

Job description

Job title:	Senior Curator – Yorkshire Museum		
Department:	Collections	Contract:	Permanent
Reporting To:	Head of Collections and Research	Hours per week:	37

1. Job purpose

To build on Yorkshire Museum’s position of excellence delivering audience-focused accessible, enjoyable, object-rich and educational displays and exhibitions.

To guide and ensure the delivery of curatorial projects that are visitor-focused and build the reputation of York Museums Trust with collectors, partners, stakeholders, and professionals.

To lead the curatorial and collections staff based at the Yorkshire Museum in the care, development, interpretation, management and research of the collections on display and in storage.

2. Dimensions

Budgets and financials

- Responsible for dedicated curatorial site budget up to £25,000 and for the joint management and administration of shared curatorial budgets up to £40,000, including managing budgets as seed and match funding for grant applications and fundraising campaigns for acquisitions and conservation projects
- Responsible for spend against temporary exhibition budgets up to £100,000
- Support the development of planned capital developments in line with York Museums Trust’s business and operational plans
- Act as a principal advocate for Yorkshire Museum

Public programme

- Lead the team in, and ensure the delivery of, a rolling programme of temporary exhibitions and rotated permanent displays

Line Management

- Line management of the Yorkshire Museums curatorial and collections team including the Curator of Archaeology, Curator of Natural Science, Associate Collections Curators, and Portable Antiquities Finds Liaison Officer, including carrying out annual reviews, setting work plans and objectives, and ensuring CPD for team members
- Co-ordinate and supervise freelance curators, project staff and technicians
- Supervise volunteers, interns and student placements

3. Principal accountabilities

Programming, interpretation and learning

- Ensure the development of a dynamic, coherent and target audience-focussed public programme at the Yorkshire Museum, engaging visitors, driving footfall, drawing on and enhancing the knowledge and expertise of the curatorial team, and generating revenue through the creation of high quality, audience focussed content and experiences
- Support the development of Yorkshire Museum visitor experience and reputation to ensure that YM maximises its opportunities to engage audiences with the collections and exhibitions.
- Support the development of planned capital programmes including exhibition space and collections storage improvements in line with YMT Business priorities
- Continue to build Yorkshire Museum's position of excellence delivering innovative, visitor-focused temporary exhibitions and displays with lively and accessible interpretation, drawing on own and team professional expertise and knowledge
- Ensure strategic Yorkshire Museum contributions to our audience's understanding and enjoyment of the Yorkshire Museum collections through events and learning by working closely with other managers in the Learning team and across YMT to maximise public impact
- Contribute to the development of formal and informal learning programmes and interpretation, in liaison with the Participation and Visitor Experience teams.

Collections management and development

- Ensure that collections are developed, managed, and documented to the appropriate sector standards and YMT internal policies
- Support access to collections through digital, physical, and intellectual means including loans out, volunteer activities, online projects, and research programmes
- Deal with loans in and out from the collections in liaison with the Registrar
- Ensure collections are handled, stored and treated to best practice standards
- Ensure the collections team and partners internally and externally have opportunities to develop the excellence of our knowledge about our collections and that collections development and research furthers YMT's Forward Plan
- Provide knowledge, advice and guidance about the historic fabric of the building to ensure it is managed and cared for appropriately

Advocacy

- To be an advocate for YMT and the Yorkshire Museum by taking a lead with key organisations locally and regionally as well as within the sector nationally and internationally
- To represent Yorkshire Museum internally and externally building and maintaining Yorkshire Museum's reputation with collectors, partners, stakeholders and professionals

Research

- Develop and implement a strategy and plan for ongoing research on the Yorkshire Museum collections that has a measurable public output to defined target audiences
- Maintain and further effective partnerships with Higher and FE organisations, individual academic contacts and with other institutions for the purposes of research
- Champion research that addresses sustainability, equality, diversity and anti-racism

Partnerships

- Liaise with the Yorkshire Philosophical Society and its members to ensure the delivery of joint projects that are effectively prioritised and mutually beneficial

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- Develop effective partnerships with organisations including national museums and specialist networks
- Cultivate and maintain relations with potential and existing donors

Volunteer Programme

- Work with the Volunteers Coordinator to devise projects, recruit volunteers, supervise and evaluate projects with the Yorkshire Museum collections including 'Hands On Here'

