

Museum Search & Reference

New Britain Museum of American Art

Job Profile: *Director of Learning and Engagement*



New Britain Museum of American Art, New Britain, CT

The [New Britain Museum of American Art](#), a major art collection and beloved community resource in central Connecticut, is building a new collaborative team among the education and curatorial staff under the direction of recently hired CEO Brett Abbott. This is an exciting opportunity for the newly defined position of **Director of Learning and Engagement (DLE)** to chart a fresh course forward in close collaboration with leadership across the Museum. The position requires a confident, connected museum educator deeply involved in the field, one who believes in cross-departmental collaboration, strategic alignment with the mission, and a passion for creative engagement among all demographics. As the Museum looks to sustainably broaden and strengthen its regional service, this is an important moment to contribute ambitious, creative and fundable ideas for growth and deepen a network of relationships for the NBMAA.

The successful candidate will be a strategic thinker and experienced planner who can conceptualize, design and direct programs and engagement strategies that reflect institutional goals and values, including DEAI initiatives. They will have experience managing staff and the diversity of educational programs in a robust environment, from gallery interpretation, school services, adult programs, and events, with all their digital and virtual potential. The new DLE will

be an up-to-date co-producer who can articulate big ideas, key messages, visitor outcomes and interpretive strategies.

The NBMAA aspires to be one of the nation's most welcoming museums as it strives to illuminate the voices of all Americans and present the evolving and broadening definition of American Art. Celebrating nearly 120 years of collecting and exhibiting American art, the NBMAA draws upon its deep and renowned array of artworks to tell the unfolding story of America's creative diversity, exploring cultural history and examining new ideas in contemporary art through exhibitions, programs and events. Firmly rooted in the history and culture of New Britain, NBMAA is an important contributor to the quality of life in the local community but draws its audiences from the wider Hartford County area, the state, and the greater Northeast region. The Museum is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion and will continue its work to reflect multidimensional audiences through creative programming and acquisitions, as well as in hiring and in governance, building unity internally and opening pathways across its community. The Museum building itself signals welcome. The beautiful Ann Beha designed Chase Building built in 2006, added 43,000 square feet of gallery and program spaces, a shop, café and terraces. A 2015 addition seamlessly expanded galleries, classrooms and studios. In 2021, the Landers House, the original home of the Museum, was renovated to include a maker's space, event space and offices. Together there is a total of 53,000 square feet of active museum space. An outdoor sculpture garden on the 2-acre campus blends almost seamlessly with the neighboring Olmsted-designed



Thomas Hart Benton Gallery, New Britain Museum of American Art

Walnut Hill Park, whose adjacency allows for Museum/public partnership events, such as the Juneteenth Celebration with programs outside and inside the Museum. At 3,500 members, support is strong and the financial position is solid. Currently, 45 dedicated employees operate within a budget of \$4.2M, supported in part by a \$25M endowment. With nearly 9,000 works of art in a wide range of media from the Colonial period to the present day, the Museum's world renowned [collections](#) are stewarded by curatorial and collections staff and enriched through

[active programming by the educational team](#) and the large and devoted docent corp. Among the many highlights are the Sanford B.D. Low Illustration collection featuring Norman Rockwell and Maxfield Parrish, as well as 300 years of masterworks by artists like Robert Duncanson, John Singer Sargent, Georgia O’Keeffe, Louise Nevelson, and Sol LeWitt, as well as contemporary artists like Titus Kaphar and Kara Walker. A major installation of Thomas Hart Benton’s five-panel mural, *The Arts of Life in America, 1932* (above), has a dedicated gallery. The Museum and its public are rightfully proud of the permanent collection and continue to plumb its depth in exhibitions and programming, build upon its strengths and fill gaps as needed.

