

CAREERS FOR GRADUATES IN HISTORY

The purpose of this chart is to show the variety of career opportunities available to historians. Areas of employment are extensive. Space has limited references to typical organizations historians should consider for employment. "Duties" focus on those responsibilities cited in employment advertisements for which historians are suited by their education. These are not complete job descriptions, and qualifications for education and experience vary widely. Contact your Department of History and the sponsors of this chart for further information.

START HERE

Do you wish to continue your education beyond a B.A.?

Do you wish to teach or make a career of education? (Note that a graduate degree may be required.)

Do you wish to pursue a career in a:

Private Sector Corporation?

Public Agency?

Private Individual or Small Firm?

Private Nonprofit Organization?

Graduate History & Related Education

- ACADEMIC HISTORY PROGRAMS**
OFFER M.A., D.A., and Ph.D. level instruction in a wide variety of chronological, topical, and geographical fields. Provide students with skills usable in many careers.
- PUBLIC AND APPLIED HISTORY PROGRAMS**
OFFER M.A., D.A., and Ph.D. level instruction in diverse areas of public history. Provide students with skills and subject matter specifically designed to prepare them for careers in industry, government and nonprofit organizations. Options include:
- Archives, Manuscripts, and Records Management
 - Business and Corporate History
 - Community History
 - Cultural Resource Management
 - Editing
 - Genealogy and Family History
 - Historic Preservation
 - Historic Site Archaeology
 - Historical Administration
 - History and Law
 - Industrial and Technological History
 - Library Science
 - Museum Operations
 - Oral History
 - Policy History

- PROGRAMS IN FIELDS ALLIED TO PUBLIC HISTORY**
OFFER students a range of specialties including:
- Archival Management
 - Area Studies
 - Historic Preservation
 - Historical Archaeology
 - Historical Editing
 - History: architectural history, art history, diplomatic history, economic history, family history, public works-environmental history, urban history, and other related historical studies.
 - Information and Library Sciences
 - Museum Studies
 - Policy Studies
 - Public Administration
 - Publishing

- PROFESSIONAL DEGREES**
OFFER students career training in various professions. Undergraduate degrees in history are good background and frames of reference for advanced work in these fields. Options include:
- Business
 - Communications (Journalism)
 - Economics
 - Law
 - Public Administration
 - Policy Studies

Whatever your goals, master historical scholarship and clear, cogent English.

You have completed your education.

Do you wish to teach or make a career of education?

Teaching and Education Careers

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION (HISTORY AND SOCIAL STUDIES)
INCLUDES public and private elementary and secondary teaching; district and state offices for curriculum and text preparation.

DUTIES: Class instruction, course preparation, organizing historic projects and tours; preparation of classroom materials, including audio-visual and simulations; counseling students; academic supervision and administration.

HIGHER EDUCATION (HISTORY-RELATED PROGRAMS)
INCLUDES public and private institutions from community colleges to universities.

DUTIES: Course instruction and preparation in academic fields of history, public history, or related disciplines as well as interdisciplinary historical writings; consultation on projects in areas of expertise; academic supervision and administration.

EDUCATION AGENCIES AND FOUNDATIONS
INCLUDES local school district offices, state and federal departments of education, private philanthropic and research foundations and institutes in education.

DUTIES: Analyze long-range trends in various levels of education; make budget and cost estimates; research new directions in teaching and text materials; promote public interest in education.

ADULT EDUCATION AND CORPORATE TRAINING PROGRAMS
INCLUDES full and part-time instruction in higher education institutions, adult and continuing education programs, and special classes offered by business firms, churches, and other organizations.

DUTIES: Class instruction and course preparation ranging from basic historical and civic topics to professional concerns involving historians' techniques and understandings.

Private Nonprofit Organizations

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIETIES
INCLUDES organizations (usually commissions) at all levels of state and local government which house and administer historical programs for the public; private groups (usually societies) in local communities and states which organize historical activities and resources; scholarly and professional associations serving historians, other professionals, and students.

DUTIES: Manage historical resources and personnel; provide services to the public and to scholars; promote interest in history; edit organizational publications; review historical publications; provide a forum for historical meetings and activities.

HISTORICAL PROJECTS
INCLUDES projects sponsored by universities, historical societies, foundations, government agencies, or other institutions. These projects possess a degree of autonomy or individual purpose, usually having staffs of their own.

DUTIES: May involve the whole range of historical activities, e.g., editing, preservation, research, writing, media presentations. Additional duties include management, budgeting, grants administration.

