



Photography Collection Curatorial Fellowship (Full-time)

The Photography Fellow works full-time, with four days a week researching, cataloguing, and digitizing nineteenth-century objects in the NBWM photography collection, and one day a week on personal research, writing, or travel. They will focus digitization and cataloguing efforts on the earliest materials first, working through the nineteenth-century objects. The Fellow will participate in planning a special exhibition, programming, and accompanying catalogue on 19th-century New Bedford studio photography scheduled for late 2025. Through archival research, the team will also assemble a thorough record of studios in operation in the city during this period, which may become an additional web resource. The Fellow may also have the opportunity to organize a second, smaller exhibition of their own choosing during the fellowship. They will serve as a key individual within the Curatorial department by attending regular weekly meetings, participating in committee meetings, and serving as an advocate for the photography collection at all levels of museum operations. This is a two-year appointment with a flexible start date, includes full benefits, and has dedicated research and travel funding. Annual compensation is \$40,000 with benefits.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- catalogue, digitize, research, and inventory 19th-century photography collection materials
- gain facility with using ReDiscovery (our CMS)
- contribute to building a standard style thesaurus for cataloguing photographs
- build skills in object handling
- produce research files on key New Bedford area photographers
- tag CMS records with keywords
- assemble a record of 19th-century New Bedford area photography studios
- execute the fabrication of specially-constructed housing for preservation of collection
- maintain safe handling and care of photographic objects, using best practices in collections care
- participate in weekly department meetings and committee meetings
- assist with preparation of grant applications related to the photography collection
- participate in planning exhibition on 19th-century New Bedford studio photography
- assist with the execution of an exhibition catalogue and programming
- serve as an advocate for the photography collection at all levels of museum operations

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND ABILITIES:

- must be organized, punctual, dependable, and professional;
- self-starter with strong organizational and time management skills;
- should have good verbal communication skills;
- able to work independently and as part of a team;
- candidate must demonstrate a strong knowledge of the history of photography;
- proficiency identifying nineteenth-century photographic techniques and materials;
- facility with Microsoft office suite and collections management systems preferred;
- knowledge of museum registration and best practices in museum collections care preferred.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- MA in art history or related field with a focus on photographic history;
- work experience with museums, libraries, or cultural organizations;
- experience with and understanding of best practices in object handling and storage;
- three years of museum experience preferred;
- ABD or PhD in art history or museum studies with a focus on photographic history preferred.

The New Bedford Whaling Museum

The New Bedford Whaling Museum ignites learning through explorations of art, history, science and culture rooted in the stories of people, the region and an international seaport. Founded in 1903 as the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, the Museum seeks to advance understanding related to the influence of the whaling industry and the port of New Bedford on the history, economy, ecology, arts, and cultures of the region, the nation, and the world. We tell the stories of the many diverse communities that shared in the creation of this history, through excellence in our collections, scholarship, and public engagement. The Museum is recognized as a compelling destination that inspires all visitors to reflect on the complex issues that shaped the past, remain critical today, and inform a sustainable future. Today, the Whaling Museum is a leader in the cultural landscape of the SouthCoast serving more than 100,000 visitors and offering engaging exhibitions, dynamic public programs, and vibrant educational activities appealing to learners of all ages.

About the Photography Collection

This fellowship is part of an extensive multi-year effort to catalogue and digitize the NBWM's vast photography collection and, ultimately, make images open access and freely available on our website. As the historical society for New Bedford and the surrounding region with a collection started in 1903, the NBWM has a rich, deep, and comprehensive photography collection. Due to the success of the American whaling industry, by 1840 New Bedford, Massachusetts was the wealthiest city in the United States with a diverse population that prospered on whaling ventures. It quickly became a center for early American photographic enterprises with at least two competing ventures in operation by 1841. By 1880, there were at least twenty studios founded or in operation, serving a total population of about 25,000. The photography collection reflects this dynamic regional history. Numbering approximately 200,000 items, the total collection represents every benchmark in photo-history and is currently only about 25% catalogued.

TO APPLY

Send cover letter and resume to Naomi Slipp, Chief Curator at nslipp@whalingmuseum.org. Application deadline is March 15, 2022. No phone calls, please.

The New Bedford Whaling Museum is committed to diversity among its employees and encourages qualified candidates from all backgrounds to apply.