

## JOB DESCRIPTION



Job Title: Director of Collections

Division: Directorate

Reporting to: Director of the V&A

### Background

The V&A is the UK's national museum of art and design, and is one of the greatest museums of decorative arts and design in the world. The V&A holds many of the UK's national collections, and is custodian of some of the world's greatest resources for architecture, painting, fashion, photography, theatre and performance, sculpture, contemporary design, ceramics, silver, Asian art and design, furniture and woodwork, textiles, jewellery, metalwork, silver, and many more.

The Board of Trustees has a statutory responsibility to care for, preserve and add to the collections; to ensure that the collections are made available; to add to the body of knowledge relevant to the collections through research; and to disseminate that knowledge.

The V&A's mission is to be recognised as the world's leading museum of art and design, and to enrich people's lives by promoting research, knowledge and enjoyment of the designed world to the widest possible audience. Its vision for the next 5 years is for a major expansion of our physical and digital, using the lens of design to make our collections increasingly accessible and relevant. We have significant plans to expand and deliver our education vision, building on our existing successful programmes to become a force in design education. We already have projects and programmes for schools, families, young people, community groups and non-traditional museum visitors, adults, higher education students and people working in the creative industries. We plan to extend the geographical reach of the V&A, reflect the changing climate in schools' education, provide a sector-leading museum learning experience and play a leadership and opinion-forming role in the fields of formal education and museum and gallery interpretation.

### Purpose of job

The Collections Division in the V&A is made up of seven collections departments and the Conservation and Collections Management Department. The collections departments are Sculpture, Metalwork, Ceramics and Glass (SMCG), Furniture Textiles and Fashion (FTF), Theatre & Performance (T&P), Word and Image (WID), Design, Architect & Digital (DAD), Childhood (Museum of Childhood) and Asia.

The post-holder will provide exceptional leadership to this Division and along with the Director, Deputy Director and the Senior Management Team (SMT), play a leading role in the development and delivery of the V&A's strategy over the coming years, ensuring that our collections and knowledge are at the very centre of our work, and that curatorial and commercial opportunities are seen as mutually reinforcing rather than conflicting. They will be responsible for leading all aspects of curatorial activities across the Museum,

developing a clear vision for the Division which sees it play its full and part in day-to-day operations and decision-making, and helping to define and build on the key areas of strength and expertise that can contribute to extending access to the widest possible audience. The post-holder will provide the Director and Deputy Director with advice, assistance and support in carrying out responsibilities relevant to the Collections, within the Museum and externally.

### **Main tasks**

1. Provide inspiration and clear leadership to the Collections Division, to ensure the full depth and breadth of the V&A's curatorial expertise is utilised through excellence in leadership, management and development of people.
2. Lead, manage and develop curatorial, conservation and collections management activities on behalf of the Museum, working with senior managers and their teams to effectively and proactively develop key V&A strategies.
3. Provide advice to the Director, Trustees and SMT on all aspects of curatorial business and policy, including acquisitions, loans, bequests, gifts, disposals, the development and application of expertise, documentation and research. Work with the relevant Keeper on major acquisitions especially where partnership funding is required and provide a lead on the investigation of issues relating to ownership or title.
4. Make a major contribution to the content of the Exhibitions programme and Future Plan, helping to ensure a popular, scholarly and balanced programme as a major part of the V&A's strategy.
5. Manage the relevant budgets of the Division, ensuring compliance with all financial procedures, and taking a creative and innovative approach to the long-term funding and structure of the Division as part of a development and succession plan.
6. Co-ordinate, manage and contribute to advice to Government, Heritage bodies and other external contacts on matters relating to objects, including representing the Director as required.
7. Develop and nurture relationships with other international, national and regional museums and institutions, identifying issues where closer co-operation and sharing of expertise would be appropriate. Be responsible for implementation of the Museum's policy towards the Regions, fostering links and exchange with the Regions. Champion the Museum's reputation for scholarship, nationally and internationally.
8. Work with the Research Institution to foster object-based knowledge and research, taking forward consideration of expertise, its sources and development, both within the Museum and in partnership with other institutions.
9. As a member of the Senior Management Team and Management Forum, play a leading role in the development of corporate strategy and strategic planning for the Division.

10. Be committed to health and safety and ensure familiarity with all of the Museum's health and safety policies and procedures.
11. Be security conscious, ensure familiarity and co-operation with all museum security procedures and ensure you wear a security pass at all times when on museum premises.
12. Promote equality and diversity in all aspects of your work by developing and maintaining positive working relationships, ensuring that colleagues are treated fairly and with respect/dignity and actively contributing to developments that support the museum's strategy for widening access, inclusion and diversity.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

1. Proven inspirational leadership and management skills with a high performing team
2. Extensive experience at a senior level within a Museum or related institution and an excellent understanding of working with objects
3. A strong track record of scholarly achievement in a relevant field with an international reputation for expertise and research in a subject area relevant to the V&A's collections and mission
4. Experience of strategy development and implementation including change management
5. A proven successful ambassador able to communicate effectively at all levels internally and externally
6. A strong track record of strategic thinking and action, with an ability to think creatively within the Museum context
7. Proven ability to apply sound business and financial management principles across a range of activities with the ability to assess and manage risks appropriately
8. Track record in strategic decision making, taking decisions and providing advice at the highest levels

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

### **Hours/Salary:**

Net working hours (i.e. excluding meal breaks) are 36 per week.

The salary for this role will be competitive. Salaries are reviewed on an annual basis.

### **Annual leave:**

28 days plus 8 days public holidays

### **Pension benefits:**

You will be auto enrolled into the Museum's Group Personal Pension Scheme and have the opportunity on completion of Probation to an enhanced pension provision, including an employer contribution of 10%.

### **Other benefits:**

Non-contributory life assurance policy (to value of 4 x annual salary)

An interest free season ticket or bicycle loan is available after three months.

Free entrance to all the major museums and exhibitions in London as well as many others.

Subsidised staff restaurant

Discounts on purchases in V&A shops

Childcare Voucher Scheme

### **Application process:**

Please apply online via the V&A's website at [www.vam.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.vam.ac.uk/jobs)

If you are having technical difficulties applying online, please use the online chat functionality which can be found on the bottom right hand side of the form. Alternatively, you can contact **Vacancy Filler** directly on **01509 236434**, and quote the role reference number and your application number (if known). Please note, Vacancy Filler are contactable, Monday – Friday between 9.00am – 5.00pm.

If you have any queries regarding the role and/or the V&A's recruitment process, you can email us – [contacthr@vam.ac.uk](mailto:contacthr@vam.ac.uk) or telephone us on 020 7942 2937 (Working hours Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm).

**Closing date for receipt of applications is midnight Sunday 08 October 2017**

**Interviews to be held week commencing 16 October 2017**

**Interview expenses will not be paid unless there is a prior agreement.**