

Best Practices in Public History

Job Postings

Prepared by the NCPH Professional Development and NCPH New Professional and Graduate Student Committees, February 2019

Adopted by the NCPH Board of Directors, March 2019

Introduction:

Recent discussions regarding the ethics of professional organizations posting <u>unpaid/uncompensated</u> internships on their websites <u>prompted NCPH to explore how this issue impacts the NCPH jobs listing webpage</u>. These discussions led to a close examination of other elements of a job posting, ranging from salaries, explanations of the hiring process, whether a position is part-time or temporary, how much experience is required, and more. Although it was not a common practice to post uncompensated internships, the NCPH Board of Directors took action to no longer allow uncompensated internships to be posted in the NCPH job listings. This change aligns with the practices advocated by the NCPH Curriculum & Training Committee in their <u>2008 Public History Internships Best Practices document</u>.

The board also charged representatives from the Professional Development and New Professional and Graduate Student Committees to draft a best practices document for employers posting jobs both with NCPH and elsewhere. This group discussed field-wide concerns about job postings, particularly concerning longstanding practices that have the effect of perpetuating inequities in the workplace, and how best NCPH could balance advocating for transparency in hiring and adequate wages for public historians, with the organization's ability to provide a comprehensive job listing service to the field. The subcommittee drafted the following guidelines based on the professional expertise of subcommittee members, experiences drawn from professional development activities, and recommendations from other public history related organizations. Per the NCPH 2017-2022 Long Range Plan (Pillar 3, Section C.3.), these guidelines were to be reviewed by the New Professional & Graduate Student and Professional Development Committees along with NCPH staff prior to the 2019 Fall Board of Directors Meeting.

NCPH believes that if prospective employers implement the guidelines listed below, they will provide greater transparency in job postings and empower prospective candidates to make informed decisions about which positions match their skills, experience, and goals. In addition to the idea that following these guidelines will bring the best candidates to employers, NCPH believes that having these conversations at the start of the hiring process can help build awareness among members, funders, and leadership at hiring institutions.

NCPH strongly recommends that:

1. Employers include a salary range on their job postings, as well as what benefits are included. To determine a salary or range, employers should consult field-wide salary surveys if available (such

- as the American Alliance of Museums' Salary Survey) to determine appropriate ranges for their positions.
- 2. Job postings (and interview processes) not ask for salary histories or salary requirements of prospective candidates.
- 3. Employers state the relevant minimum number of years' work experience required for the open position and/or whether graduate education is an acceptable substitute.
- 4. Job postings list a contact person for questions about the posting or state in clear terms (i.e. "do not contact") if the employer wishes not to be contacted.
- 5. Employers include the name/title of the person in charge of filling the job opening and/or state if a search committee or Human Resources officer will review the application materials.
- 6. Employers request reference letters only from candidates who have passed the initial screening.
- 7. Employers include information about the interview process and the format in which interviews will take place (i.e. phone, video platform, group interview in person, etc.)
- 8. Job postings clearly state employment terms (i.e. full-time, part-time, permanent, contract, term-limited, or a combination) and what, if any, benefits are included.
- 9. Employers provide a timeline for how long job postings will be active, along with a prospective start date for the new employee, when possible. If applicable, include "start day negotiable within certain parameters."