“How Do I Get a Job in Archaeology These Days?”

Webinar Resource List

Takeaway points:

- Having a bachelor’s degree will help you secure an entry level position, but there is a limit to the responsibilities and job growth opportunities available without a master’s.
- Most entry-level work is temporary, part-time or project-to-project based. You may find yourself working temporary jobs with a master’s.
- If you decide to pursue a master’s degree, choose a graduate program that will allow you to develop marketable skill sets. Search current job openings in your area and look for the qualifications listed.
- Join local organizations and professional societies to build your network.
- Find a field school that will give you practical training in regionally specific materials and excavation standards. Most companies will want to see that you have formal field training.
- If you are unable to attend an in-person field school, look into virtual options or use this time to focus on developing a marketable skill set like GIS.

Chat Questions and Answers

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<td>I am an out of state student getting a BA in Historic Preservation, Religion, and Classics with a minor in Museum Studies. I have to take a year off from school before going into a graduate program. What is, in your opinion, the best way to go about getting a graduate degree and beginning to look at jobs?</td>
<td>It is a great idea to take some time between getting your BA and graduate degree, especially if you are still figuring out what interests you. Spend the gap year looking into grad programs that you would thrive in. Look at research happening there, but also look to see if you connect well with any faculty who might be your advisor. Search out someone who is compassionate in addition to being great in their field. And someone who you can communicate well with. As for job searches, try to cast your net widely in terms of what you are open to and available for. Quality is worth more than quantity in terms of submitting applications and be persistent with it.</td>
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<td>I often see positions for internships and entry-level CRM field tech positions, and then way-upper-level openings for administrative / director / project manager / supervisory type positions. Are there any middle ground permanent positions for professionals who have already been field techs for several years but are not seeking to be directors or supervisors?</td>
<td>In most cases where the position requires field work, yes. Take a look at some job descriptions that you see yourself applying to and look over the qualifications. A mid-level permanent position might be called a “Crew Chief” or “Field Director”.</td>
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<td>Is a formal field school absolutely necessary for employment?</td>
<td>They are not absolutely necessary, but most employers who are hiring techs for a field project right out of undergrad are looking for candidates with some field experience. A field school is a good way to get that experience and it will also</td>
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<td>I will be graduating next month with two B.A.'s (Anthropology and History), experience through a 2.5 year long internship with an archaeology lab, a field school, I currently volunteer with the Public Archaeology Corps and docent with a historic home. What else do you suggest I do?</td>
<td>Honestly, that’s all great stuff! Keep doing all of that! And, develop/keep up with relationships with people at all of those places and experiences. It's not great to hear, but finding a job just take some time and persistence.</td>
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<td>That is the one thing that is terrifying for applying for jobs. They said you need a BA and a field school but COVID has cancelled two of my opportunities to take them through school. So I was also wondering if they were absolutely required (as you know, we get lab and field experience in school).</td>
<td>The lab and field experience you get in school might be sufficient to get you that first job. Many employers who say a field school is necessary will accept field work done for a class project.</td>
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<td>Is having a master's degree important to get a job in archaeology?</td>
<td>It is not necessary to get an entry-level field or lab tech job. But you will find that it eventually becomes necessary since you will hit a ceiling after the crew chief level. There are professional standards that require an advanced degree for Principal Investigators and the lead author on reports.</td>
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<td>What kind of advice would you give a student who wants to work in academia or become a professor of archaeology or a related field?</td>
<td>Find opportunities to co-author articles in peer-reviewed journals. Writing in general will be very important, including being able to write successful grant applications. And a PhD will be necessary.</td>
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<td>All the panelists have at least a master’s degree. Do you consider that the educational baseline for getting a stable, good-paying job? Also, if you don’t want to teach, what is the advantage of having a Ph.D. as opposed to a master’s degree. Are there many entry-level non-teaching jobs for which a Ph.D. is required?</td>
<td>A PhD is necessary for professor positions and is sometimes preferred for higher level director or curator positions that might require running research projects. It is rarely (or never) required for an entry-level, non-teaching job. A master’s degree is sufficient (and sometimes preferred) for upper level CRM positions. In general, a master’s is the required baseline for advancing in archaeology beyond the Crew Chief level.</td>
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<td>Are there field tech position openings for metal detecting, for personnel that already have field experience and knowledge with metal detectors out in the field, without taking the Advanced Metal Detecting for the Archaeologist (AMDA) training class? Or does it really just depend on the project?</td>
<td>I think it depends on the project, since not all archaeology or preservation projects will include metal detecting. In general, a BA in Anthropology or a related field is required to get your foot in the door for field tech jobs but there are people who manage to work their way through the CRM ranks without an undergraduate degree.</td>
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<td>Working for a private business or government agency? Advantages or disadvantages of each.</td>
<td>Salaries are generally higher in private businesses and there are more jobs available in this sector. You can get a broad range of experiences, dig in different areas of the country, and expand your network by working in CRM. Full-time government jobs are harder to come by but provide more long-term job security. You also will be able to work in more public archaeology and outreach roles with government jobs.</td>
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<td>Are there questions you recommend asking during job interviews? Maybe about potential for advancement so you know if those ceilings may be a problem for you.</td>
<td>Yes, that’s a great question to ask. Also things that will show you what company culture is like and what kinds of skills they are looking for the most. &quot;What do you like about working for this...&quot;</td>
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Do part-time paid opportunities exist in archaeology?

Most entry-level archaeology jobs are part-time, be they in CRM or government. There are also opportunities to get on part-time or limited term grant-funded work.

National and Regional Organizations:

- Archaeological Institute of America

- Society for American Archaeology

- The Society of Black Archaeologists

- Council for Maryland Archaeology

- Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference Student Committee

- National Council for Preservation Education

- The Archaeological Society of Maryland

- Society for Historical Archaeology

Training and Educational Resources:

- Certified Archeological Technician Program, CfMA

- Archaeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines
• Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum
  https://bit.ly/3mPDDNO

• QGIS

• National Park Service

• Virtual Field School
  https://bit.ly/2QmO6UN

Job Boards and Funding Opportunities:

• Black Trowel Collective Microgrants
  https://bit.ly/3g9Xhmp

• Online Crowdsourcing

• Archeological Consulting Firms and Contractors working in Maryland
  https://bit.ly/3mXc5WP

• Preservation Maryland

• Maryland Historical Trust

• Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory, Gloria S. King Research Fellowship in Archaeology

• Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World

• Muse Weekly
  https://bit.ly/3x1GSpW

• Museum Hue