Opportunities of the Position

The new Director of Learning and Engagement will have the exciting opportunity to explore and present a refined and sustainable program of educational initiatives, in collaboration with the CEO, incoming Director of Collections and Exhibitions, Education staff, volunteers, and community partners. This will include a new focus on engagement events, deeper interpretive gallery experiences, and more community engagement off-site.

The NBMAA Director of Learning and Engagement will be expected to:

- Have administrative and management maturity, modeling transparency, empathy, support, and partnership.
- Be a poised and inspiring presence, collaborative and positive.
- Be a visionary for growth, engaged in the field of museum education.
- Be planful and strategic, with good project management skills.
- Understand that education and revenue generation are not at odds, even while emphasizing accessibility.
- Be comfortable with budget development, tracking and understanding expenditures.
- Be on the lookout for grant opportunities and be comfortable participating in proposals and funding requests.
- Have strong communication, organizational and writing skills.
- Care deeply about connecting with and welcoming community.
- Be committed to advancing diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.
- Have a strong network of peers and allies.
- Be a creative and enthusiastic promoter of the New Britain Museum of American Art.



Education and Experience

- M.A. in Education, Art Education, Museum Studies, Art History or related field, with concentration in Museum Education preferred, or significant professional experience.

- At least 7 years of successful museum education experience, 5 years managing teams, docents, and programs.
- Track record of engaging community programs required.
- Solid background in art history desired, with the ability to teach, train and inspire; knowledge of 19th-century art a plus.
- Experience with grants and national foundations a plus.
- A strong network of museum professional contacts is desired.
- Board committee management helpful.
- Persuasive communication skills both oral and written are essential.

Compensation

- \$80,000 - \$100,000 per annum (commensurate with experience).
- Competitive benefit package includes medical, dental, a 403b plan and paid time off.

To apply in confidence, email 1) a letter expressing interest in this particular position and giving brief examples of past related experience; 2) a résumé; 3) names of three references with contact information (will not be contacted without prior permission). All applications and nominations are kept confidential. Submit application to retained search firm: Lora Urbanelli, Museum Search & Reference, SearchandRef@museum-search.com. **Applicants are encouraged to apply early as candidates will be considered on a rolling basis.** For additional information visit: <http://museum-search.com/open-searches/>. **Nominations are welcome.**

The New Britain Museum of American Art is committed to fair and accessible employment practices, welcoming individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and ideas who embrace and value diversity and inclusivity. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply for this search.



Eva LeWitt, *Untitled*, installation in the LeWitt Family Staircase, Nov. 2021 - 2023

More About the New Britain Museum of American Art

The NBMAA brings art and people together, reflecting local and regional diversity, to examine the unfolding story of America through art and history. Located since 1937 next to New Britain's historic Walnut Hill Park, the New Britain Museum of American Art traces its beginnings to 1853 with the establishment of the New Britain Institute which displayed original art works for the benefit of the public. In 1903, John Butler Talcott donated funds for the

establishment of an endowment to purchase American art for the enjoyment and education of the community, including its many factory workers who made New Britain the "Hardware Capital

of the World.” Today, the collection numbers nearly 9,000 oils, watercolors, drawings, graphics and sculpture spanning 300 years of American history, with an impressive depth and quality - holdings of national importance.



Walnut Hill Park, New Britain, CT

About New Britain, CT

Celebrating its Sesquicentennial, New Britain is a diverse community with a proud immigrant and manufacturing history, including Stanley Black & Decker. It is home to several art museums, community theatres, 1,200 acres of park land, small businesses and a vibrant downtown area that includes Central Connecticut State University with over 12,000 enrolled students. Cost of living in the greater New Britain / Hartford area is lower than other areas of the Northeast. Connecticut and greater New England abound in natural beauty and abundant resources, with proximity to hundreds of hiking trails, river sports and mountain activities, and the Long Island Sound is 40 minutes away. Located in the center of the state, New Britain is less than 10 miles southwest of Hartford, and 2 hours equidistant from Boston, Providence and New York.

