Voluntary Supplemental Life and AD&D insurance for Employees and/or Dependents; Voluntary Group Critical Illness or Group Accident Benefits; Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA); Pet Insurance; Credit Union (USC); Paid/Floating Holidays, Paid Vacation and Sick Leave; and a 403(b) Retirement Plan with Employer Contributions. As an active player in Southern California's vibrant and diverse natural history and cultural communities, the NHMLAC also offers a supportive, family friendly, and inclusive work environment. Relocation will be provided for the successful candidate.

**APPLICATION**

The Natural History Museums of Los Angeles County has retained Campbell & Company to conduct this search. The team for this project includes Dan Nevez, Vice President, Alexandra Catuara, Consultant, and Kole Farrise, Associate Consultant. To be considered for this opportunity, please send a letter of interest and resume to:

**ALEXANDRA CATUARA**

Consultant, Executive Search  
[anc@campbellcompany.com](mailto:anc@campbellcompany.com)  
(312) 506-0060 direct

*NHMLAC is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is committed to diversity in its workforce.*



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