

# Museum Search & Reference



## Job Profile: Director of Education and Public Programs



New Bedford Whaling Museum, part of New Bedford Whaling National Park, overlooking the Harbor and Buzzards Bay

[The New Bedford Whaling Museum](#) (NBWM) in New Bedford, Massachusetts seeks a Director of Education and Public Programs (DEPP) to join its Leadership Team to provide strategy and direction for an important array of educational and public programs, supported by a dynamic, professional department. The DEPP leads the design, staffing, implementation, program evaluation and financial sustainability of museum learning experiences and resources focused on early childhood, K-12, family, college and life-long learner programming and outreach. Among them is the Museum's impactful 3-year, paid high school [Apprenticeship](#) program, a National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award winner, which provides eligible New Bedford students with access to resources and experiences that deepen community engagement, promote personal and professional development, and cultivate college and career success. The Museum also offers comprehensive K-12 school visitation programs, volunteer programs, community educational partnerships and a range of public programming for all ages. In leading efforts to plan engaging annual programs and deepen community and regional partnerships, the DEPP will need a solid understanding of museum educational best practices, strong organizational skills and proven experience in staff motivation, support, and management.

As part of the Museum's leadership team, the Director of Education and Public Programs will be engaged in setting direction, planning, and executing objectives. They will oversee a staff of 6, plus

a cohort of volunteers, apprentices, and interns. They must be able to deftly guide, represent and support the education and public programs team, have the vision to lay out a comprehensive, innovative approach to department goals and be willing to work in a hands-on manner to see projects through to completion. The successful candidate will move easily from management to community engagement, to strategy to funding, and still be happy to roll up their sleeves with department staff when needed. They should appreciate working across departments with a team of colleagues and be adept at building partnerships. They should be comfortable developing a partnership with the President & CEO and be confident to work independently knowing they will be supported. They will also work closely with the Board of Trustees through the Education Committee. The successful candidate will have experience writing grants and being able to communicate educational goals for funders. They should also have a track record of exciting and successful programs and partnerships, including with diverse audiences.

A beloved keeper of the region's collective memory and a leading cultural institution, NBWM is a part of a vibrant cultural community that is particularly diverse, with legacies of whaling leading to many paths of migration. The Museum embraces this role and boldly explores new regional narratives, weaving stories about global maritime history, fine art, whaling and whale ecology, industrial expansion, and immigrant culture with collections in art and cultural history, science and nature. Even with pandemic challenges, the Museum has continued its sharp focus on community engagement with family programs, nationally recognized speakers, and internationally acclaimed events like the [Moby-Dick Marathon](#). The successful candidate for Director of Education and Public Programs will have a commitment to Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) and be excited to participate in cross-departmental efforts to fulfill this mission, reflect on interpretive strategies, build community and expand audiences in a positive, welcoming environment. The new DEPP will lead the team on a strategic review of program breadth and depth, assess priority areas for growth and adjustment, and articulate a vision of dedicated community service. Important work is ahead, and the staff is eager to welcome a visionary partner and leader.



