



Museums Association of Namibia  
*Making Museums Matter - Since 1990*

# JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS IN NAMIBIA

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**FOR:** Museums Association of Namibia (MAN)

## INTRODUCTION

This document was developed to act as a guide for museum professionals in Namibia. It provides guidance for job descriptions, qualifications and roles for museum professionals in Namibia.

It is not compulsory that all museums or that all MAN member museums adopt these job descriptions however, job descriptions serve as communication tools that allow employees to clearly understand the expectations of the role, its essential duties, and the required competences, educational credentials, and experience for the role.

This document was developed by adaptations from [www.museums.jobs](http://www.museums.jobs) and existing job descriptions developed by the Museums Association of Namibia, for museum professionals in Namibia.

Depending on the size of the museum, the museum will require one, some or all of these positions. However, each museum should tailor their staff compliment based on (but not limited to) the following criteria;

1. The size of the museum building and the museum's collection
2. The budget/financial abilities of the museum
3. The nature of the museum's activities
4. The location of the museum

This document does not include positions such as cleaners and security personnel whose job descriptions are standard and not tailored specifically to museum work.

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## **MUSEUM ADMINISTRATOR**

Museum administrators look after the business side of the institution and, depending on the size of the museum or cultural institution, the museum administrator may be one person or a team.

### **MUSEUM ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

Museum administrators have a wide range of responsibilities depending on their specific title and institution including, but not limited to: fundraising, developing budgets, hiring and firing staff, ensuring safety policies, public relations policies, and educational goals are being met, attending board meetings, etc. Working closely with the rest of the Museum staff, the Administrator oversees all aspects of administrative coordination and logistics for the museum.

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIRED**

A museum administrator typically needs a bachelor's degree or a diploma in a related field, e.g., arts administration, museum studies, history, business administration, etc., and 1-3 years of administrative experience depending on the position.

### **KEY SKILLS**

A successful museum administrator would need to be able to work well under pressure, to have good organization and communication skills, is able to multitask and ultimately makes sure the museum is always running smoothly behind the scenes.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Welcomes and assist museum visitors and, where necessary, assists the curator in acting as a guide to the museum exhibitions, logs comment cards, adds and maintains emails from the museum's donor database, removes unsubscribed emails from database
2. Oversees day-to-day administrative needs of the museum's office; serves as point person for general office procedures and interoffice communications
3. Assists in data-entry and development of record keeping protocol for various museum departments utilizing the museum's database software
4. Assists with organizing meetings, notifies attendees and sends reminders
5. Answers phones and manages incoming communications (email, phone, post) and directs to appropriate staff as needed
6. Deposits all checks and cash weekly or as needed, records deposit, manages petty cash- In the absence of the Curator makes necessary payments as approved by senior staff
7. Oversees daily upkeep and inventory of staff kitchen, refrigerators, and maintains inventory of utensils, serving goods and office supplies
8. Develops and maintain a successful strategy for intern recruitment, evaluation, and retention
9. Conducts independent research and assists with special projects, special events as needed
10. Additional duties as required

### **MUSEUM ADMINISTRATOR SALARY**

The salary would be determined by the Museum's Advisory Board/Board of Directors /Owners /Government, taking in to consideration, the budget, financial position and grading system of the museum.

## **MUSEUM EDUCATOR**

Museum educators are the pioneers of the museum world, working hard to share their museum's unique collections and stories with the world by creating engaging and educational programs for visitors of all backgrounds and ages.

### **MUSEUM EDUCATOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

Museum educators are responsible for developing and carrying out all of the museum's various education and public programs, e.g., lectures, family, community and school programs, etc. Educators are also sometimes in charge of their institution's community outreach programs and writing curriculum around their museum's collection. This position involves planning and presenting educational programs that enhance public understanding of the museum's subject areas. Contributes to educational research efforts, and assists in the development and production of written educational materials. Develops and presents gallery talks, lectures, seminars, symposia, and other educational programs. May coordinate volunteers and/or docents.

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIRED**

To become a museum educator, you typically need a degree in something similar to education, museum studies, or public history, and a lot of previous work experience in the education field. Some institutions with a particular focus, such as science, natural history, or art, may require a degree specifically related to their collection. Most museum educator jobs do not require more than an undergraduate degree, however, having a Masters or Ph.D. can put you ahead when looking for higher salaried and titled positions.

### **KEY SKILLS**

1. Excellent written and verbal communication skills
2. Ability to organise, present and communicate messages effectively
3. Excellent organisational skills
4. Knowledge of working with museum databases and IT issues
5. Good teamworking skills
6. Excellent research and teaching skills

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Present high-quality education programming and effectively manages instructional materials under general supervision.
2. Under general supervision, develops instructional materials and activities.
3. Contribute to the establishment and maintenance of effective partnerships.
4. Document program evaluations and makes recommendations for improvements in a timely manner.
5. Effectively executes some administrative responsibilities related to education programs.
6. Effectively applies basic organizational and problem-solving skills.
7. Additional duties as required

### **MUSEUM EDUCATOR SALARY**

The salary would be determined by the Museum's Advisory Board/Board of Directors /Owners /Government, taking in to consideration, the budget, financial position and grading system of the museum.

