

Historical Research Fellow Job Description

Position: Historical Research Fellow

Supervisor: Director of Interpretation & Education

Type: Contract, one year, approx. 30 hours/week

Pay Range: \$40,000

Organization Overview

Formed in January 2020, Revolutionary Spaces is a new organization on Boston's civic and cultural landscape. Our mission is to bring people together to explore the ongoing American struggle to create and sustain a free society as singularly evoked by the two national treasures we care for -- Boston's Old South Meeting House and Old State House.

Through community partnerships, contemporary forms of storytelling, and important civic conversations, Revolutionary Spaces strives to bring people together to explore the history and continue the work of democracy that took shape in these buildings, located two blocks from each other in the heart of downtown Boston. We are dedicated to creating experiences for our audiences that not only deepen understanding of the past, but also provide a fresh perspective on the world we live in today and help us create new ideas and tools to build a more just and equitable tomorrow.

About the Position

The Historical Research Fellow, reporting to the Director of Interpretation & Education, will assist Revolutionary Spaces in developing a more wide-ranging and inclusive approach to interpretation of the Revolutionary era and its legacies, pursuing research aligned with the organization's recently completed interpretive plan. The Researcher will focus primarily on pursuing more information on the experience of marginalized groups (including but not limited to Black Bostonians, Indigenous groups, and women) and their interactions with the colonial government hosted at Old State House, and both the church and community meetings held in Old South Meeting House in the 18th century.

Utilizing collections at Revolutionary Spaces, the Old South Church at the Congregational Library, the Massachusetts State Archives, Massachusetts Historical Society, The Boston Public Library, and New England Historical Genealogical Society, the research fellow will explore questions such as:

- How did marginalized groups who were not allowed to vote attempt to make their voices heard in colonial Boston?

- Where did marginalized people find success in advocating for themselves and their rights or interests, and were those experiences transferable to the larger group?
- When, if ever, were marginalized people able to participate in civic life in colonial Boston, and how was their experience different from that of their white, male, property-owning counterparts?
- How were legal and extra-legal categories of privilege and discrimination constructed?

Deliverables will include:

- Collaboration on specific subject matter to pursue with the Director of Interpretation & Education
- Documentation of analysis and findings, including a final written report
- Monthly blog posts on research findings
- A public presentation of findings at conclusion of the Fellowship

The ideal candidate will have a Doctorate of History and a demonstrated interest in 18th century American history and research.

Compensation: \$40,000, non-employee contractor position

Time commitment

Research Fellow will be required to have check-in with the Director of Interpretation & Education, and other RSI support staff, on a bi-weekly basis, with other check-ins as needed. Research Fellow will be expected to work on-site at Old State House, Old South Meeting House, or target archives for 50%+ of their time working on the project.

Qualifications

- Masters in History required, PhD preferred; PhD candidates welcome
- Demonstrated ability to present research findings both verbally and in written form
- Ability to research independently and in a timely fashion
- Track record of successfully researching the 18th-century colonial world through primary sources
- Interest in telling inclusive stories beyond those of traditional subjects
- Desire to do research to make new stories accessible to the general public, including local Boston audiences.

Physical Requirements

This is a hybrid role, and candidates will sometimes be expected to work out of offices and historic sites in downtown Boston. Some staff offices are located on the third floor of a 300 year old historic building without an elevator.

To Apply:

Please send cover letter, resume, and a writing sample to Matthew Wilding, Director of Interpretation & Education, at HR@revolutionaryspaces.org.