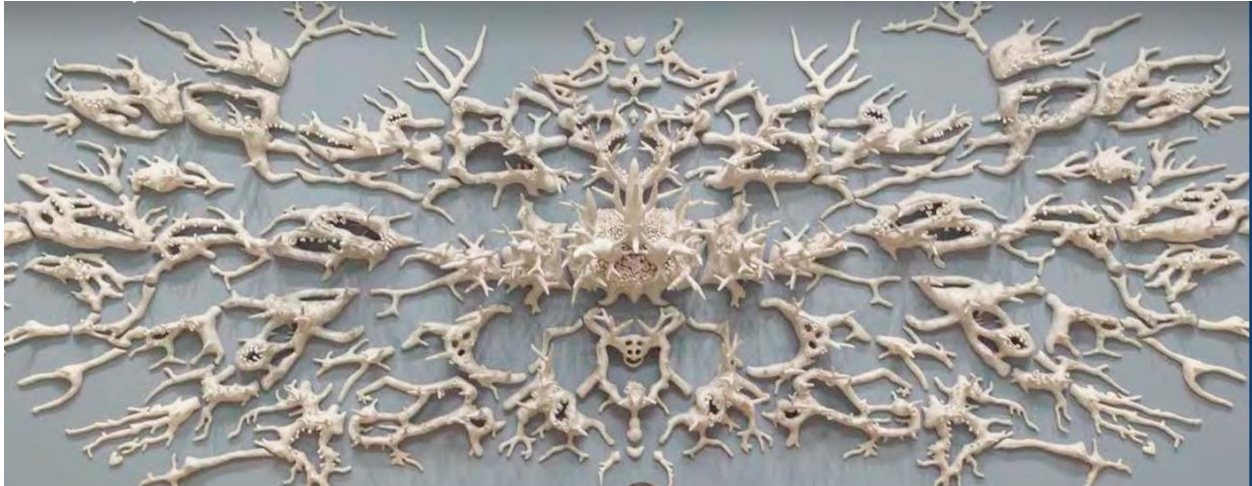
### **Opportunities of the Position**

The Director of Education and Public Programs will be engaged by the recent opportunities for expansion and master planning that will reorganize existing space for improved user experience and holds the potential to accommodate expanded children and family programs, makers' spaces, teachers' institute, learning labs, and a Museum Studies classroom. The DEPP will have an

opportunity to refresh the department's vision, balance, and pacing. They will participate in reshaping and redefining the Museum's narrative with a fresh look at interpretation through the lens of DEAI and will help lead the Museum's efforts of expanding access through traditional, and increasingly digital means.

**The Director of Education and Public Programs will be expected to:**

- Adhere to and be motivated by NBWM's organizational **Values** (as established by Staff in 2019): **Collaborative • Creative • Inclusive • Passionate • Respectful.**
- Serve on a newly reconfigured and energized Leadership Team that includes the Chief Curator, Director of Marketing and Communications, Director of Digital Engagement, Director of Museum Experience and Community Engagement, CFO/CAO, and Director of Philanthropy.
- Partner with leadership colleagues to collaboratively achieve broad museum strategic goals.
- Guide the Education and Public Programs team, collaboratively and supportively providing direction to develop and execute on department objectives.
- Forge new relationships and build on existing partnerships both internally and externally to advance work of Education and Public Program efforts.
- Lead department planning, both short term and long term, to envision new educational opportunities and programs, and enhance existing efforts.
- Demonstrate commitment to the Museum's work to Building a Museum for ALL and our steps to increase our efforts in Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI).
- In partnership with President and CFO, develop annual operating budget expectations connected to strategic objectives.
- Work collaboratively with the Development team to secure funds from foundations and individuals to support education and public programs.
- Partner with program leadership to actively participate on the In-Gallery Engagement Group, which meets bi-weekly to consider wayfinding, interactives, and visitor experience.
- Think strategically about all public programs, considering effectiveness, capacity and a fresh take going forward. Is there opportunity beyond our walls?
- Be responsible for oversight of the volunteer council who serve as an extension of educational efforts.
- Collaborate on the effort to grow young adult and family audiences and deepen relationships with local educators.
- Coordinate with the Chief Curator and team to ensure that exhibitions are engaging, participatory, and accessible, partner in the development of learning tools and interpretation.
- Coordinate with the Chief Curator and Director of Digital Engagement to envision interactive technology for exhibitions.
- Think broadly and care deeply about the visitor experience.
- Participate in decisions regarding capital improvements and Campus Master Planning.
- Coordinate Education Committee activities and support Education Committee Co-Chairs.
- Maintain professional affiliations in field-related and museum education organizations, professional societies, and relevant committees.
- Be available for evening and weekend events, as needed.



*Turn the Tide: Courtney Mattison exhibition, November 2021 – May 2022*

### **Experience & Education Desired**

- Four to eight years of museum experience, 4 of which has been successfully managing staff, organizing team activities, overseeing programs, educational activities, and partnerships.
- Strong knowledge of the field of Museum Education, its current issues, and best practices.
- Experience developing or helping develop grant projects and imagining outcomes.
- Must be comfortable and enjoy engaging with the public and working with high school young adults.
- Master's Degree or equivalent years of directly related study or experience desired.
- Persuasive communication skills both oral and written.
- Interest and familiarity in the art, history, natural history, and material culture of the region is an asset.
- Knowledge of Spanish and/or Portuguese languages a plus.

### **Desired Personal Characteristics**

- Organized and focused; a timely decision-maker.
- Strong, diplomatic team player and good listener with a high-level perspective.
- Collaborative and collegial leader; a respectful advocate for staff, supporting their growth and continued learning.
- Belief in friendly, welcoming environment for creative work balance.
- Deep commitment to DEAI and the social purpose of museums as platforms for new knowledge, community engagement, lifelong education, and as a positive force in society.
- Flexible and positive spirit that can move easily from planned activities to impromptu encounters.
- Creative problem solver, curious about a broad array of topics.
- Clear, transparent communicator.