## **MUSEUM CONSERVATOR**

Museum conservators handle, preserve, and treat deterioration of works of art, artifacts, and or restore them to their original glorious state. Conservators are the reason so many beautiful artifacts and works of art still exist today and look as good now as they did back when they were created.

### **MUSEUM CONSERVATOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

Museum conservators typically specialize in preserving a specific type of artifact, e.g., books, documents, paintings, skeletons, textiles, sculpture, etc.

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIRED**

Museum conservators typically need a background/undergraduate degree in chemistry, archaeology, studio art, or art history and at least one conservation internship before even earning the required master's degree in conservation.

### **KEY SKILLS**

1. A strong interest in, and knowledge of, art and historical artefacts
2. Observational skills
3. Manual dexterity and good colour perception
4. Computer literacy
5. Excellent communication skills, tact and diplomacy
6. An investigative nature, together with problem-solving skills
7. Patience and attention to detail
8. The ability to work to tight deadlines
9. Good team work and collaborating skills
10. Strong planning and organisation skills
11. A flexible and adaptable approach to work
12. Self-motivation and the ability to manage an independent workload
13. Business awareness in order to work to a budget and cost projects
14. Administration skills to record and document work
15. Tenacity and a commitment to the profession.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Preserve artifacts by ensuring the light, temperature, and humidity stay at the proper levels
2. Clean the artifacts with carefully chosen cleansers that are best for each material, whether they are made of fabric, metal, paper, glass, pottery, wood, or stone
3. Must be able to accurately estimate the total cost of these tedious projects
4. Often supervise curators and other museum technicians re: properly displaying artifacts within the exhibits
5. Research and Training: Stays current with recent developments and research in the preservation field and in objects conservation. As time allows, conducts and publishes research on conservation issues that affect the preservation of the collection, its treatment, or its technical understanding. Researches new laboratory equipment as required.

### **MUSEUM CONSERVATOR SALARY**

The salary would be determined by the Museum's Advisory Board/Board of Directors /Owners /Government, taking in to consideration, the budget, financial position and grading system of the museum.

## **MUSEUM DOCUMENTALIST**

Documentalists gather, file, record and rank documents for public and private companies, associations or government. Under their control, archives are organized and stored before being distributed and made available to the public. Documentalist can eventually manage an archiving department and thus be in charge of all the archives and the associated distribution policy. In the cultural sector, they can hold heritage curator or librarian jobs.

### **MUSEUM DOCUMENTALIST JOB DESCRIPTION**

Documentalists often work in the information and culture sector, but can also be employed by a company to manage its information flows. The arrival of computers has revolutionized the profession, with the filing of data usually done using software and information made available on an intranet or the Web.

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIRED**

A bachelor's degree with a minor in archiving or equivalent is essential to apply for a job as documentalist. In the cultural field, an increasing number of employers, particularly in the public sector, require applicants to have a master's degree in history, library science or archiving.

### **KEY SKILLS**

1. Knowledge of integrated document management
2. Knowledge of laws governing the management of information
3. Excellent knowledge of office systems software
4. Excellent grasp of archive management software
5. Knowledge of the target sector
6. Bilingualism is an asset
7. Meticulous
8. Organized
9. Punctual
10. Flexible
11. Good teacher
12. Sociable
13. Team player

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Gather and file documents, information, images, files, etc. for a company
2. Perform information searches
3. Determine document authenticity
4. Assist researchers
5. Ensure good archive accessibility
6. Participate in developing archive management and conservation policies
7. Propose methods to extract information from archives
14. Additional duties as required

### **MUSEUM DCUMENTALIST SALARY**

The salary would be determined by the Museum's Advisory Board/Board of Directors /Owners /Government, taking in to consideration, the budget, financial position and grading system of the museum.

## **MUSEUM CURATOR**

The dictionary definition of a museum curator is someone who manages and oversees a collection of objects, most commonly in a cultural institution, e.g., museum, library, gallery, or archive.

### **MUSEUM CURATOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

Curators are responsible for assembling, cataloguing, managing and presenting/displaying artistic and cultural collections. Curators are in charge of a collection of exhibits in a museum or art gallery. Their job is to build up collections, often in specialist areas. Curators develop ways in which objects, archives and artworks can be interpreted, through exhibitions, publications, events and audio-visual presentations. Their work involves buying exhibits, organising exhibitions, arranging restoration of artefacts, identifying and recording items, organising loans and dealing with enquiries. All of these tasks require curators to work with colleagues in areas such as conservation, education, design and marketing. In addition, they may conduct research and may lecture on findings or ongoing activities.

