

Curator Job Description



Department: Stafford Air & Space Museum

Reports To: Executive Director, Stafford Air & Space Museum

Employment Status: Full-Time

POSITION SUMMARY

Under the direction of the Executive Director, the Curator is responsible for the care, documentation, preservation, research, interpretation, and presentation of the Stafford Air & Space Museum's collections and archives. The position manages day-to-day collections activities, maintains accurate records and inventories, coordinates loans, assists with acquisitions and donations, conducts historical research, and supports the development and maintenance of permanent and temporary exhibitions. The Curator works with Museum staff, City personnel, volunteers, donors, lenders, researchers, contractors, and institutional partners to ensure the responsible stewardship and meaningful interpretation of Museum collections.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Collections Management

- Maintain physical and intellectual control of permanent collections, archives, and loaned objects.
- Accession, catalog, inventory, photograph, document, store, and track collection objects and records.
- Maintain accurate collections-management database records, object locations, inventories, and related documentation.
- Monitor object condition and identify deterioration, damage, environmental concerns, or preservation needs.
- Ensure artifacts are properly handled, stored, exhibited, packed, transported, and documented.
- Maintain organized and secure collections and archival storage areas.
- Assist with collections policies, procedures, documentation standards, emergency plans, and authorized deaccessioning activities.

Archives & Historical Research

- Organize, preserve, catalog, and maintain photographs, documents, correspondence, mission materials, publications, technical records, and audiovisual materials.
- Conduct research concerning General Thomas P. Stafford, aviation, military aviation, NASA, human spaceflight, aerospace technology, and related Museum subjects.
- Research provenance, historical context, significance, and stories associated with collection objects.
- Maintain research files and source documentation; respond to research requests as appropriate.
- Fact-check historical information used in exhibits, educational materials, publications, programs, and other Museum content.

Exhibitions & Interpretation

- Research, develop, write, edit, and review content for permanent, temporary, and special exhibitions.
- Prepare exhibit labels, object descriptions, timelines, interpretive panels, digital content, and visitor materials.
- Recommend artifacts, photographs, documents, artwork, and archival materials for exhibition.
- Coordinate preparation, movement, installation, deinstallation, and documentation of collection objects.
- Conduct routine inspections of displayed artifacts and exhibit environments and identify needed corrections, repairs, conservation, or updates.

Loans, Acquisitions & Donations

- Coordinate incoming and outgoing loans and maintain related agreements, condition reports, photographs, insurance, shipping, and tracking records.
- Track loan terms, renewals, expiration dates, lender requirements, and reporting obligations.
- Assist with evaluating proposed donations and acquisitions for mission relevance, significance, provenance, authenticity, condition, and stewardship needs.
- Maintain donor, deed-of-gift, accession, acquisition, and related documentation in accordance with City and Museum procedures.
- Maintain professional relationships with donors, lenders, collectors, researchers, and institutional partners.

Preservation & Collections Care

- Monitor environmental conditions in galleries, exhibit cases, archives, and storage areas.
- Identify risks involving temperature, humidity, light, pests, water, handling, storage, and other threats to collections.
- Implement or recommend preventive conservation measures and identify objects requiring professional conservation.

- Coordinate with qualified conservators, specialists, preparators, riggers, and other professionals as authorized.
- Participate in emergency preparedness and collections disaster-response planning.

Public Programs & Professional Responsibilities

- Provide collections and historical expertise for tours, educational programs, lectures, special events, exhibit openings, and other Museum activities.
- Assist with public presentations, media interviews, donor and VIP visits, and community outreach as requested.
- Assist with appropriate digital access to collections through online exhibits, digital archives, websites, social media, or other platforms.
- Represent the Stafford Air & Space Museum and City of Weatherford professionally when interacting with visitors, partners, donors, volunteers, researchers, and the public.
- Follow all applicable City of Weatherford personnel policies, administrative procedures, safety requirements, and Museum policies.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding donors, lenders, valuations, security procedures, restricted records, and other sensitive information.
- Participate in City-required training, meetings, evaluations, and administrative processes.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Stafford Air & Space Museum operates as a collaborative team. Employees may occasionally assist with responsibilities outside their primary area when necessary to support Museum and City operations.

- Special events, programs, exhibit openings, installations, and educational activities.
- Donor/VIP visits, community outreach, and public presentations.
- Collections-related grant projects, photography, documentation, and research projects.
- Emergency response involving Museum collections and professional conferences, workshops, or training.
- Other duties as assigned by the Executive Director or appropriate City administration.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in Museum Studies, History, Public History, Anthropology, Archives, Library Science, Art History, Aviation/Aerospace History, American Studies, or a closely related field; or an equivalent combination of relevant education, training, and professional experience.
- Demonstrated ability to conduct historical research and evaluate source material.
- Strong writing, organizational, documentation, recordkeeping, and communication skills.
- Exceptional attention to detail and accuracy.
- Ability to appropriately handle historically significant and potentially fragile artifacts and archival materials.
- Ability to manage multiple projects, priorities, and deadlines and work independently within a collaborative environment.
- Proficiency with computers, standard office software, digital files, and the ability to learn collections-management databases.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with City employees, Museum staff, volunteers, donors, lenders, researchers, contractors, and the public.
- Ability to exercise discretion and sound judgment when working with confidential, valuable, or historically sensitive materials.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Professional experience in a museum, archive, historic site, library, cultural institution, or collections environment.
- Experience with museum collections-management software, accessioning, cataloging, inventory, photography, and object documentation.
- Experience organizing archival collections and developing permanent or temporary exhibitions.
- Knowledge of aviation, aerospace, military, NASA, or human spaceflight history.
- Experience writing exhibit labels, object descriptions, or historical interpretive content.
- Experience managing incoming or outgoing museum loans and knowledge of preventive conservation and collections storage.
- Experience working with institutional, government, military, or nationally significant collections.
- Familiarity with Smithsonian Institution collections practices or Smithsonian loans/affiliated institutions is highly desirable.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS & WORKING CONDITIONS

The employee must be able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. Work is primarily performed in museum, office, gallery, archival, and collections-storage environments.

- Regular computer/database work and walking throughout Museum facilities.

- Bending, reaching, stooping, kneeling, climbing step stools/ladders, and working in collections storage areas.
- Careful handling and movement of artifacts and archival materials; lifting, carrying, pushing, or moving objects, equipment, or supplies up to approximately 40 pounds.
- Appropriate assistance, equipment, or professional services will be used for heavy, oversized, fragile, or high-value artifacts.
- Occasional evening, weekend, or holiday work and travel may be required for events, installations, collections activities, research, conferences, training, or other City/Museum business.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Curator is expected to maintain professional museum standards and ethical practices, support the mission of the Stafford Air & Space Museum, and perform other duties as assigned. This job description is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed and is not an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities, qualifications, or working conditions. Duties may be modified based on the operational needs of the City of Weatherford and Stafford Air & Space Museum.

The City of Weatherford is an Equal Opportunity Employer.