



# new bedford whaling museum

ART. HISTORY. SCIENCE. CULTURE.

***The Richard W. Burkhardt Endowed Fellowship in History, Science, and Art***  
**\$20,000 per year/24-months/ 16-hours per week (in-person preferred)**

The Burkhardt Fellowship is a two-year research appointment from Spring of 2025 through Spring of 2027. The Fellow must be a currently enrolled graduate student, working towards an M.A. or Ph.D. They will work 16 hours per week on a research agenda that aligns with their academic research and supports strategic priorities for the curatorial and collections division. While in-person is strongly preferred for this position, a remote research position could be negotiated for the right candidate.

For the 2025-2027 Fellowship term, the museum seeks a current graduate student working on African American history, American studies, material culture, economic history, or ante-bellum American history to engage in preliminary research for a 2027 exhibition tentatively called *North/South*. The exhibition will chart the material, economic, political, and social linkages between New Bedford, Philadelphia, Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans in the ante-bellum period (ca. 1800-1860). The fellow will explore earlier histories of enslavement and abolition in Southeastern Massachusetts and examine the circulation of people, money, and resources between these five key coastal cities. One goal is to connect individuals – free and enslaved, whenever possible, with economic investments and material extraction, including the movement of Southern Live Oak, whale oil, people, and cotton. These histories will be contextualized against the backdrop of abolition, Quakerism, and Black activism. Key research questions include: How reliant was New Bedford on the slave economy before the war? Were individual economic interests in systems supported by slavery contradicted by abolition, or were such realities held in tension? What material artifacts and manuscript collections can help to tell this important historical story? This is a 24-month appointment. The exhibition will open in Fall/Winter 2027.

**CORE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Gather secondary source material on various topics related to exhibit
- Build research files and resource library
- Conduct original research on histories of enslavement and abolition in the region
- Create working lists of possible items and materials for exhibition
- Improve cataloging records when appropriate
- Participate in exhibition planning conversations internally and with external partners
- Write a select number of exhibit labels and a short essay on subject of choice
- Present research at virtual program related to exhibition

**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 a team
- candidate must demonstrate a strong knowledge of this period in US history

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:**

- Currently enrolled graduate student working towards MA or PhD
- Experience with primary source and secondary source research required;
- Work experience with museums, libraries, or cultural organizations 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 regional historical society, NBWM interprets the history, economy, ecology, arts, and cultures of the South Coast of Massachusetts. We tell the stories of the many diverse communities that shaped this history, through excellence in collections, scholarship, and public engagement. Today, NBWM is a leader in the cultural landscape of the South Coast serving more than 80,000 visitors annually and offering engaging exhibitions, dynamic public programs, and vibrant educational activities for learners of all ages. The Museum inspires all visitors to reflect on the complex issues that shaped the past, remain critical today, and inform a sustainable future.

### **TO APPLY**

Send cover letter, resume/curriculum vitae, and [Application for Employment](#) to Naomi Slipp, Chief Curator at [nslipp@whalingmuseum.org](mailto:nslipp@whalingmuseum.org), by **February 21, 2024**. 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.