



Abbe Museum

INSPIRING NEW LEARNING ABOUT THE WABANAKI NATIONS WITH EVERY VISIT

Curator of Exhibits and Collections

Bar Harbor, Maine

Type: Full Time, Experienced

Required Degree: Masters or equivalent experience

Salary: \$53,000 - \$70,000 with benefits

With the mission to inspire new learning about the Wabanaki Nations with every visit, the Abbe Museum is a decolonizing museum, offering changing exhibitions and a robust programming schedule for all ages, and welcoming 30,000 visitors each year on Mount Desert Island, Maine, home of Acadia National Park. Wabanaki people are engaged in all aspects of the museum, from curatorial roles to policy making.

The Abbe Museum has the organizational mandate to develop decolonizing museum practices, the first of its kind in non-Tribal museums. Through collaborative practice, privileging of Indigenous voice and perspective, and a commitment to telling the full truths of history, the Abbe Museum is breaking ground in 21st-century museum practice. More importantly, we are actively promoting inclusion and power-sharing both within our own organization and in service to Wabanaki communities. It is our hope and intention that this significant work ultimately leads to healing and reconciliation for Native people and museum spaces. The Curator of Collections & Exhibits is instrumental in this work.

Annually, the museum hires over 30 Native artists and demonstrators to lead programs for schools and public audiences, serve on advisory committees, and as content specialists. We represent over 80 Native artists in our shops, making us an economic engine for Tribal communities. In addition, The Abbe is a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and is the only Smithsonian Affiliate in Maine.

Description: The Curator of Exhibits & Collections is a highly visible position within the fast-paced Abbe Museum environment with three main areas of focus: exhibitions, collections care & management, and research.

Exhibitions: Manages the Abbe's interpretive content in collaboration with the Curator of Education, as guided by the museum's tribally-appointed Wabanaki Council. Leads the exhibits team to plan, organize, and implement exhibits and frequently serves as project manager and content specialist.

- Develops exhibits and works collaboratively with Wabanaki community curators and advisors to create temporary exhibits
- Leads content and material culture changes and updates for the permanent exhibit(s)
- Manages the long-range exhibit schedule and all exhibit-related policies and procedures
- Coordinates all loan requests, completes condition reports, and has primary responsibility for all collections handling
- Works closely with exhibit designers, graphic artists, and contractors to realize the curatorial vision

- Serves as staff liaison member on the Board of Trustees' Collections Committee. Develops acquisitions priorities, possible deaccessioning plans for the Native American art collection. Cultivate relationships with collectors and potential donors.

Collections Care & Management: Primary responsibility for the Wellman Archaeology Research Laboratory and Collections Storage and the documentation, management, and care of the museum's collections and institutional archives, seeking to make them accessible to internal and external audiences and to make sure the museum maintains a high level of accuracy.

- Responsible for the development, implementation, and updating of the museum's collections-related policies and procedures
- Answers inquiries from the public and manages all incoming and outgoing loans and any image use requests
- Responsible for the development and testing of the museum's emergency preparedness and response plan and is the leader of the recovery team
- Member of the facilities team and Building & Grounds Committee, with primary responsibility for monitoring collections care environments
- Content provider and liaison for museum-tribal partnerships and collaborations
- Serves as staff liaison for the Collections Committee. Develops acquisitions priorities and deaccessioning and repatriation recommendations
- Ensures compliance with all relevant MOUs, tribal policies, and legal requirements, consistent with museum best practices
- Advises on long term goals for collections care & management, taking an active role in new strategic planning for the institution

Research: Provides support for researchers within well-defined guidelines; keeps abreast of current publications relative to research methods, techniques, and developments; supports the dissemination of findings; acts as a content specialist to the Museum board and staff members.

- Acts as the primary point of contact for researchers and coordinates access to the Abbe Museum research library
- Ensures compliance with all relevant MOUs and Wabanaki Nations' research policies and guidelines for researchers utilizing Abbe collections and related resources
- Ensures that researchers disseminated results of completed projects for publication in scholarly journals, for presentation to the agency requesting a project, or for use in further applied or theoretical research activities

Tribal Relationships: Provides direct support and relevant resources to Wabanaki communities in support of collections care and management, and exhibitions, upon request.

