



Request for Proposals Temporary Contract Curator

Curator (Temporary, Contract)

The DC History Center seeks an experienced and creative independent curator to develop a culturally relevant lead exhibit, *Class Action: The Fight for Black Education in the Nation's Capital* (working title). We anticipate that the 16-month contract position will work closely with several additional contract roles: researcher, exhibit designer, expert content advisors, community engagement specialist, as well as staff members, specifically the education manager, collections manager, and program manager. The curator serves as exhibit project manager and team lead. The start date would be as soon as possible.

This position reports to the deputy director. The exhibit is expected to open in summer 2024 and will serve a general audience, from DC residents, including K-12 students and teachers, to conventioners and tourists.

About the DC History Center

Established in 1894 and located at the Carnegie Library in Downtown, the DC History Center is a community-supported nonprofit organization, which deepens understanding of our city's past to connect, empower, and inspire. It collects, interprets, and shares the history of our nation's capital through research and scholarship, adult programs, youth education, and exhibits. We seek to do this work as a welcoming and inclusive community that fosters curiosity and nurtures civic engagement to strengthen the District for all. For more information visit dchistory.org.

Scope of Work

As the lead project manager for the exhibit, the contract curator will research and write an original interpretive exhibition on the history of education for Black students in Washington, DC. Their responsibilities include creating a timeline for development and production; researching relevant scholarship on this subject matter; investigating the DC History Center's collections as well as those at the Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives; identifying and finalizing object selection; and writing an exhibition script that is meaningful, culturally relevant, and reflective of diverse resources.

The contract curator will serve as team lead during project meetings and will collaborate with exhibit designers, staff, educators, subject matter experts, and other key contributors to ensure the exhibition reflects current research and perspectives on the development of educational opportunities created by, and challenges faced by, Black families in DC from the early 1800s through the 1990s. A more detailed description of the project is available on our blog and upon request.



Contract services will last 16 months, with the possibility of extending by an additional six months. Credit to the curator will be in the exhibition materials, written materials, and press materials. All materials will be considered “work-for-hire” and remain the intellectual property of the DC History Center. This exhibit is independent from, but will complement, a concurrent education exhibition at the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, and will also benefit from close collaboration with the Charles Sumner Museum and Archives.

Project Deliverables

- Preliminary material including a curatorial statement on the exhibition concept
- Full project timeline of development and production
- Comprehensive background research materials to support the interpretive materials, including photographs, objects, research notes, and annotated bibliography of relevant quality sources
- Object list, including material from the DC History Center collections, other local repositories, and private collections identified via active community engagement
- Written interpretive materials, including overall script, introductory panels, interpretive text panels, labels, and additional supplementary materials

Compensation

This contract is for \$40,000, or \$2,500/month for 16 months. The curator will invoice monthly. In addition to the project deliverables listed below, the contract curator would provide project management and coordination with other team members and outside advisors.

Qualifications

- PhD in history, public history, or related (may be a degree in progress)
- 2+ years of curatorial experience including experience with exhibition development, exhibition research, and exhibition writing
- Demonstrated experience in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, social justice, and anti-racism in exhibition and educational resources and content
- Working knowledge of the history of the DC public schools system preferred
- Demonstrated interest in local DC history preferred
- Culturally relevant knowledge that speaks to the Black experience in Washington, DC preferred

To Apply

Applicants should submit a 1–2 page proposal; resume; three samples of exhibition development and writing, such as exhibition timelines, scripts, labels, and/or education or program materials; and three references. The position is open until filled. Visit <https://dchistory.org/about/employment/> to submit a proposal. Email Erik Castillo at ecastillo@dchistory.org with any questions.