

JOB DESCRIPTION



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| Job Title: | Textile and Organics Conservator |
| Division: | Research and Collections |
| Department: | Conservation, Textiles Conservation Section |
| Reporting to: | Head of Textiles and Fashion Conservation |
| Location: | South Kensington/Blythe House/Bethnal Green |

Background

The V&A has one of the world's most comprehensive collections of textiles representing the decorative arts of many periods and cultures. The textile conservation section works with four main Curatorial departments dealing with a very wide range of textile and textile-related objects including costume, fashion accessories, tapestries and carpets, ecclesiastical garments, archaeological textiles, furnishing textiles, embroideries, printed textiles, theatre costume and a wide range of objects from the Museum of Childhood. Many objects are composite and may be constructed with non-textile but related materials. Work in the section may involve liaison with specialists in other V&A Conservation studios. The Department has a worldwide reputation for the excellence of its practical work, for innovative ideas, for the teaching of conservation practice and for pioneering the scientific and ethical approach to conservation.

Purpose of job

We are seeking a textile conservator with a strong understanding of related organic materials to join our team in textiles and fashion conservation. The successful candidate will work on textiles and costume from the entire collection of the V&A but will be expected to take the lead role in exhibitions and displays at the Bethnal Green based Museum of Childhood and to take a leading role in the redevelopment of the Museum, including the relocation of the collection. The nature of the collection at the Museum of Childhood requires a very thorough understanding of materials such as wood, paper, wax, basketry and plastics. In addition to this, it is expected that the successful candidate will also work on items of furniture with related organic materials such as caning, rush and leather. The work will be carried out in the V&A's South Kensington Textile Conservation Studio as well as on site at Bethnal Green and at the V&A's new conservation studios at the Collections and Research Centre in East London due to open in 2023.

Main tasks

1. To carry out practical work of the highest standard on a wide range of textiles, textile related objects, and organic objects. Practical work will include both interventive conservation treatments and mounting for display.
2. To demonstrate a sound understanding of how objects may be changed or damaged and be able to undertake risk assessments on objects and implement good preventive practice wherever possible.

3. To keep accurate and clear documentation of treatments and precise records of the results of technical analysis.
4. To explore innovative techniques, materials and ideas and apply them where appropriate.
5. To liaise with curators, exhibition officers and other project team members on conservation related issues.
6. Be committed to health and safety and ensure familiarity with the Museum's health and safety policies and procedures.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. To undertake general duties within the Textile Conservation Section and within the Conservation Department as may be required by the Head of Studio. Carry out ad hoc duties as requested by appropriate managers within your department.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential requirements

1. A recognised conservation qualification or relevant training in textile conservation and demonstrable practical studio experience.
2. A current knowledge and proficiency in a wide range of practical treatment processes in this discipline including experience of organic materials and plastics.
3. A good understanding of conservation theory and the principles of ethical decision making.
4. Experience of mounting textiles, costumes and accessories for display.
5. Evidence of working with and understanding the conservation ethics of social history materials.
6. The ability to produce a high standard of work within tight deadlines and to be able to deal effectively with conflicting priorities.
7. You will be highly self motivated and able to organise tasks and your own workload in an efficient and effective way.
8. You will be able to work independently or as part of the team.
9. Good verbal and written communication skills. The ability to explain techniques and give advice on conservation and preservation matters clearly and concisely and keep accurate records.

Desirable requirements

1. Proficiency with SLR digital photography and image processing applications.
2. Knowledge of the V&A and its collections.
3. Experience with storage moves or large multi-object projects.

OTHER INFORMATION

Hours/Salary:

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

The salary for this role will be £27,385 - £32,914 per annum. 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

Application process:

Please apply online via the V&A's website at 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 or telephone us on 020 7942 2937 (Working hours Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm).

Closing date for receipt of applications is: 10 February 2019

Applicants invited for interview will be asked to submit an electronic portfolio in advance.

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