MUSEUMS
INCLUDES museums of history; historical exhibit projects which collect, preserve, and display photographs, artifacts, and documents.

DUTIES: Administration and management; analysis, preservation, display and interpretation of historic material; preparation of interpretive histories; promotion of the use and support of museums by the public; research and production of historical material, including publications, exhibits, films, and audio-visual products; presentation of lectures on history.

RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS
INCLUDES organizations specializing in research requiring the study of subjects over time; private "think tanks"; university-based institutions; public research agencies.

DUTIES: Historical analysis; study of development of policy issues; preparation of analytical reports for contract assignment; computer-based analysis of data; coordination of interdisciplinary studies requiring an historical perspective.

SERVICE INSTITUTIONS
INCLUDES agencies, foundations, and other philanthropic organizations which provide educational, social and cultural services to the public.

DUTIES: Historically based policy analysis of social service issues; formulation of programs which use history as the basis of serving the public; analysis of social need and program proposals.

Private Individual or Small Firms

CONSULTING: CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
INCLUDES individual or group contracts with developers, public agencies, business firms; counseling services on preservation and cultural resource management policy.

DUTIES: Research and prepare cultural resource statements for environmental impact reports; identify and evaluate historic structures and other cultural resources; nominate structures for legal protection; preservation education programs.

CONSULTING: RESEARCH/WRITING
INCLUDES contract assignment with clients representing all fields of business, various levels of government and nonprofit concerns; contract counseling and services in various fields of public history.

DUTIES: Preparation of histories; archival and records management services; public and private records search and research; legal and policy research services; oral history interviewing and transcribing; historical editing and indexing.

GENEALOGICAL SERVICES
INCLUDES research and writing of family genealogies, contract assignments in tracing family lines and producing family histories.

DUTIES: Genealogy and family history; community history; research, writing, editing, publishing; marketing and sales of genealogical services.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION
INCLUDES firms offering historic preservation/restoration services; rehabilitation of historically accurate buildings and artifacts; information services on the field.

DUTIES: Architectural, art, and urban history research; application of historical conservation and related artistic, technical, and manual skills; research on preservation laws and tax benefits.

HISTORY AS AN AVOCATION
INCLUDES reading, researching, writing, and interpreting history of all kinds for pleasure; historical reenactment, museum and historical society volunteer work; service on boards of history-related associations; teaching and advising students of history on a voluntary basis.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES: to develop appreciation and competence: Ability to think historically; research, writing, and verbal communication skills; deep and abiding appreciation of the field of history.

Note that activities such as marketing and public relations may be performed by independent firms or by departments within a given corporation.

Public Agencies

EXECUTIVE BRANCH
INCLUDES cabinet-level departments of federal government such as Department of State and Department of the Interior (especially National Park Service); independent executive units within the federal government (e.g. National Endowment for the Humanities, Central Intelligence Agency, Smithsonian Institution); state, regional and local executive departments, agencies, commissions.

DUTIES: Writing institutional and policy history; preparation of current issues studies; analysis of policy performance, of long-range trends; preservation and organization of institutional records; editing of public records and documents; archival and records management; management and interpretation of historic sites and parks.

LEGISLATIVE BODIES
INCLUDES Congress of the United States, state legislatures; staffs of same; legislative reference and analysis services, historical offices of the U.S. House of Representatives, Senate, and some state legislatures.

DUTIES: Provide research assistance to legislators and general public, especially histories of legislation on policy areas or analysis of policy effectiveness; management of institutional records and legislators' papers; publication of bibliographic material; staff and committee investigations; service on study commissions.

JUDICIAL BRANCH AND REGULATORY AGENCIES
INCLUDES U.S. Supreme Court Curator's Office, historical offices and projects in other levels of federal, state, and local judiciary; clerks and staffs of courts; independent quasi-judicial public regulatory agencies at state and federal level (e.g., Interstate Commerce Commission, state insurance commissions).

DUTIES: Records collection and preservation; research and writing of institutional histories analyzing regulatory and judicial policies; staff work.

HERITAGE/CULTURAL AGENCIES
INCLUDES institutions responsible for public programs administering heritage/cultural resources.

DUTIES: Supervision and administration of historic documents, artifacts, structures, and parks; exhibit display; research and publication.

INTERNATIONAL/MULTINATIONAL AGENCIES
INCLUDES a variety of institutions in which the United States participates, with political, social, economic, or cultural goals.

DUTIES: Application of economic, social, political, and financial history to contemporary problems; foreign languages; research and writing in the areas of policy-related history, demographic history, records management; information management.