Fundraising

- Seek and secure funding through applications to Trusts and Foundations, as well as asks to businesses and private individuals, in order to increase resources available for public programmes, acquisitions and collection management

Management

- Manage the Yorkshire Museum curatorial and collections team including developing team plans and setting individual work plans and SMART objectives in line with delivery of YMT Business Plan.
- Ensure development opportunities for the team.
- Oversee expenditure on exhibition budgets and manage team budgets within the set limits
- Represent Yorkshire Museum in external forums, including YPS, being an effective advocate for YMT
- Work collegiately with the other Senior Curators to ensure teams work together jointly and collectively to maximise efficiencies and support agile and flexible ways of working.
- Represent the collections teams at the Yorkshire Museum in wider forums within YMT
- Contribute to the continued development of the Trust by working with other managers and attending management and senior meetings as appropriate, ensuring good two-way communication
- The Senior Curator works closely with the Museum Manager, and Facilities Manager on all aspects of the building particularly security and environmental requirements

CPD

- Implement and regularly update an active CPD programme for yourself and the YM curatorial teams

Other duties

- To promote and develop equality and diversity in line with YMT Equality Statement
- You may from time to time be required to undertake such other duties of a similar nature which fall within the job purpose outlined above and which are consistent with the grading of the post.

4. Key performance measures

Curatorial measures

- Collections and Curatorial Team plan developed in line with York Museums Trust's organisational strategy and plan, and delivered through working with Curatorial Management Team
- Yorkshire Museum Curatorial Team plan developed and delivered effectively and efficiently
- Maintain and increase visitor satisfaction and engagement at YM (NPS and Impact and Insight assessments)

Organisational Key Performance Indicators

People management
Collections management
Exhibitions and programming
Research
Fundraising

5. Knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours

Knowledge

- Degree in appropriate subject
- Postgraduate qualification, or equivalent experience
- Significant experience of managing collections
- Knowledge of documentation systems and conservation issues for archaeological, biological, geological, and numismatic collections
- Expert knowledge of at least one of archaeology, biology, geology, and numismatics with specialist interests relevant to the Yorkshire Museum site and collections

Skills

- Creativity – ability to generate original ideas and find innovative solutions to problems
- Interpersonal skills – ability to work collaboratively and in partnership with individuals within YMT and outside of the organisation to get the best results
- Analytical / critical thinking - use reasoning and logic to evaluate and interrogate sources, data, and research and put forward compelling perspectives and arguments
- Communication skills – ability to communicate complex information to a variety of specialist and non-specialist audiences in verbal and written form. Strong writing skills with an ability to write for a variety of audiences and learning styles
- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Ability to embrace change and work flexibly and in an agile manner, responding quickly and effectively to opportunities as they arise.
- Active learning with a growth mind set - desire to learn and grow, to take on challenges, learn from mistakes and actively seek new knowledge.
- Digital skills - a good level of digital literacy and willing and able to utilise new technology to be most effective in the workplace
- Ability to work responsibly, meeting targets as part of a team and on individual initiative
- Personable and a team player
- Leadership skills - ability to take the initiative, supervise, lead, and motivate people, providing ongoing direction and support, communicating organisational priorities
- Project and budget management skills
- Team management and development skills, with an ability to identify skills gaps, training needs, and develop succession plans

Experience

- Significant experience of exhibition development, delivery and project management, working with external contractors
- Project management experience and demonstrable track record on significant projects
- Experience planning and managing budgets
- Significant experience of collections' management and documentation
- Experience of working with volunteers

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Behaviours

- Commitment to and advocacy of equality, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism and understanding how these apply to the role
- Actively engaging in Continuous Professional Development for self and others
- Strong commitment to collections' interpretation and their ability to engage and stimulate audiences
- Flexible attitude towards performing tasks
- Proven team player

6. Key relationships

- Chief Executive
- Head of Collections and Research
- Senior Leadership Team
- Senior Curators of York Castle Museum and York Art Gallery
- Registrar
- Curator of Archaeology
- Curator of Natural Science
- Finds Liaison Officer
- Associate Collections Curators
- Public Engagement Team
- Communications Team
- Digital Team

7. Organisation chart

