



## 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 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 and Senior Conservator to carry out collections management activities.

The Museum Collections Officer has the sole responsibility of photo-documenting objects, managing master images, and uploading versions onto the collection database, and the incumbent 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 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 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. Performs collections management actions to contribute to a well-documented and accessible museum collection.**

- Prepares accession records for new acquisitions, as well as ownership documentation, conveyance documentation, and other permanent records filed in the accession file.
- Documents objects and specimens by examining, cataloguing, measuring, describing and photographing them and applying catalogue numbers. Applies established standards and rules for classifications, terminology and data formats.
- Contributes to maintaining and improving database records for objects by updating records, editing and adding new information.
- Performs documentation checks on objects in preparation for exhibitions and loans.
- Assists 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. Liaises with Exhibits Program staff to ensure inward exhibition loan agreement paperwork is complete and up to date.
- Reconciles and closes returned loans.
- Arranges shipping of outgoing collection loans.
- Conducts inventory checks in the collection storerooms and updates records with results.
- Performs routine backups and utility maintenance of databases.
- Conducts research and orders specialized supplies for storing collections.
- Makes recommendations to the Manager, Museum Collections on work priorities and procedures.
- Helps monitor new staff in collections tasks and database procedures; may oversee the work of casual staff.



- Maintains and revises the Collection Management Procedures Manual used by Collections staff.
- Maintains and revises data dictionaries that contain standards and rules to guide data entry and retrieval.
- Inventories and accessions deposits of archaeology permit collections; ensure 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. Maintains a filing system for images and provides collection object photographic services.**

- Photographs museum objects using studio lighting and equipment.
- Manages a filing system of master object image files, reformats data and edits digital images to meet user needs.
- Produces images for documentation, for websites, for exhibitions, publication and for staff and clients' uses.
- Photographs exhibitions containing PWNHC collection objects, and maintains a visual inventory binder of those exhibitions, providing inventory control and a long-term record of exhibition change.
- Conducts research and purchases photography equipment and imaging software.

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

- Assembles, adjusts and prepares storage shelves to receive collections.
- In consultation with the Senior Conservator, selects storage locations appropriate for new acquisitions, and actions necessary pest management procedures.
- Under the direction of the Senior Conservator, prepares objects for storage by constructing mounts, boxes, and by using other types of supports and packing.
- Participates in storage upgrade projects in collaboration with the Senior Conservator and the Collections team.
- Employing safe object handling techniques, moves objects to and from storage areas, exhibition areas and other parts of the facility.
- Records location changes for objects and keeps records up to date.
- Applies principles of preventative conservation as directed by the Senior Conservator.
- Assists and monitors researchers using museum collections.
- Maintains the collections storerooms and registration room in good order.
- Monitors the access and activities of non-program staff and contractors in the program area.



**4. As a member of the Collections team, provides 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.**

- Analyzes requests and responds to inquiries for information about objects in the collection.
- Prepares and/or coordinates preparation of collections and their information for use by visiting researchers.
- Follows institutional policies on uses of recorded information and copyright issues.
- Plans and delivers tours of the collection storerooms for groups and individuals.
- Researches and interprets objects, writes, and edits exhibition texts and media content (e.g., for websites).
- On a project basis, leads and co-ordinates development of in-house exhibitions.
- Participates in various committees of the Division (e.g., Safety) and other in-house project teams. Takes minutes for Collections Committee and Acquisitions Committee meetings.
- Coordinates and tracks 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.

### **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:** Indigenous Language - Not Specified

- ☐ Required  
☒ Preferred