

Museum Careers

Museums offer a number of interesting career opportunities. At a smaller museum, there are opportunities to do a variety of job functions, while at a larger museum; each staff person typically focuses on a specific function.

There are many good programs for museum studies and museum education. If you plan to work in a museum, be prepared to work hard to achieve your goals. You might consider interning or volunteering in several different positions to gain experience and to discover what you like best. A good place to start is at your local historic site or park. Talk to people who are doing the type of work you one day hope to do and find out everything you can.

If you would like to work for the new National Museum of African American History and Culture, all employment opportunities within the Smithsonian Institution are posted on the Smithsonian's website: www.si.edu/OHR.

Please visit the website or contact the Smithsonian's Office of Human Resources at (202) 275-1102 to learn of all possible job opportunities and to apply for specific jobs related to your area of interest.

Here are brief descriptions of only some museum career roles:

Administrator and Finance Manager

The Administrator and Finance Manager work hand-in-hand to manage the business oversight: personnel, budget, purchases and contracting activities of the museum.

Collections Manager

The Collections Manager numbers, catalogs and stores the museum's collections.

Conservator

The Conservator uses scientific techniques to examine, treat, repair and preserve the museum's collections.

Curator

The Curator, a specialist in a particular subject which relates to the museum's collections, conducts research, develops ideas and writes exhibitions scripts.

Development Officer

The Development Officer coordinates the fund-raising activities of the museum.

Director

The Director, highly knowledgeable about the topic of the museum's collections, manages finances, plans, organizes staff and supervises the management of the museum's collections, activities and programs.

Educator

The Educator develops implements and evaluates museum exhibitions and programs to help visitors better understand the museum's collections. Educators often manage the volunteer corps.

Exhibitions Manager

The Exhibitions Manager designs, creates scale models, fabricates and arranges objects and lighting in order to display the museum's collections.

Librarian

The Librarian selects, acquires, catalogs, classifies and circulates books and materials specific to the museum's collections.

Membership Officer

The Membership Officer attracts and maintains the interest of the museum's public and provides special benefits to people who donate monies to become a member of the museum.

Public Affairs Officer

The Public Affairs Officer manages the public image of the museum and sends information to newspapers, radio, television and other media to promote exhibitions and programs.

Security Personnel

The Security Personnel manages the safety and well-being of the visitors, staff, museum's collections and the building in which the museum is housed.