

**Job Title: NAGPRA Compliance Officer
(Professional Consultant)**

Location: Hybrid - Onsite location Grand Rapids, MI

Job Type: Independent Contractor (1099)

Duration: Project based up to December 31, 2028

Salary: \$60,000 annually paid in monthly installments

SUMMARY:

The Grand Rapids Public Museum seeks a knowledgeable, strategic and empathetic professional to lead our compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA (NAGPRA - 25 U.S.C. §§ 3001-13) and related state/federal laws (43 C.F.R. §§ 10.1-.17). This position will serve as the GRPM's NAGPRA Compliance Officer and primary liaison between the Museum and Tribal Nations and their representatives. They will coordinate with appropriate management staff to provide their guidance in overseeing the daily stewardship of the NAGPRA collection, assist with sourcing and documentation, and completing the repatriation of all Ancestors and cultural items. They will lead consultations with all interested Tribal Nations and defer to Indigenous Knowledge. This contract position will be responsible for publishing all required Notices before the January 1, 2029 federally mandated deadline.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

- Direct all museum activities to ensure the GRPM's continued full compliance with NAGPRA and its 2024 regulatory updates.
- Seek out and implement NAGPRA best practices, above and beyond strict legal compliance, to ensure strong collaboration between the GRPM and Tribal Nations.
- Actively participate in regional and national NAGPRA Communities of Practice and regularly attend workshops, trainings and webinars to stay current with best practices and build institutional relationships.
- Initiate meaningful and ongoing consultation with designated Tribal representatives on behalf of the GRPM through written communications, virtual meetings, and site visits.
- Draft and submit all Notices of Inventory Completion and Notices of Intent to Repatriate to the National Park Service by the January 1, 2029 federally mandated deadline.
- Implement "Duty of Care" standards to ensure that Ancestors and cultural objects are cared for using protocols and materials as requested by Tribes.
- Maintain detailed, accurate, and accessible records that document GRPM's past and current NAGPRA work as required by the updated NAGPRA regulations.
- Identify, organize, maintain, and share GRPM collections documentation upon request by designated Tribal representatives.
- Oversee the legal and physical transfer of ancestral human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony, including any travel required to complete those transfers.

- Seek input from Tribal Representatives and participate with GRPM staff on special projects, potential acquisitions, loans, imaging, and requests for access to collections, ensuring there is “free, prior, and informed consent” from Tribal Nations before work proceeds.
- Create a Procedures Manual for the GRPM’s NAGPRA work.
- Potentially coordinate repatriations outside of NAGPRA for culturally sensitive international collections.
- Other duties and projects as assigned.

WORKSKILLS:

- Ability to communicate effectively and respectfully in person and in writing with Tribal representatives, colleagues, and the general public.
- Comfortable handling ancestral remains, funerary objects, sacred and ceremonial objects, and objects of cultural patrimony as directed by Tribal Representatives to ensure the GRPM’s “Duty of Care” requirements are fulfilled.
- Proven experience working with sensitive and confidential information.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Digital literacy skills including cloud-based platforms such as Google Apps, Zoom, Dropbox, Basecamp, and Museum Collection Management Systems.

QUALIFICATIONS (REQUIRED):

- Minimum of 3-5 years experience working on NAGPRA compliance for either a Tribal Nation or Museum/Institution.
- Demonstrated understanding of NAGPRA law and updated regulations, including the specific updates to the regulations introduced in 2024.
- Previous experience managing multiple complex projects simultaneously.
- Experience with museum collections and provenance research.
- Must possess, or be able to acquire, a valid Michigan Driver’s License and personal means of transportation for routine multi-site work and work-related travel.

QUALIFICATIONS (PREFERRED):

- Advanced degree in Native American Studies, Museum Studies, Anthropology, Law, or a related field (or equivalent lived experience).
- Experience working with split and shared collections in a NAGPRA context.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

- Ability to lift 40 pounds, bend, stoop and climb.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

- Professional, multiple settings that include standard business office, climate controlled storage areas, public exhibition galleries, and travel within the United States.
- While performing the duties of this job the employee may be subject to outdoor weather conditions and temperatures.
- The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate and generally does not require the use of hearing protection equipment.