

Job description/Person specification

(For HR Use only)

Job number for CIPHR:

Job title: Keeper of Africa Oceania and the Americas

Reports to: Director of Collection

Grade: M4

Department: Africa Oceania and the Americas

Term: Permanent

Main purpose of job

The Keeper of Africa Oceania and the Americas is a specialist of academic distinction that leads and manages the department of Africa Oceania and the Americas. The role is responsible for overseeing the department's curatorial and academic work, including the care of an internationally important collection. Required to manage, mentor, and inspire a team of curators and other staff, the postholder is expected to participate widely in support of the Museum's goals and objectives, including representing the Museum both in the UK and abroad.

Key responsibilities (in order of priority)

- Ensure the safety and security of the relevant parts of the collection, in line with agreed standards, strategies, processes and procedures, and in collaboration with other expert colleagues from across the Museum.
- Lead and engage the department in the development of ideas and plans in support of the Museum's core aims and objectives and, in so doing, further the care and increased understanding of the collection and engagement with it by a wide public. Recruit, develop and motivate a team of curators and other staff, in line with the goals and requirements of the Museum. Provide guidance and support to curatorial colleagues who will be at different stages of their academic career, ensuring high quality research and engagement outputs, and with a view to succession planning and the Museum's future.
- Work openly and collaboratively with colleagues across the Museum to ensure appropriate care, documentation, curation, and presentation of the collection, in line with Museum values.
- Work with the Head of Research and the Research Board to ensure research activity is in accordance with strategic objectives and is financially sustainable.
- Develop strong partnerships and collaborations and maintain positive relations with external colleagues and stakeholders. These will include, but are not limited to, academic peers, international and national museum partners, governments and official bodies, communities, and supporters. Deliver high-profile advocacy for the Museum locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Support the Directorate in the management of major collection issues, including questions of strategic importance and with significant risk profile.
- Ensure the collection is strengthened through appropriate acquisitions. Working closely with BM colleagues and external partners, actively support wide public engagement with the collection and the Museum's work through exhibitions and displays, public programming, loans, acquisitions, publications, press and communications, broadcast, digital platforms, and via other appropriate means.
- Support the generation of financial support, in consultation and collaboration with the Advancement department, to further delivery of Museum priorities, e.g. delivering the Masterplan, relieving core budgets, and advancing the research programme.

- Share your deep understanding of museums and relevant best practise across museum disciplines beyond collections and research, mentor colleagues, and act as an adviser as required, internally and externally; nationally and internationally.
- Be responsible for the operations of the department and its projects, in line with Museum procedures, protocols, and processes. This includes management of a department budget and relevant project budgets. Take on other relevant projects and duties as assigned, including occasional overseas travel and some out of hours and/or evening responsibilities.

What are the main work pressures and challenges?

- Effectively manage, develop, and motivate colleagues and prepare the department for and ensure delivery of Museum strategic aims and objectives, e.g. the Masterplan.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across the organisation to fulfil the Museum's goals and objectives. Cultivate and maintain collaborative relationships with colleagues around the UK and internationally.
- Support the Museum's public engagement programme, including development of exhibitions and new permanent galleries.
- Leadership and delivery of strategically significant and innovative projects to required standards, on time and within budget.
- Management of key international relationships and potentially high-profile reputational issues.
- Sustaining an international professional reputation and research output within a complex working environment.
- Make well informed proposals with external implications.

What are the performance targets or standards?

- Ensuring safety and security of the collection to agreed standards.
- Shaping the department intellectually to enable the delivery of Museum objectives, including Masterplan.
- Developing plans to drive the development of curatorial and research content that supports the Museum's engagement with audiences.
- Sustaining a vibrant and high-profile research programme with defined outputs that secures major funding awards.
- Developing succession plans for managerial and academic leadership across the department.

Who are the main contacts of the jobholder and what are the relationships to these contacts?

Departmental staff: Managing, leading.

Trustees: Advising

Director: Advising

Director of Collections: Reporting, advising

Directorate Group: Advising

Heads of Departments: Advising, influencing, collaborating

External stakeholders: Influencing, collaborating.

Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Education - levels & subjects	Degree educated or equivalent in a relevant subject.	Postgraduate educated in a subject area relevant to the departments' collection.
Other qualifications	Membership of relevant learned and professional societies.	Management or leadership qualifications. Expertise formally recognised by a major body of national or international authority, e.g. a prize or fellowship of a distinguished learned society.
Specific technical/professional skills & experience	Evidence of international recognition as a scholar in a relevant field. Excellent understanding of the Museum and wider academic and cultural world, in one or more areas relevant to the Museum's collection. Principal investigator of a major research project. Experience of major income generation and liaising with external funders. Experienced public speaker. Communicating with academic and wider audiences.	Experience of broadcast media and issues-based advocacy.
Work experience, likely former jobs	Senior curatorial or research role in a major museum or cultural institution.	Head of department in a major museum or cultural institution. Experience working in large and complex organisations.
Specific managerial skills	Significant management experience and a proven track record of managing high-performance teams Proven ability to lead, influence, negotiate and work collaboratively across a complex organisation. Demonstrable success in getting staff and peers to	Experience of leading a complex department in a major museum Experience of leading complex projects with a wide range of international stakeholders Experience of dealing with high level funders and external supporters

	<p>work together for the benefit of the wider institution.</p> <p>A strategic and analytical approach, and able to demonstrate excellent judgement.</p> <p>Proven track record in strategic development</p> <p>Significant experience of budget management</p> <p>Experience of delivering and managing effective change</p> <p>Experience of managing stakeholders with conflicting priorities</p> <p>Excellent prioritisation and organisational skills</p>	
Specific interpersonal skills	<p>Demonstrably good presentation and interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate confidently, effectively, and persuasively at a senior level.</p> <p>Diplomatic and calm under pressure.</p> <p>A good communicator, with an open and inclusive style which inspires trust.</p> <p>Enthusiasm for the cultural sector.</p> <p>Ability to work in a complex and intellectually rigorous environment.</p>	
Publications record (if appropriate)	<p>Significant publications resulting from a major externally funded research project.</p>	<p>Groundbreaking publications and peer-reviewed research on the British Museum's Collection.</p>

Prepared by: Acting Director of Collection

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