

## WHATCOM MUSEUM FOUNDATION

### JOB DESCRIPTION

**JOB TITLE:** Controller

**DEPARTMENT:** Administration

**CLASSIFICATION:** Hourly (Non-Exempt),  
Full-Time (40 hours per week)

#### MUSEUM BACKGROUND:

The Whatcom Museum is a multidisciplinary institution focused on art, nature, and Northwest history, and located in beautiful Bellingham, Washington. Our three-building campus is sited on the ancestral homeland of the Coast Salish People. The Museum works actively to build an inclusive environment and values all people. As an [Equal Opportunity Employer](#), the Museum is committed to assembling a staff with a multitude of viewpoints and perspectives that help us relate and communicate to all members of our diverse community. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Decolonization stand at the forefront of the work we do. In creating authentic and meaningful experiences for all, we hope to inspire a love for history, spur creative engagement in art, and instill respect for our shared natural world.

#### JOB SUMMARY:

The Controller works closely with the Boards of Trustees Finance Committee of the Whatcom Museum Foundation, the Executive Director, and senior staff, in fulfilling the fiduciary responsibility for all financial aspects of the Museum Foundation, including investment decisions. The Controller takes a leadership role in institution-wide strategic planning, creating an annual budget, and managing the production of timely and accurate monthly financial statements for the Foundation. The controller also interfaces, at a minimal level, with the City of Bellingham Finance Department for expenses supported by the City, a few timecard procedures, and will report regularly as it relates to the City Bellingham/Museum foundations Operations Agreement and Agreement for Services documents. The Controller is responsible for ensuring that the Museum Foundation complies fully with all not-for-profit GAAP, IRS, and other governmental and professional financial standards and regulations. The Controller evaluates, analyzes, and reports on entrepreneurial opportunities, and partners with the Executive Director and senior staff to accomplish the mission of the Whatcom Museum. Furthermore, the Controller handles all day-to-day accounting functions; in addition to providing basic Human Resource support for the Museum Foundation.

#### SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP:

Reports to the Executive Director. Provides supervision of the Museum Development Manager, Museum Marketing and Public Relations Manager, Museum Membership and Visitor Experience Supervisor, and the Museum Store Manager.

#### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

1. Direct the fiscal management of the Whatcom Museum Foundation. The Controller will work closely with the Finance Committee and in collaboration with the Board Treasurer organizes and leads regular Finance Committee meetings and presentations to the Board of Trustees.
2. Directly handle all accounting functions, including (but not limited to) processing Accounts Payable, Cash Receipts, and Payroll, plus all related tax obligations and reporting.
3. Manage complete monthly financial statement process, with overall responsibility for managing and monitoring revenues, expenses, and cash flows. Handle month-end closing of accounting records, with responsibility for the accuracy of the general ledger. Establish and review internal controls to ensure proper

segregation of duties and that the assets of the Foundation are properly safeguarded. Manage banking relationships, including Endowment funds.

4. Ensure all accounting functions operate smoothly within established internal controls, policies and procedures, and GAAP. Create a culture of continuous improvement within Finance and Operational functions.
5. Provide key support to the Executive Director in all strategic planning and forecasting projects. The Controller will assist in the evaluation and modeling of new business opportunities, providing in-depth operational and financial analysis. The Controller is expected to take a leadership role, working closely with the Executive Director, senior staff, and Board of Trustees.
6. Supervise, mentor, motivate, assist, and evaluate business staff. Assist Executive Director and senior management with Human Resource matters, including coordinating efforts with the City of Bellingham Human Resources department for City Employees. Assist the Executive Director, senior management, and the Board of Trustees in the development and implementation of an HR organizational development plan that focuses on strategic recruitment and maximizing resources for the improved fiscal sustainability of the Organization.
7. Manage the Foundation's annual budgeting process for both the operational and capital budgets. Work closely with the Executive Director and the City of Bellingham Finance department in preparing and managing the bi-annual budget of the Museum Department of the City of Bellingham.
8. Ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.
9. Manage relationships with the outside accounting firm, including direct work on the annual audit of the Foundation's financial statements. Oversee the timely filing of all tax returns, corporation documents, and related items, in collaboration with the outside accounting firm.
10. Work in partnership with all senior managers at the Museum to provide timely data necessary for optimizing operational performance.
11. Negotiate annual insurance contracts and ensure appropriate amounts of medical and dental coverage for Foundation employees, plus general liability / Director's, and Officer's ("D&O") coverage for the Foundation.
12. Assist the Executive Director, senior management, and the Board of Trustees in the development and implementation of an HR organizational development plan that focuses on strategic recruitment and maximizing resources for the improved fiscal sustainability of the Organization.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Complete other related projects and duties as assigned by the Executive Director.
2. Act as a resource management, employees, volunteers, and the general public regarding financial and operational policies of the Museum.
3. May perform physical activities to include moving, lifting, pushing, and carrying equipment or supplies.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities):

