

IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Curator, Museum Collections Engagement	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
71-3508	Yellowknife	Culture and Heritage/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Curator, Museum Collections Engagement is responsible for research and outreach activities involving the permanent museum collections at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. The Curator leads and manages research activities to support use and development of the museum collection, including the development of exhibits within the facility.

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC), the Curator, Museum Collections Engagement (Curator) reports to the Manager, Museum Collections, and initiates in-house and external collaborative collection research, acquisition, and access projects, and has signing authority up to \$10,000.

The Northwest Territories (NWT) museum collection contains over 77,000 objects, artifacts and specimens of human history, archaeology, and natural history from all geographic regions of the NWT. While many of the objects are irreplaceable, the museum collections are valued at over \$13M.

The Curator is responsible for creating a plan for research and development of the PWNHC museum collection. By engaging with community stakeholders, other heritage institutions, and based on a strong knowledge of NWT culture and history, the Curator will create and lead projects that add to the knowledge of current collections and the acquisition of new materials to represent the history, and cultural identity of the NWT.

This position will be required to travel to NWT communities and to undertake community-based research activities. Incumbents may be required to assist with moving objects and storage boxes, lifting up to 40 pounds and using 8-foot ladders in the museum collections storerooms.



RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Plays a central role in in-house exhibition development at the PWNHC.

- Regularly creates and leads in-house exhibit projects.
- Participates as a key member of the Experience Working Group to guide exhibit planning and selection for the PWNHC.
- Brings an understanding of the PWNHC collections and a general understanding of NWT culture and history to help shape overall storyline of PWNHC galleries and exhibits.
- Recommends topics and objects for exhibition based on knowledge of the collection.
- Collaborates with colleagues and external stakeholders on exhibits projects.
- Writes storylines and/or contributes storyline research.
- Selects, interprets, and provides contextual insights into objects intended for exhibition.
- Assists with collecting objects when required to supplement planned exhibitions.

2. Creates and coordinates collections outreach activities to increase awareness of the PWNHC collection and to engage with Indigenous and other community members to increase engagement with the museum collections.

- Maintains relationships with NWT Indigenous communities and key stakeholders as they relate to museum collections.
- Keeps up to date on museum and heritage centre activities throughout the territory.
- Works with community members to collect and acquire new objects for the PWNHC.

3. Initiates and coordinates research activities involving the PWNHC museum collections to add to knowledge about the territory's material culture and history.

- Builds and maintains working relationships with NWT communities related to objects, collections and projects related to material culture.
- Plans and undertakes community-based research projects that add to the knowledge of the museum collection.
- Plans and undertakes research activities to strategically acquire new objects or collections for the PWNHC.
- Actively engages, conducts and directs collections research activities on single objects, or groups of objects from (or potentially for) the collection in order to gain knowledge about the collection and NWT culture, history and heritage.
- Keeps abreast of research on material culture and art related to NWT collections.
- Keeps abreast of current museum practices and innovations in collections management. This includes determining what material culture and what information is valued by constituencies, and how it is collected and recorded.
- Conducts research projects on the NWT-related holdings in museums outside the NWT.
- Seeks external funding and prepares funding applications for projects when necessary.



4. Contributes to the acquisition of new museum objects for the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

- Develops and implements object acquisition strategies for the PWNHC in accordance with divisional and institutional plans.
- Works with community members to collect and acquire new objects for the PWNHC.
- Assesses and makes recommendations on potential acquisitions based on their significance, suitability, and potential contribution to the PWNHC collection.
- Contacts, corresponds, and negotiates with donors and vendors to ensure that information is gathered, and that items are authentic, legally acquired, and that title of ownership is transferred to the GNWT.
- Co-chairs, with the Manager, Museum Collections the internal Acquisitions Committee to solicit feedback on object acquisition.
- Issues Official Donation Receipts for appraised object donations, according to Revenue Canada regulations.
- Applies the laws of the Northwest Territories, Canada and other countries as they relate to the acquisition, transport, import, export, and use of objects and collection.
- Maintains an overall understanding of where NWT collections exist in institutions outside of the NWT and fosters relationships with these institutions.
- Maintains an awareness of NWT heritage centres and provides advice.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

No unusual demands.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of northern North American cultures as well as history of the North and an understanding of its unique social and cultural conditions.
- Knowledge of museum collections theory, standards, practices and procedures.
- Knowledge of collections management theory and practice.



- Specialized knowledge in one of the disciplines represented in the museum collection (e.g., art history, anthropology, history, archaeology, earth sciences) and general knowledge of the other human and natural history disciplines.
- Knowledge of collections management software and database management principles.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire knowledge of territorial, federal and international legislation, regulations and policies related to heritage resources, natural resources, museum and art objects and their application to the activities of the Division.
- Skills handling and interpreting cultural objects (artifacts, clothing, tools, art, etc.).
- Ability to work in cross-cultural environments and to become informed and follow various cultural protocols.
- Ability to design and execute academic research projects.
- Organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Budgeting, financial management and administrative skills.
- Communication skills, including writing skills and public speaking.
- Supervisory/management skills.
- Research, analysis, problem solving and practical application of research to the preservation of collections.
- Ability to interpret preventative conservation concepts, including pest management.
- Ability to define strategic objectives, develop strategic plans and implement solutions; specifically the ability to make strategic decisions about the future direction of the museum collections.
- Ability to work collaboratively and to listen, and act with tact and diplomacy.
- Ability to travel, to work with project teams, community groups and heritage organizations, and to host delegations at the PWNHC.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A degree in anthropology, art history, information studies, history, or a related field, and two (2) years of experience researching and presenting culture in a museum.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The incumbent will be required to obtain Restricted and Non-Restricted firearms licenses.

Position Security

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check



French language (check one if applicable)

☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

☒ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

☐ Required

☒ Preferred