MILITARY SERVICES
INCLUDES Army (e.g. U.S. Army Center of Military History, Corps of Engineers), Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and National Guard.

DUTIES: Preparation of institutional histories and policy related studies; direction of historical editing projects; management of archival and records centers; direction of museums and collections of artifacts; lecturing on unit history.

PLANNING AGENCIES
INCLUDES state and local agencies involved in urban planning, environmental and resource control and management, land-use management.

DUTIES: Analysis of urban development and land use as well as policies related to the same; preparation of studies dealing with preservation of historical resources; land use, natural resources, and environmental quality; supervision of public compliance with such legislation.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES
INCLUDES National Archives and Records Service offices and centers; state libraries and archives; municipal archives and records centers; historical rooms of public libraries.

DUTIES: Preservation, arrangement and service of archival and public documents and manuscript collections; planning and selection of archival acquisitions; overall records management and archival policy; promotion of scholarly research in archival records; exhibiting records.

Private Sector Corporations

BANKING
INCLUDES credit creating institutions which lend, borrow, issue, or safeguard money. Commercial banks, savings institutions, development and reserve banks are examples.

DUTIES: Produce historical financial, economic, and political risk analyses; manage current and archival records; research operating and policy issues; write and teach staff corporate history; mount historical displays.

COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA
INCLUDES network and cable television companies, TV stations, motion picture firms, and record and tape industries.

DUTIES: Research and write historical documentaries and narratives; analyze public trends over time; provide information and archival services.

INSURANCE
INCLUDES firms engaged in underwriting risks and losses, ranging from life, health, and casualty insurance companies, to concerns offering credit, fire, title and product liability insurance.

DUTIES: Search and evaluate historical records relating to insurance case histories; prepare studies of policy matters based on historical research; provide legislative analysis; manage archives and records centers.

INVESTMENT SERVICES
INCLUDES companies specializing in issuing, purchasing, and selling of corporate equity. Examples are brokerage and venture capital firms; investment banking houses.

DUTIES: Research in company financial and management history; information and records management; analysis of current market and economic trends; analysis of opportunities for business.

JOURNALISM
INCLUDES newspapers as well as news, trade, professional journals; historical and popular periodicals and magazines.

DUTIES: Search contemporary and historical records; interview using oral history techniques; write for the general public under time constraints, placing current events in historical perspective; editing.

LAW
INCLUDES law or legal service firms.

DUTIES: Research in public and private archives and records sources; development of support material from historical evidence; oral history for depositions; writing briefs.

MANUFACTURING
INCLUDES industries engaged in the manufacture of consumer and capital goods.

DUTIES: Analysis of markets, financial, economic and political risk over time; corporate history; design of decision support systems; management of archival and record-keeping services; staff training in corporate history and foreign cultures; oral history for organizational diagnosis; development of exhibits of archival material and memorabilia.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING
INCLUDES firms which, using marketing and advertising techniques, promote the flow of goods from the producer.

DUTIES: Research market performance; determine trends on which to base future estimates; analyze historical marketing and advertising strategies; write historical analysis of markets and pricing effect.

MINERAL EXTRACTION INDUSTRIES
INCLUDES firms engaged in exploration for drilling, storage, and distribution of petroleum-based and natural gas products as well as other minerals.

DUTIES: Analysis of political risk and of key political figures with reference to economic implications for business; geographical and land use history; research in mineral claims; research and writing for corporate communications and public affairs; archival management; information retrieval services.

PUBLISHING
INCLUDES firms specializing in publishing historical works written for the general public, students and scholars; general publishing firms with history or humanities services.

DUTIES: Copy editing; manuscript evaluation; research on market demands, especially for works dealing with history and its uses; direct computer based on-line information research services.

PUBLIC RELATIONS
INCLUDES firms active in promoting public relations and public affairs for clients in all economic sectors.

DUTIES: Analysis of public trends; presentations of clients' activities based on historical interpretation; archival and information management; writing historical material for organizational promotion.

UTILITIES
INCLUDES electric companies; natural, liquefied, and synthetic gas companies; water and sewerage firms; communications companies such as telephone and data transmission.

DUTIES: Historical analysis of rate structures; archival services; direct record retentions and microfilming programs; provide information services; research policy and management studies; review local issues and problems.

OTHER INDUSTRIES
NUMEROUS opportunities exist for historians in other industries where history or historians' skills are required. Individuals are encouraged to apply research techniques such as those learned in class to seek out these positions. They should then present their historical skill and their knowledge in terms applicable to the industry in question. An entrepreneurial spirit is required.

Do you want to return for more education?