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIRED**

To become a museum curator you typically need, either a PhD in a relevant field, like specialism., classical studies, ancient history, anthropology, or archaeology, and/or a Masters in museum and/or gallery studies. Related work experience such as internships and/or volunteer work are also required and highly valued.

### **KEY SKILLS**

8. Excellent written and verbal communication skills
9. Ability to organise, present and communicate messages effectively through design
10. Excellent project management and organisational skills
11. Knowledge of fundraising for cultural projects
12. Knowledge of working with museum databases and IT issues
13. Good teamworking skills
14. Excellent research and IT skills

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

15. Developing and organising new collections to expand and improve educational and research facilities
16. Extensively researching, negotiating prices on and buying items such as sculptures, statues and paintings that can add value to the collection
17. Maintaining records and cataloguing acquisitions
18. Researching, compiling and preparing written information about catalogues and publishing it on the institution's website
19. Collaborating with other institutions
20. Ensuring that collections are properly preserved
21. Raising funds and grant applications
22. Interviewing, hiring and training staff and managing volunteers
23. Additional duties as required

### **MUSEUM CURATOR SALARY**

The salary would be determined by the Museum's Advisory Board/Board of Directors /Owners /Government, taking in to consideration, the budget, financial position and grading system of the museum.

## **MUSEUM DIRECTOR**

The museum director oversees everything that happens within the institution, manages the staff, and ensures policies, budgets and goals are made and kept. They also have the final say on the exhibits and displays. The director would need to be well knowledgeable about the public and private aspects of a museum, a fantastic and thoughtful leader, and a vigilant protector of the world's most precious artifacts and stories.

### **MUSEUM DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

Museum directors have years of experience and they do it all! They oversee their museum's collection, supervise and negotiate the exchange or loan of artifacts, and travel with exhibitions. They are also called on to authenticate and classify the museum's newest acquisitions. The Director has the overall responsibility to carry out the organization's mission and policies established by the Board, including the financial, educational, collections, and operations management of the organization.

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIRED**

To become a museum director, you typically need (at least) a Master's degree in museum studies, archaeology, anthropology, public history, public administration, historic preservation, architectural history, or related field and 5+ years of high-level museum management experience.

### **KEY SKILLS AND PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP**

1. With the Board of Directors, establish a clear vision for the organization.
2. Assist the Board of Directors in long-range strategic planning and implementation of those plans.
3. Provide both support and leadership to the Board of Directors.
4. Serve as the liaison between the Board of Directors and staff.

#### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & FUNDRAISING**

1. With the Finance Committee, the Executive Director will propose an annual budget for the Board's adoption.
2. Prepare monthly financial reports to the Board of Directors.
3. Manage all accounts payable and receivable.
4. Support the Board's fundraising efforts and special events.
5. Develop and sustain relationships with members and donors.
6. In partnership with staff, prepare grant applications and manage grant projects.
7. Maintain excellent donor records and stewardship of all donations made to the organization.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION**

1. Hire, train and supervise all staff and volunteers including scheduling and annual work goals.
2. Manage the visitor experience before and during their visit.
3. In conjunction with the Executive Committee, evaluate staff (other than the Executive Director); set performance standards; create annual goals; conduct annual staff evaluations; maintain personnel records.



## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1. Represents the museum and advocate its mission to external stakeholders and audiences including community organizations, schools, government at all levels, and the museum and nonprofit communities.
2. Establish and implement a marketing/communications plan that supports the museum's brand and reputation including website content, social media accounts, media relations, and printed materials.
3. Maintain museum calendar and coordinate all programming and events with museum staff.

## BOARD & VOLUNTEER RELATIONS

1. Involve board members in decisions that affect the future of the museum.
2. Assist the Board with identifying community members who may be appropriate for board service and support their recruitment and orientation to the organization.
3. Recruit volunteers for appropriate positions within the organization.
4. Participate in Board meetings by working with the Executive Committee to create agendas, prepare staff reports for the meetings, and attend meetings of the Board and committees.

## Exhibitions, Live Animal Care, Collections, and Education

1. Create and maintain standards of excellence for all collections, exhibitions, and education efforts of the museum.
2. Oversee the proper care of the collections as well as the care of the live animals, where applicable.
3. Oversee exhibitions to support the mission of the organization to attract audiences, donors and sponsors.
4. Oversee educational programming.
5. Oversee animal care including training and scheduling volunteers in proper animal care procedures (reptiles, arthropods, amphibians, and fish); and monitoring the overall health of the animals.

## MUSEUM DIRECTOR SALARY

The salary would be determined by the Museum's Advisory Board/Board of Directors /Owners /Government, taking in to consideration, the budget, financial position and grading system of the museum.