

## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Senior Conservator	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
71-3716	Yellowknife	Culture and Heritage / HQ

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Conservator is responsible for preserving and conserving the archival and museum collections at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in accordance with established practices, ethics, and standards of conservation science, to ensure the safety and integrity of these Government of the Northwest Territories assets.

## SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC), the Senior Conservator reports to the Director, Culture and Heritage, and monitors and safeguards the material condition and physical care of collections of over 77,000 museum objects and the Northwest Territories (NWT) Archives holdings. This is done primarily by taking preventative actions, and, when necessary, executing treatments.

The Senior Conservator manages the conservation program with a budget of approximately \$18,000, and has signing authority up to \$10,000. The incumbent supervises staff working on special projects, interns, and casual employees. While many of the objects and archives are irreplaceable, the collections under the Senior Conservator's care are valued at over \$26 million.

The duties of the Senior Conservator enable the Division to fulfill its responsibilities under the *Archives Act*, the GNWT Heritage Services Policy, as well as requirements of the Code of Ethics and Guidance for Practice of the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property and of the Canadian Association of Professional Conservators.

The incumbent works in the conservation lab all day, with some work in the archives and museum collections storerooms as well as galleries. The incumbent works in the government warehouse twice a month.

The job includes moving objects (up to 10lbs daily), storage boxes (up to 40lbs, once a week), and using up to 8-foot ladders once a week. Treating objects may involve stretching, standing, and moving objects once a week.

On occasion the incumbent is required to travel for the purpose of packing and shipping materials or giving workshops in small communities (1-2 times per year). Periodically the Senior Conservator may be asked to provide onsite conservation assistance, and this will require working in remote locations in a non-traditional lab or office setting including archaeological sites (less than once a year).

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Oversees the physical preservation of the museum and archival collections at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC).**

- Ensures that the preventative conservation and treatment needs of the museum and archival collections are identified and addressed, working with the Curator, Museum Collections, and the Territorial Archivist.
- Identifies and prioritizes conservation needs of museum and archival collections including storage and housing, equipment needs, and sets environmental standards.
- Working with the Manager of Exhibits, plans for and addresses conservation requirements for the exhibit or display of artifacts/archival materials and materials on loan from other institutions and/or individuals.
- Arranges for and or undertakes inspections, condition reporting, and treatments as required for preservation of collections.
- Keeps abreast of current research and practices in the conservation field and applies this knowledge to the job.
- Works closely with and occasionally mentors all Culture and Heritage staff on conservation matters.
- Maintains conservation-related information for preservation management and collection documentation in fields on NWT Archives and Museum databases.
- Collaborates with the Curator, Museum Collections, and territorial Archivist to manage risks to the collections, and to implement recommendations for preservation including storage upgrades, housing and treatments.

### **2. Administers the conservation program.**

- Develops, reviews, and updates policies, directives, guidelines, and procedures for conservation work at the PWNHC.
- Establishes program priorities and objectives for Business Plan, Main Estimates, Strategic Plan and other planning and organizational activities of the Division/ECE.
- Develops and manages an annual O&M budget and seeks third party project funding when necessary.



- Works with the Curator, Museum Collections and Territorial Archivist to ensure that collections database functions to meet conservation documentation and management standards.
- Reviews NWT Archaeologist permit applications to ensure archaeologists address conservation/preservation requirements of collections being excavated in the Northwest Territories, according to the *Archaeological Sites Act* and Regulations.
- Provides conservation advice, services, and expertise to the Division, other GNWT departments, land claim and self-government organizations and community heritage groups.
- Manages and supervises staff such as interns and by assigning tasks, works plans, schedules, and monitoring work.
- Develops and facilitates training seminars, discussions and presentations for community museums and in-house staff.

### **3. Advises on environmental and system requirements to building systems at the PWNHC.**

- Advises on environmental systems and requirements to ensure the facility maintains proper environmental standards for collections.
- Works with Assistant Director to ensure the PWNHC has an up to date Integrated Pest Management Plan, and that the plan is executed, including the treatment of infested materials.
- Assists the Assistant Director in emergency response planning and recovery, including ensuring staff are trained in emergency response procedures related to the safeguarding of museum and archival collections.

## **WORKING CONDITIONS**

### **Physical Demands**

No unusual demands.

### **Environmental Conditions**

The incumbent may be exposed to hazardous chemicals and materials such as dust, mold, or toxic materials from contact with objects, and is required to follow proper safety measures.

### **Sensory Demands**

Many daily tasks require meticulous attention to detail and focused concentration. The incumbent uses multiple senses including the sense of smell to detect environmental and potential conservation problems with archival and other objects. The incumbent requires a high degree of manual dexterity to perform precise techniques in the treatment of artifacts and archival material.

### **Mental Demands**

No unusual demands.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Knowledge of conservation philosophy, procedures, and codes of conduct and ethics and museum/archival collections preservation management.
- Knowledge of museum and archival practices and industry standards.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire and apply knowledge of the cultures and history of the North.
- Knowledge and skills relating to information management software for preservation management.
- Organizational skills and attention to detail
- Financial management and administrative skills.
- Verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Ability to supervisor, guide and mentor persons in developing roles.
- Research, analysis, problem solving and practical application of research to the preservation of collections.
- Interpersonal and collaboration skills.
- Ability to interpret, analyze and apply conservation theory, standards and practice.
- Ability to define strategic objectives, develop strategic plans and implement solutions.
- Ability to deal with stressful situations in the event of a disaster.
- Ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively and to act with tact and diplomacy.
- 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 Master's degree in Conservation plus three (3) years of experience working in the field of Conservation in a museum or archives.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **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