



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Museum Collections Officer	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
71-6536	Yellowknife	Culture and Heritage / HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Museum Collections Officer is responsible for physical object retrieval and supporting the museum collections program at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

SCOPE

Located at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC) in Yellowknife, the Museum Collections Officer reports to the Manager, Museum Collections (Manager), and is responsible for collections management actions, such as accessioning and cataloguing museum objects, digital photography, and inventory control, as well as updating collections records using established procedures. As a regular part of operations, the incumbent supports the Manager in carrying out collections management activities.

The Museum Collections Officer is responsible for photo-documenting objects, managing master images, and uploading versions onto the collection database, and contributes to making museum collections and their information accessible to a broad range of clients by responding to inquiries, taking digital images for a variety of uses (e.g., for study, for publication), and by preparing written content for web sites and exhibitions. A significant activity is facilitating on-site access for clients to the museum collections.

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.



Collections management encompasses the body of museum theory, standards, practices and procedures relating to the acquisition and development of collections, their documentation, care, preservation, inventory, security, access and use. Under the Heritage Services Policy, the Museum Collections Program acquires and manages a museum collection of objects and specimens representing the cultures, history and natural history of the NWT. The program is the repository for archaeological material, collected under the Northwest Territories Archaeological Sites Regulations. Through loans, the Program provides safekeeping for objects belonging to other organizations and lends Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) museum objects to researchers and other organizations. Collections Program staff work with collections management information systems, both automated and manual, and contribute to maintaining and developing information in the collection database.

As part of the Collections team, the Museum Collections Officer provides information services and assistance to PWNHC staff, the general public, researchers, donors, lenders, borrowers, educational groups, other museums, Indigenous cultural organizations and community heritage organizations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Perform collections management actions to contribute to a well-documented and accessible museum collection.

- Support the Manager, Museum Collections with collection acquisitions by handling potential acquisitions, accessioning new acquisitions, preparing ownership documentation and other permanent records filed in the accession file.
- Document objects and specimens by examining, cataloguing, measuring, describing and photographing them and applying catalogue numbers. Apply established standards and rules for classifications, terminology and data formats.
- Contribute to maintaining and improving database records for objects by updating records, editing and adding new information.
- Perform documentation checks on objects in preparation for exhibitions and loans.
- Support the Manager, Museum Collections with loans by preparing loan agreements, object lists and values, and processing returning objects by inventorying, readying them for storage, and resolving discrepancies with borrowers. Liaise with Exhibits Program staff to ensure inward exhibition loan agreement paperwork is complete and up to date.
- Reconcile and close returned loans.
- Arrange shipping of outgoing collection loans.
- Conduct inventory checks in the collection storerooms and update records with results.
- Perform routine backups and utility maintenance of databases.
- Conduct research and order specialized supplies for storing collections.
- Help monitor new staff in collections tasks and database procedures; may oversee the work of casual staff.



- Make recommendations to the Manager on work priorities and procedures.
- Maintain and revise the Collection Management Procedures Manual used by Collections staff. Maintain and revise data dictionaries that contain standards and rules to guide data entry and retrieval.
- Inventories and accessions deposits of archaeology permit collections; ensures that final catalogues are received; ensures all artifacts are received; and follows up with permit holder on discrepancies. Ensures that final catalogues are labeled and entered in the relevant database.

2. Maintain a filing system for images and provide collection object photographic services.

- Photograph museum objects using studio lighting and equipment.
- Manage a filing system of master object image files, reformats data and edit digital images to meet user needs.
- Produce images for documentation, for websites, for exhibitions, publication and for staff and clients' uses.
- Photograph exhibitions containing PWNHC collection objects, and maintain a visual inventory binder of those exhibitions, providing inventory control and a long-term record of exhibition change.
- Conduct research and purchase photography equipment and imaging software.

3. Oversee physical access to collections storerooms and the movement, storage and disposition of objects to prevent damage, maintain security and location control.

- Assemble, adjust and prepare storage shelves to receive collections.
- Select storage locations appropriate for new acquisitions, in collaboration with the Senior Conservator if required.
- In collaboration with the Senior Conservator, prepare objects for storage by constructing mounts, boxes, and by using other types of supports and packing.
- Participate in storage upgrade projects in collaboration with the Senior Conservator and the Collections team.
- Employ safe object handling techniques, move objects to and from storage areas, exhibition areas and other parts of the facility.
- Record location changes for objects and keep records up to date.
- Apply principles of preventative conservation in collaboration with the Manager and Senior Conservator, including actioning preventative pest management procedures.
- Assist and monitor researchers using museum collections.
- Maintain the collections storerooms and registration room in good order.
- Monitor the access and activities of non-program staff and contractors in the program area.



4. As a member of the Collections team, provide services and information to the Division, the public, and clients to contribute to the mandate and objectives of the Division and to facilitate physical and intellectual access to the collections.

- Analyze requests and respond to inquiries for information about objects in the collection.
- Prepare and/or coordinate preparation of collections and their information for use by visiting researchers.
- Follow institutional policies on uses of recorded information and copyright issues.
- Plan and deliver tours of the collection storerooms for groups and individuals.
- Research and interpret objects, write, and edit exhibition texts and media content (e.g., for websites).
- On a project basis, lead and co-ordinate development of in-house exhibitions.
- Participate in various committees of the Division (e.g., Safety) and other in-house project teams. Take minutes for Acquisitions Committee meetings.
- Coordinate and track the filing of operational records including Reference files and books, Collections Use & Inquires, Potential Acquisitions, and Temporary Deposit files.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

The incumbent is required to lift and handle museum objects, boxes and shipping crates, and to assist other staff with moving objects, boxes and crates. Objects and boxes may be heavy and/or awkward to move or very fragile. Retrieving objects from high shelves in storage units can be difficult and requires maneuvering a roller ladder into the appropriate location, climbing/descending the ladder steps carrying objects or boxes. Adjusting and changing components of metal storage units is physically demanding, especially when working high up or with arms raised. Activities in the Government Warehouse collections storage area often involve accessing or retrieving large objects, crates and boxes. Moderate 2-4 hours/day.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions

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.

Mental Demands

No unusual demands



KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of museum principles, practices, procedures and preventative conservation.
- Knowledge of and skills in digital photography techniques, studio lighting and files management using digital imaging software (e.g., Photoshop).
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire and apply knowledge of northern history, cultures and natural history for cataloguing, responding to inquiries, and writing exhibit texts.
- Knowledge of museum classification and terminology systems.
- Knowledge of procedures regarding access to information and copyright.
- Written and verbal communication skills, including technical writing and ability to speak to groups.
- Facilitation skills to train staff and provide oversight to collections activities
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a team, and to organize efficiently, set priorities and accomplish work goals.
- Ability to recognize and solve problems.
- Ability to apply standards and practices to collection management activities.
- Ability to concentrate on numbers and to record them accurately.
- Ability to recognize conservation concerns with museum collections.
- 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:

An undergraduate degree in museum studies or in a related field (such as history, anthropology, archaeology, cultural studies, Northern studies) that includes courses in museum theory and collections management, plus one (1) year of experience working in collections management at a museum or art gallery.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The incumbent will be required to obtain restricted and non-restricted firearms licenses to handle items from the collection. This is a requirement of the job.

The incumbent will be required to obtain certification in Standard First Aid and CPR/AED.



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