

Application Guide

Master of Arts in Museum Studies

We admit students to the M.A. program for the fall semester. Applications are due in early February each year (consult MUSE admissions webpage for exact date). To be considered for admission to the program, a student must hold a bachelor's degree. Acceptance in the program is determined by the Museum Studies Admissions Committee. A complete application for admission must include:

Completed Application Form

A completed application form, along with a non-refundable application fee, submitted online through Graduate Admissions.

Official Transcript

A copy of your official transcript, issued by the Registrar's Office of the institution from which you have (or will have) earned your bachelor's degree (and master's degree, if applicable). You can obtain an official transcript from your Registrar's Office and upload it to your application. IMPORTANT: Records accessed through a student portal are NOT official transcripts, and we are unable to accept them.

Personal Statement

A personal statement, not to exceed three double-spaced pages, explaining:

- those aspects of museums and museum studies that particularly interest you
- your professional goals, including the area of museum work that most attracts you
- your relevant experience and background
- how you believe KU's Museum Studies Program matches your interests, and
- anything else you think is important for us to know. If you believe your academic record doesn't reflect your potential to perform well in our program, please provide an explanation.

Three Letters of Recommendation

Please use KU's online letter of recommendation system. We strongly recommend that at least two of your letters of recommendation come from professors, instructors, or other individuals who can speak directly to your academic ability.

Resume or Curriculum Vitae

A resume or curriculum vitae listing your education, employment history, volunteer experience, internships, scholarships/fellowships, and academic awards.

Essay

One essay not to exceed five double-spaced pages. Please respond to this prompt: **How has a museum experience shaped your outlook on the function and relevance of museums? Explain how you have seen museums engage with their various audiences, stakeholders, or communities.**

Feel free to draw from personal experiences of visits to museums or volunteer/paid positions you have held or current events or other instances of museum engagement you have learned about in your studies. Be analytical. Use your essay to help the Admissions Committee better understand your worldview and how you think critically and comparatively about museums and your career objectives in them. We realize you may not have museum work experience, so we want to know how you envision approaching museum studies and your unique perspective as an emergent scholar. We also want to see how well you write. Feel free to cite and support your essay with representational examples from museums, related socio-cultural or political events, your educational and disciplinary expertise, and/or interventions that you see are necessary in the field.

We will evaluate your work based on the clarity of your vision, the relative support for your perspective and claims, and your passion for the field as an incoming scholar. We encourage you to think critically about your areas of interest and how your experience, broadly conceived, offers a fresh perspective to an incoming graduate cohort in Museum Studies at KU. Cogency and clarity are at least as important as content.

Topics you might consider, but certainly are not limited to: ethical responsibility to the community; programming surrounding collections and holdings; acquisition practices and repatriation of collections; ecology and the environment; ethics/legal aspects of collecting, exhibiting, or storing materials; how museums create knowledge; the role of objects in deepening people's capacity for self-awareness.

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