*Because we know that no one will meet 100% of what is expected for any role, and because we understand that some women and underrepresented applicants could refrain from applying if they do not meet 100% of qualifications, we urge you to consider applying if much of this description describes you.*

## Compensation

- \$80,000 to \$90,000 per annum (commensurate with experience).
- Benefit package includes generous PTO, participation in health plan, 403b, and potential for merit bonus.

**To apply** in confidence, email 1) a letter expressing interest in this particular position and giving brief examples of past related experience; 2) a résumé; 3) names of three references with contact information. Submit application by August 14, 2022 to retained search firm: Lora Urbanelli, Museum Search & Reference, [SearchandRef@museum-search.com](mailto:SearchandRef@museum-search.com). References will not be contacted without prior permission of the applicant; Writing samples may be requested. **Nominations are welcome.**

For additional information visit:

<http://museum-search.com/open-searches/>.



The New Bedford Whaling Museum is committed to fair and accessible employment practices, and all qualified candidates are encouraged to apply for this search.



Guests in awe in *Skeletons of the Deep*

## About 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 (<https://www.whalingmuseum.org/>). Founded in 1903 as the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, the Museum's rich history reveals an intimate relationship with the communities it serves on the south coast of Massachusetts and beyond. Today, the Museum fosters explorations of the region's cultural, artistic, historic, and scientific contributions. From abolitionists to immigrants, merchants and whalers to conserving whales, seamstresses to fisherman, and artists to environmentalists, the New Bedford Whaling Museum weaves their narratives together, inviting visitors to examine complex and sometimes difficult topics that are shaped by our past, remain critical today and inform a sustainable future.

NBWM has an operating budget of over \$5M and a staff of 46 (full and part-time). With over 750,000 objects, the Museum can claim many superlatives amongst its holdings, including whale skeletons, the world's largest half-scale model whaling bark, and the largest intact 19th-century panorama in the country, as well as decorative arts and significant 19th-c. American and Dutch paintings, important photography, Japanese art, scrimshaw, and the world's largest library of whaling logbooks, prints, journals, manuscripts, maps, charts, and instruments. Today, focused outward to a culturally rich, creative, and vibrant community, the New Bedford Whaling Museum reflects on history to help us see more clearly the world we experience now.



## About New Bedford, MA

New Bedford, the sixth-largest city in Massachusetts, is nicknamed "The Whaling City" because it was one of the world's most important whaling ports in the 19th century. The city is known for its fishing fleet and accompanying seafood industry, as well as for its high concentration of Portuguese Americans. In New Bedford, the creative community is an engaged and powerful partner, inspiring social, economic, and cultural growth. An authentic seaport city, New Bedford boasts a diversity of cultures.

A proud area rich with American history and sea culture, the town was incorporated in 1787 after the American Revolutionary War and was a dominant whaling port throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. New Bedford was one of the first centers of abolitionism in North America,

and an important stop on the Underground Railroad. Many people were attracted by New Bedford's relatively open-minded atmosphere. Paul Cuffe, an Ashanti-Wampanoag Quaker and self-made tycoon, among other remarkable achievements earned black property owners in New Bedford the right to vote decades before Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Lewis Temple, an African American blacksmith, invented the Temple toggle iron, which was the most successful harpoon design. Frederick Douglass, the famous social reformer and orator, also found amnesty in New Bedford and worked at the wharf for three years.

The decline of whaling in the late 19th century, coincided with a growing textile industry, and stone mill buildings still enrich the urban fabric. Economically, New Bedford is rising with plans for a commuter line to Boston and links to a growing wind-energy market. The cost of living and housing is below average in the city, and only slightly higher in the surrounding towns. Today with its revitalized downtown and diverse populations, New Bedford is a rich cultural tapestry with fine restaurants, a museum of glass, an art museum, the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, performing arts center, symphony orchestra, nearby beaches, and a working waterfront. Four hours from New York City, an hour from Boston or Cape Cod, 35 minutes from Providence, and a ferry-ride to Martha's Vineyard, New Bedford is advantageously located and surrounded by nearby scenic, small coastal towns with numerous natural amenities such as swimming, sailing, hiking, fishing, and kayaking.