- Possessing the competencies required to envision the future, measure, and analyze performance, and report financial results. Also, to collaborate on the development and effective execution of the Organization's financially sustainable and mission-oriented organizational goals and objectives.
- Strong skills are required to guide decisions, manage risk, and maintain an ethical environment.
- Thorough knowledge of accounting principles including legal, technical, and organizational aspects, as well as the ability to research and implement the latest professional accounting standards and principles.
- Excellent skills in budgeting, forecasting, and cash flow management; coupled with the ability to monitor and proactively recommend appropriate adaptations to operations in response to budget variances.
- Comprehensive knowledge of pertinent Federal, State, and local laws, codes, and regulations; in addition to experience working with the various agencies and other resources to ensure the Organization remains compliant.

- Proficient in managing technology and information systems to enable effective operations. Excellent knowledge of accounting, database, and spreadsheet software applications. Strong understanding of personal computers and the ability to use current Museum information systems (including 'cloud-based' programs), along with the City's core financial data. Excellent Excel skills are vital to the success of the position.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills. Ability to present complex financial information to a variety of non-technical users.
- Working knowledge and ability to assist others in the understanding of principles of supervision, training, and performance evaluation; in addition to current Human Resources related laws, regulations, and general practices.
- Management skills including leadership, supervision, instruction, problem analysis, decision-making, planning and organizing, management control, adaptability, stress tolerance, and time management. Ability to collaborate with others and inspire teams to achieve organizational goals.
- Excellent interpersonal skills for establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with employees, Board of Trustee members, volunteers, and the public.
- Ability to always conduct one's self in an ethical, professional, and respectful manner; in addition to maintaining the confidentiality of all sensitive information encountered while in the performance of duties.
- Ability to maintain accuracy and attention to detail in an atmosphere of frequent interruptions.
- Physical ability to perform required duties including:
  - sitting or standing for long periods
  - visual acuity to read a computer screen and a typeset page
  - fine finger dexterity to operate a computer keyboard and mouse, etc.
  - occasionally lifting up to 30 pounds
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT:**

Works inside heated and secured buildings and requires sitting and using a computer workstation for an extended period of time. Work is subject to interruptions and distractions.

**EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:**

- Bachelor-level degree in accounting, finance, or related area required. Master's degree preferred.
- Licensed Certified Public Accountant or other professional accounting designation preferred.
- At least 5 years of relevant and progressively responsible experience in accounting and finance.
- Proven track record in strategic financial management and analysis, budgeting, and forecasting.
- In place of the above requirements, any combination of relevant education and experience which demonstrates the knowledge, skill, and ability to perform the essential functions of the job will be considered.

**NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- Must pass a local police and Washington State background check prior to hire.
- Flexibility to attend occasional evening or weekend events, and occasional overnight travel to conferences and training sessions.

Salary Range: \$65,000-80,000 depending upon experience.

**Approved by:**

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 Patricia Leach, Museum Executive Director

I have read the attached job description for the position of *Controller* with the Whatcom Museum Foundation. I fully understand the job description. I can perform the essential functions and meet the job requirements of the position. I also understand that the Whatcom Museum Foundation may revise this job description at any time as business needs dictate. I realize that the job description is not intended to be an exhaustive listing of all of the functions of the job, nor is it to limit the Whatcom Museum Foundation's right to assign other functions to an employee in this position. This job description does not constitute a written or implied contract of employment and does not alter the employment-at-will relationship.

In addition, I have discussed the job description with my supervisor and have gone over the following items as it pertains to the position:

Job Description Elements	Employee Initial
<b>Basic Purpose</b>	
<b>Essential Functions</b>	
<b>Job Qualification Requirements</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Knowledge/Experience</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Equipment, Tools And Software</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Other Requirements</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Physical Demands</b>	
<b>Work Environment</b>	

**AGREED BY:**

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 *Date*