

# ARCHAEOLOGY ANSWERS

A bulletin series for the Archaeology Program of the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office



Bulletin 3 | [www.michigan.gov/archaeology/](http://www.michigan.gov/archaeology/)

## Exploring Careers in Archaeology

### Are there Careers in Archaeology?

Yes! Archaeologists work in a variety of settings, including government agencies, museums, historic sites, higher education, and private industry. Colleges and universities hire archaeologists to teach and conduct research. Some archaeologists work in museums to manage artifact collections or conduct public education programming.

In the United States, laws such as the National Historic Preservation Act have created many different jobs in what is known as Cultural Resource Management

(CRM). More than 80% of archaeologists work in CRM fields in government or private industry. Archaeologists at federal, tribal, and state government agencies manage, protect, and interpret archaeological sites and oversee various aspects of federal, state, and tribal laws. Archaeologists also own and work for private CRM firms conducting fieldwork, laboratory analysis, and report writing for federal projects related to historic preservation laws. CRM archaeology jobs are tied to economic development and career opportunities in these areas are always growing.



## Is a career in Archaeology right for me?

If you are curious about past people and how they lived, then a career in archaeology may be for you. Archaeology is a diverse and varied field of study, with many sub-specialties. This means that you are likely to find a career that fits your interests and skills. While we tend to think about fieldwork when we think of archaeology, archaeologists also spend their time in laboratories, museums and collections spaces, classrooms, and offices. Archaeologists conduct research, write books and articles, engage the public on social media, collaborate with the public and stakeholders, provide information to local, state, and federal government agencies, and much more.



## What education is necessary to be an Archaeologist?

Becoming an archaeologist requires a minimum of a bachelor's degree in anthropology or archaeology. A typical 4-year college degree will include hands-on training in the field and laboratory. It is a good idea to seek applied opportunities and experiences while you are getting your education. Roughly [70% of jobs in archaeology](#) require a post-graduate degree, such as a masters or doctorate in anthropology or related fields. In the United States, there are also national standards known as the [Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards](#) for Archaeologists. These standards, along with professional qualifications defined by the [Register of Professional Archaeologists](#), determine which jobs you may be qualified for.

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## How can I get experience?

There are many organizations that offer volunteer opportunities for people who want to learn more about archaeology. You can find volunteer experiences with many local [colleges and universities](#) through their field schools or public archaeology projects. Museums are another great place to volunteer and gain experience working with artifact collections. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) also organize an annual event called [Archaeology Day](#) at the Michigan History Center each year in October, where you can learn more about careers in archaeology. You can also contact the SHPO to talk to one of our archaeologists!

## How can I find archaeology jobs?

Many professional societies and organizations keep job listings online. Visit the following to view recent job postings:

- [Career Center, Society for American Archaeology](#)
- [Job Board, Society for Historical Archaeology](#)
- [Job Board, American Cultural Resource Association](#)
- [Job Listings, PreserveNet.org](#)
- [Search archaeology at governmentjobs.com](#)