- Provides training and hands-on assistance with collections care and management for Wabanaki tribal museums, cultural centers, and cultural/historical preservation departments
- Provides training and hands-on assistance with exhibition development and implementation for Wabanaki tribal museums, cultural centers, and cultural/historical preservation departments
- Provides reference resources on collections care and management and exhibits to Wabanaki tribal museums, cultural centers, and cultural/historical preservation departments

- Provides access to Abbe Museum collections, either at the museum or in the tribal community, in support of Wabanaki tribal museums, cultural centers, and cultural/historical preservation departments

Project Management: Acts as project manager on grant-funded internal projects in collections care and management, exhibitions, and research, as assigned by the Executive Director & Senior Partner with Wabanaki Nations.

The Curator of Wabanaki Exhibits & Collections communicates the museum's vision and mission and carries out policies and procedures established by the Executive Director and the Trustees. The Director may be assigned to other duties as required by the small museum environment, including event, fundraising, and guest services support.

Organizational Relationships: This is a full-time, salaried position reporting to the Executive Director and working closely with all team members. The Curator of Exhibits leads the Exhibits Team, the Collections Committee, and other teams and workgroups as assigned. The Curator of Collections & Exhibits manages collections volunteers and occasional contractors, including collections and exhibit interns and grant assistants.

Experience and Education: An advanced degree in museum work or equivalent experience and a background in Native American studies, anthropology, archeology, and collections management.. Three to five years of experience in a museum setting is preferred. Leadership and project management experience preferred. Thorough familiarity with computers and collections management software is a must. Current knowledge of decolonizing museum practices, museum best practices, Native concerns, and Indigenous research best practices is essential. Experience working with Tribal Nations is required, experience with Wabanaki nations is preferred.

Required Skills: The Curator of Exhibits & Collections is skilled in exhibit planning and creation, cataloging and registration techniques, collections cataloging and research. Independent judgment, decision-making authority, and common sense are essential. The Curator of Wabanaki Exhibits & Collections must also have the highest standards of integrity and be capable of working under pressure and meeting deadlines.

Preferred Qualities and Skills: Candidates who are naturally generative, collaborative, outgoing, self-starting, well-organized, tactful, detail-oriented, and innovative will excel. Preference is given to candidates with NAGPRA experience, skills in the fabrication of exhibit and storage supports, and those versed in environmental best practices as detailed by the Abbe's collections and greening policies. Ability to manage relationships and work closely with a small team are preferred, given the small museum environment. Familiarity with art, cultural heritage, archival, and archeological collections is highly desirable.

Working Conditions: Majority of time will be in office and collections settings, using computers, general office equipment, collections maintenance tools, rolling shelves, etc. Lifting of 25 to 50 lbs may be required. Active installation and maintenance of exhibits and associated accessories may require the use of ladders, power tools, etc. Exposure to potential environmental hazards may occur; proper PPE is provided. Driving of vehicles, including large delivery vans, may be required.

Work Schedule: Typical schedule averages 40 hours per week, though individual weeks may vary. Occasional night or weekend commitments may require flexible scheduling. As secondary contact for building systems, the position may require phone calls or alarm checks outside of regular working hours. Approximately 75% of work requires onsite resources; potential for the remainder to be blended onsite and remote. There is frequent travel in the state of Maine and occasional travel outside of the state and country. A valid driver's license and passport will be necessary.

Institutional Expectations: Every employee participates as a fully integrated part of the team. Every employee is mindful of our fundraising needs and is involved in the process. Every employee is committed to furthering the decolonizing work of the museum.

We will be accepting applications until the position is filled. To apply, please provide a cover letter, resume or CV, and information for three references. Please send complete applications via email to:

Betsy Richards
Executive Director & Senior Partner with Wabanaki Nations
search@abbemuseum.org

Or via mail to:

Abbe Museum
Attn: Curator of Exhibitions & Collections Search Committee
PO Box 286
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

No phone calls, please.

Equal Opportunity Employment Statement

The Abbe Museum is an equal opportunity employer, and its management intends to fulfill, to the letter of the law, all provisions under federal, state, and local employment regulations which prohibit discrimination with respect to employment. Accordingly, we will not discriminate in hiring, promotion, compensation, discharge, or any other term or condition of employment due to gender (including pregnancy or related medical condition), age, race, color, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, marital status or covered veteran status. We will not discriminate against anyone who has filed a worker's compensation claim, nor an employee who has brought to management's attention an irregularity or violation of regulation under the Whistleblowers' Protection Act. We will not permit, condone, or tolerate unlawful discrimination against employees in any manner whatsoever. All employees and supervisors are obligated to support the concept of equal employment opportunity at the Museum.