

**Old North Foundation**  
**Old North Church & Historic Site**  
**Job Description: Research Intern**

## **The Organization**

The enduring fame of Old North began on the evening of April 18, 1775, when church sexton Robert Newman and vestryman Capt. John Pulling, Jr. climbed the steeple of Old North Church and held high two lanterns as a signal from Paul Revere that the British were marching to Lexington and Concord by sea across the Charles River and not by land. This fateful event ignited the American Revolution. Old North Church is Boston's oldest surviving church building and welcomes 150,000 visitors each year as one of the Freedom Trail's most visited historical sites.

Old North Church, built in 1723, sits at a paradoxical intersection of freedom and unfreedom. To many, our steeple is an icon of American liberty and independence. Yet, the steeple (and the building itself) was built with the proceeds of human trafficking, and early congregants who used Old North as a social nexus enriched the church with their wealth generated through the enslavement of Africans and their descendants. Old North's complicated past is a leading example of the complexity of our shared national history, and can shine a light on ways that historical events and institutions contribute to inequities that persist today.

The [Old North Foundation](http://www.oldnorth.com) (ONF) inspires active citizenship and courageous, compassionate leadership by interpreting and preserving the Old North Church & Historic Site. The Foundation serves a wide audience by creating meaningful experiences through educational outreach, site-specific programming, and historical analysis. The Old North Foundation of Boston, Inc. was established in 1991 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization independent of Christ Church in the City of Boston (the Episcopal congregation of Old North Church). Learn more at [www.oldnorth.com](http://www.oldnorth.com).

The Old North Foundation believes that:

- Bravery, patriotism, and active citizenship come in many forms. These acts can inspire both large-scale and local change.
- Education and respectful dialogue are key to building a more perfect union that reflects the promise of liberty and justice for all.
- Becoming an anti-racist organization will require active engagement with the legacy of slavery at Old North Church and the ongoing burdens of slavery and racism in our country.
- By preserving and sharing history, space, and stories, we shape our future.

## **The Position**

The Research Intern will report to the Director of Education and the Research Fellow. Their research will focus on Black people's religious and social experiences in Boston's North End from 1880 onward. They will play a critical role in helping the Foundation prepare for Old North Church's 300th anniversary in 2023 and the 250th anniversary of the lantern signals in 2025.

The Research Intern will use primary source materials about the Old North Church and the North End. They will find these materials through a careful search of the physical and digital holdings at archival

repositories such as the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Massachusetts State Archives, the Boston Public Library, the Boston Athenaeum, and the New England Historical Genealogical Society. They will consider research questions such as the ones listed below. They may also propose related research questions.

- Can we cross-reference church records with other archival resources to better understand the lives and experiences of Black North Enders in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries?
- What do archival records reveal about Old North's efforts to eradicate poverty in nineteenth and twentieth-century Boston? How did the church serve the community during the Great Depression, and who were the primary beneficiaries of the church's support?
- How did the church collaborate with the diocese and other organizations in Massachusetts to do prison reform in the early twentieth century?
- Did white women at Old North participate in the suffrage movement? If so, what was their participation? Did they advocate for Black people's right to the franchise?
- What were Black women's experiences in the North End in 1880 and onward?
- What was/were the church's stance(s) on Black liberation movements (the long Civil Rights Movements) from roughly 1930-1970?

As a member of the Education Department, the Research Intern will have the opportunity to experience public history within the context of Boston's Freedom Trail and Boston National Historical Park.

Deliverables will include:

- Images of primary sources to be posted online
- Written list of key findings and directions for future researchers
- Public-facing sharing of research (i.e., blog post, participating in research videos, audio recordings)
- Supporting the Director of Education's production of a timeline of the church's history that will be displayed on campus in 2023

The ideal candidate will have expertise in nineteenth and twentieth-century New England history. They will have experience working with primary source materials. Additionally, they will have a demonstrated interest in African American history, ethnic history, working-class history, and/or U.S. Gender History. They will be an intellectually curious self-starter who excels when working on small teams of researchers. They will be skilled at presenting research findings to a general audience.

Position Type: 75 hours over ten weeks during the Fall 2022 Semester

Stipend: \$1,250

To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to Catherine Matthews, Director of Education, at [jobs@oldnorth.com](mailto:jobs@oldnorth.com). Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

The Old North Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes a diverse pool of candidates in this search.