

City of Bellingham
Classification Specification

CLASS TITLE	Museum Curator
DEPARTMENT	Museum
UNION:	231
SG:	S-8
CS:	N
FLSA:	N
EE04CODE:	PR

NATURE OF WORK:

Cares for specific collection(s) and provides for the use of collection(s) to benefit the Museum and the public. Performs and directs activities concerned with instruction, acquisition, exhibition, preservation, security, research, and public service objectives of the Museum. Responsible for the care and superintendence of collections related to functional area of expertise. Manages the budget, implements policy, supervises staff, conducts long range planning and scheduling, establishes priorities for staff deployment, and evaluates program effectiveness.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The Museum Curator classification is distinguished by its assignment of responsibilities for managing and coordinating a functional area of museum work, such as education, acquisition, exhibition, preservation, research or public service activities. This is professional-level museum work requiring an advanced degree and professional experience in the specialty.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to the Museum Director. Supervises support staff, work study students, interns and volunteers.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Proposes, plans, curates and implements exhibitions at least annually. Manages and coordinates the installation, maintenance, and dismantling of exhibits. Manages and coordinates the production of exhibit graphics and labels. Arranges insurance coverage for objects on loan or special exhibits. Manages and coordinates the development, conceptualization, and evaluation of an exhibit story line. Researches and writes exhibit labels and catalog essays. Develops and reviews exhibit design concepts, detailed exhibit design drawings, audio-visual components, and computer software programs.
2. Acts as liaison between the agency and the community. Cultivates and works with community partners for exhibitions and/or programs.
3. Serves as project director for programs as assigned; organizes and oversees work of assigned project staff.
4. Develops and maintains institution's registration, cataloging, and basic record-keeping systems. Plans and organizes acquisition, storage, and exhibition of collections and

- related educational materials. Recommends artifact acquisitions and de-accessions; monitors storage locations.
5. Develops, implements, and monitors collection management and preservation policies and procedures related to functional area.
 6. Researches, examines and tests acquisitions to authenticate origins, composition, history and current value.
 7. Negotiates and recommends purchase, sale, exchange, or loan of collections.
 8. Cultivates potential donors of objects in functional area and works with the donors throughout the year.
 9. Organizes and conducts tours, workshops and instructional sessions to acquaint individuals with use of institution's facilities and collections.
 10. Supervises staff as assigned.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Provides leadership to the Museum as a participant on the Senior Management Team.
2. May write and review journal articles, institutional reports, and publicity materials.
3. Provides input into the development of annual budget within the area of curatorial responsibility.
4. Provides training in professional museum and archival techniques for staff and volunteers.
5. Serves on task forces regarding exhibits, education, or collections.
6. Conceptualizes and writes grants to granting organizations. Monitors and reports to granting organizations, as appropriate.
7. Provides responses to research inquiries; conducts research or oversees staff conducting research on specific topics related to specialized discipline.
8. Provides written and oral reports to board, staff, and outside groups.
9. Performs other related duties as appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Knowledge of:

- Specific discipline related to hire and field of study.
- Museum methods of handling and managing collections.
- Standards and best practices used by accredited museums.
- Computer applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, presentation software, museum collection management systems and other management tools directly related to the job functions.

Ability to:

- Identify and classify museum objects and/or archival collections.
- Develop and implement educational activities, materials and programs related to the mission of the Museum.
- Clearly express ideas and concepts both orally and in writing.
- Perform administrative duties.
- Work with volunteers and others to carry out assignments effectively.
- Establish and maintain relationships with donors.
- Establish and maintain relationships with outside groups directly related to the success of the museum.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed primarily indoors, but may also occur outdoors in all kinds of weather, depending on the position and area of responsibility. Occasionally requires work at a computer workstation. May require travel.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- A master's degree involving major study in history, museum studies, fine arts, art history, education or anthropology, and two years of collection-based experience in art or history.

OR

- A bachelor's degree involving major study in history, fine arts, art history, education or anthropology and four years of collection-based experience in art or history.

OR

- A combination of education and experience that provides the applicant with the required knowledge, skills and abilities will be considered.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

- Valid Washington State driver's license and good driving record. Must submit a three-year driving abstract prior to hire.
- Some positions must pass a police criminal convictions records check and Washington State Adult/Child Abuse records check prior to hire

PREPARED BY: L. McGowan
S. Mahaffey
1/01

REVIEWED BY: _____
Tom Livesay, Director
Whatcom Museum of
History & Art

REVISED BY: T. Livesay/L. Klemanski/Joint Classification Committee
6/02

T. Livesay/L. Klemanski/ Joint Classification Committee
5/05

JOINT CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE ADOPTION:

May 17, 2005