

# KITTLEMAN

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## Newport Historical Society

*History Starts Here*

**Executive Director**

<http://www.newporthistory.org>



**POSITION:** Executive Director

**REPORTS TO:** Board of Directors

**LOCATION:** Newport, Rhode Island

## **MISSION**

Founded in 1854, the purpose of the Newport Historical Society is to collect, document and preserve Newport's unique contribution to our national narrative over the course of five centuries. Our continuing mission is to chronicle, advocate for the importance of, and communicate this history to a broad audience, so that knowledge of our past will contribute to a deeper understanding of the present and better preparation for the future.



## **ABOUT THE NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Newport Historical Society (NHS) is a multi-faceted history-based institution with a public-facing orientation. NHS retains and preserves significant collections of artifacts, photographs, manuscripts and six historic properties. It develops and delivers a variety of educational programs — exhibits, tours, conferences, publications, research and digital formats — to transmit information and open dialogs with the public about history. Newport Historical Society's collection materials span pre-colonial, colonial, American Revolution, and Gilded Age periods to the present.

NHS has completely modernized its headquarters and collections storage facility, moving many research and educational activities online (which made adjustment to the pandemic years swift and successful). The organization currently has 12 full-time staff, and the number of part-time staff varies seasonally. The NHS has 16 Board members and an operating budget of \$1.2 million.

The NHS seeks to continue to innovate in programming that serves all of Newport's communities and NHS stakeholders. As a trusted resource within the statewide community, NHS seeks a creative, collaborative and inspiring leader who is able to bring history to life today.

For more information about the Newport Historical Society, it's programs and properties, please visit: <http://www.newporthistory.org>.

## **THE OPPORTUNITY**

The next Executive Director will be joining a committed community of staff, Board of Directors and community partners. Responsibilities include:

- Providing leadership and vision to implement programs and initiatives towards achieving the organization's mission.
- Creating and implementing effective fundraising plans, systems and programs; building durable and effective relationships with funders and donors; identifying new resource and revenue generation opportunities.
- Identifying new opportunities for NHS to lead and tell the full story of Newport's history.
- Leveraging existing organizational assets (collections, buildings, relationships) to elevate the profile of NHS.
- Representing NHS to the diverse and plentiful cultural and educational communities of Newport, Rhode Island; building authentic and mutually beneficial partnerships to further the organization's mission.
- Coaching and supporting staff while fostering an equitable and inclusive work environment.
- Running a fiscally sustainable organization and bringing mission criteria and financial rigor to opportunity assessment.
- Partnering with and supporting a volunteer Board of Directors, the organization's governing body.

## **CANDIDATE PROFILE**

The ideal candidate to lead Newport Historical Society in this exciting new phase will:

- Have successful management experience in a nonprofit organization or organizations, ideally within the cultural, history or museum spaces.
- Have demonstrated success in fundraising through diverse sources from government to high-level donors and membership drives including major gifts and capital campaigns.
- Have superior communication skills to engage with a range of audiences such as business, media, community leaders, other civic organizations, staff, Board and volunteers.
- Demonstrate comfort in the use of technology and digital media in promoting the institution and to reach audiences.
- Have experience cultivating, developing and inspiring a cohesive, high-performing team of staff and volunteers.
- Demonstrate familiarity with facilities management and prioritization of capital investments to ensure operational efficiency.
- Demonstrate a creative approach to development of earned income streams from mission-related activities.
- Have a passion for history and at least a general familiarity with the academic discipline.
- Willingness to live in the Newport, RI area and to actively participate in the life of the community.

To confidentially apply, please submit a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC at <https://bit.ly/3GCYIVD> (click on the Apply button at the bottom of the page).

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is between \$125,000 - \$150,000 commensurate with experience. NHS offers a comprehensive benefits package, including but not limited to paid holidays, vacation, health insurance and FSA, as well as a retirement plan including employer contribution.

## EQUAL OPPURTUNITY STATEMENT

The Newport Historical Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer, complying with all applicable laws regarding equal employment opportunities for all qualified applicants and employees.



## INTRODUCTION TO NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Newport, Rhode Island, originally the land of the Narragansett and Wampanoag peoples, holds historical importance within American history. Settled in 1639 by English colonists seeking more religious freedom than could be found in the Puritan colonies, Newport grew to be one of the largest and most prosperous port cities of the original colonies and the most welcoming to religiously diverse groups such as Jewish and Quaker immigrants as early as 1657.

Colonial Newport became enmeshed in, and dependent on, the growing trade in enslaved Africans and Indigenous people. Most Newport residents participated in the institution of slavery in some fashion, and the entire economy was enhanced by the presence of enslaved labor. The community was also home to free people of color, and to those who spoke out on the immorality of this practice.

In a city dependent on trade, and accustomed to self-government (there was no Royal Governor in Rhode Island), Newport was a hotbed of early resistance to growing British trade restrictions and rising political tensions in the build-up to the American Revolution. The British occupied Newport from 1776 – 1779. In August of 1778, the Battle of Rhode Island was fought, planned in coordination with our new French allies, and with the participation of the Marquis de Lafayette and the Rhode Island First Regiment, a division which included Africans, Indigenous and white soldiers.

Following the Revolution, Newport's economy declined, and the rustic beauty of Aquidneck Island became a draw for summer vacationers. By the 1890s, at the height of the Gilded Age, wealthy New York families were summering in Newport, building ornate "cottages" that still line Bellevue

Avenue. At the same time, waves of immigrants including Black families from the South and workers and artisans from Europe found a home and a livelihood in Newport.

Today, Newport has a population of roughly 25,000, economically and racially diverse, which swells seasonally with summer residents, summer workers, and tourists. Over 2 million visitors come annually for the beaches, sailing, restaurants and cultural/historical tourism. Tourism is a primary economic engine of this small city, and many museums and cultural organizations seek to attract attention and support.

The Newport Historical Society plays a critical role, as it holds the comprehensive history of the city and the county. NHS provides a broad spectrum of programming to a variety of audiences and historical content to colleagues, governmental offices scholars and educators.

