

Job description

Job title:	Curator of Contemporary Art		
Department:	Collections and Research	Contract:	Fixed Term, Maternity Cover (12 months)
Reporting To:	Senior Curator (York Art Gallery)	Hours per week:	30 hours

1. Job purpose

To lead the development and delivery of high-quality, audience-focused exhibitions, displays, and immersive experiences, particularly focusing on contemporary art and new media.
To care for, share and develop York Art Gallery's contemporary Fine Art collection through research, interpretation and management.

2. Dimensions

Budgets

Manage temporary exhibition budgets up to c.£100,000

Line Management

Supervise project staff and technicians

Supervise volunteers, interns and student placements, as required

Role Impact

Responsible for developing and delivering the exhibition programme, displays and immersive experiences that focus on contemporary, digital and new media art, to meet organisational priorities

Ensure YMT adheres to Arts Council England and other strategic priorities, particularly York's UNESCO City of Media Arts designation

3. Principal accountabilities

Core duties

- To identify opportunities and develop proposals for temporary exhibitions at YAG that deliver against YMT organisational and audience priorities, particularly focusing on digital and new media art
- To create high-quality content for exhibitions, displays, programming and social media that shares and interprets YAG's Fine Art collection, with a focus on new media art
- To support the Senior Curator and Curator of Fine Art in the development of YAG's Fine Art collection in line with the Collections Development Policy, leading on contemporary and new media art
- To support the Programme Manager: Exhibitions in delivering a programme of temporary exhibitions focusing on digital and new media art
- To deliver expert talks and tours
- To care for YAG's contemporary Fine Art collection

Exhibitions programme

- Work with colleagues, partners and artists to shape a dynamic public programme, including innovative contemporary and new media temporary exhibitions and displays
- Research and prepare exhibition texts and interpretation to ensure that displays and exhibitions engage a variety of audiences and learning styles
- Interpret the contemporary Fine Art collection through social media content, talks, seminars, events and public enquiries
- Bring new perspectives to the contemporary Fine Art collection through research, collaboration and through supporting emerging artists

Collections management

- To implement a programme of ongoing and retrospective acquisitions, conservation, documentation and storage for YAG's contemporary Fine Art collection
- To deal with loans in and out from the permanent collection, in liaison with the Registrar
- To support the Senior Curator and Curator of Fine Art to develop and deliver YAG's Collections Development Policy, ensuring equality and diversity are embedded values in future collecting practice

Advocacy

- To be an advocate for new media and contemporary art and artists by taking a lead locally, regionally, nationally and internationally

Research

- Implement a plan of ongoing research on the contemporary Fine Art collection that has a measurable public output to defined target audiences

Acquisitions

- Acquire new works for the collection in line with the agreed Collections Development Policy, liaising with YMT's Development team to secure funding from both public and private sources

Partnerships

- Develop effective partnerships with agreed organisations, particularly focusing on digital and new media organisations connected with York's UNESCO City of Media Arts status

Fundraising

- Contribute to funding applications to Trusts and Foundations, businesses and private individuals in order to increase resources available for public programmes, acquisitions and collections management

Equality and diversity

- To champion equality and diversity through collections development, interpretation, presentation and partnership working

Other duties

- Other duties may be required from time to time which are consistent with the grading of this post

4. Key performance measures

Curatorial measures

Art Team plan developed in line with the YMT organisational strategy and business plan and delivered effectively and efficiently

Organisational Key Performance Indicators

Visitor satisfaction and engagement (in line with Audience Development Plan priorities)

Accessioning

Documentation

Exhibitions

5. Knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours

Knowledge

- Degree in Media Art/History of Art or relevant subject area
- Postgraduate qualification in relevant subject, or equivalent experience
- Substantial and demonstrable knowledge of working with new media and contemporary art exhibitions and immersive experiences
- Substantial and demonstrable knowledge of the contemporary and digital art landscape
- Knowledge of documentation systems and conservation issues for media art collections
- Knowledge and understanding of issues around art, heritage and collections in relation to equality and diversity
- Knowledge of current practice with regard to relevant legal and ethical issues to the contemporary art world
- Knowledge of and enthusiasm for community engagement with and access to contemporary art

Skills

- Creativity – ability to generate original ideas and solve problems
- Interpersonal skills – strong ability to develop and work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders to achieve optimal results that are aligned with YMT priorities
- Analytical / critical thinking – use reasoning and logic to evaluate and interrogate sources, data, and research and put forward compelling perspectives and arguments
- Verbal communication skills – ability to communicate complex information to a variety of specialist and non-specialist audiences, including public speaking
- Strong writing skills with an ability to write about contemporary art 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
- Ability to be self-motivated and work unsupervised – work responsibly to meet targets as part of a team and through individual initiative
- Research skills
- Ability to promote positively YMT's vision, mission, values, priorities, and outcomes
- Digital skills – a good level of digital literacy and willing and able to utilise new technology to be most effective in the workplace

Experience

- Significant experience of exhibition development and delivery, as well as working with living artists
- Experience of best practice in commissioning and understanding of public art issues and contemporary art practice

- Project management experience
- Experience of managing budgets, cost planning and value engineering
- Partnership working experience
- ICT experience for documentation and general office use

Behaviours

- Commitment to and advocacy of equality, diversity, and inclusion and understanding how these apply to the role
- Flexible attitude towards performing tasks
- Advocacy for contemporary art and new media art and living artists

6. Key relationships

- Senior Curator
- Programme Manager: Exhibitions
- Curators of Fine Art and Ceramics
- Associate Collections Curators
- Registrar
- Head of Collections and Research
- Creative Learning Producers
- Health and Safety Advisor
- Art Gallery Visitor Experience Team

7. Organisation chart

