

JOB DESCRIPTION



Job Title	Senior Curator, Paintings & Drawings	Duration	Permanent
Division	Collections Division	Hours/FTE	1.00
Dept	Art, Architecture, Photography & Design		
Reports to	Christopher Turner	Direct Reports	3 Curators

Context

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance. The V&A's Collections Division comprises six curatorial, research, and conservation and collections care & access teams. The curatorial departments are arranged as Decorative Art and Sculpture; Performance, Furniture, Fashion & Textiles; Art, Architecture, Photography & Design; and Asia. The staff in these teams are at the heart of the founding purpose of the museum: to care for, research and develop the collections, to exhibit them to the public, to make them available for study and research, and to broaden access to the collections.

Main Purpose of job

This is one of 6 Senior Curator posts that sit in the Art, Architecture, Photography & Design Department (AAPD). The post holder will take leadership responsibility for the development, care of, documentation and research, presentation, and interpretation of a part of V&A's Collection of national and international importance, in this case the collections of paintings and drawings (which include four national collections – Portrait Miniatures, John Constable, British Watercolours, and Pastels). Contemporary drawing is the main focus of current collecting and the postholder will lead on this too. As such, the postholder will be expected to represent the Museum at the highest level and play an active role in the field of paintings studies and collecting, nationally and internationally.

As a senior member of the AAPD Department, the postholder will also make a significant contribution to the wider work of the V&A, contributing to policy, projects and public programmes, supporting fundraising and income generation, and supporting the Keeper in the running of the Department, including by creating a positive environment, supporting change, line managing 3 staff and sharing knowledge, expertise and best practice with a wider group of Curators and Assistant Curators to help them develop and perform. The postholder will also play a leadership role in the community of Senior Curators, Curators and Assistant Curators that will span the four curatorial teams.

Key Responsibilities

Deepening Knowledge

Being personally active in research in the field of historic paintings, in particular British 19th- century painting, and collecting, publishing in this field; being an active contributor to the V&A's research culture.

Playing a leading role in the V&A's scholarship in British 19th- century paintings and collecting studies, and other areas of our national collections: leading and managing research activities in this field, ensuring that the museum's scholarship takes account of the latest scholarly research, and develops new perspectives on the collections.

Collecting
Contributing to V&A's Collection Development Policy
Taking responsibility for identifying potential acquisitions, undertaking research and due diligence and creating opportunities to acquire in line with the museum's collections development strategy
Caring for this significant part of V&A's Collection, and in collaboration with Conservation and Collections Care & Access, ensuring that it is displayed and stored to the highest standards; and taking responsibility for storage and conservation plans for relevant collections and objects
Applying the highest level of scholarship to cataloguing, documenting and digitizing this part of the Collection
Advising on, and negotiating, loans in and out; contributing to the curatorial aspects of these loans
Dealing with complex and specialist enquiries, including assisting public access to the collections, organising study visits and collaborating on V&A conferences and seminars; liaising with peers in regional, national and international museums; participating in relevant SSN; collaborating in partnerships
Presenting and interpreting collections
Leading and organising permanent and temporary displays, working with relevant colleagues from across the museum
Leading and organising major exhibition projects, working with relevant colleagues from across the museum: proposing, supporting and curating exhibitions in own field of interest as well as proposing and curating exhibitions with a broader chronological or thematic focus
Leading and organising publication projects on and offline
Collaborating with colleagues in Learning on the development of their programmes; contributing content and teaching as required; ensuring that curatorial expertise and content is responsive to colleagues' and audiences' needs and shared to reach a wide variety of audiences; taking an active role in the V&A's public programmes
Representing V&A nationally and internationally through lecturing, scholarly and popular publications, broadcasting and through peer relationships with other organisations and colleagues
Innovating
Understanding museum policies, strategies and priorities and contributing to the development of new policies and plans as required, keeping across developments and changes in the wider community
Understanding the suite and scope of museum projects and contributing as required
Contributing to National and International programmes and partnerships as required
Developing knowledge of potential funding sources and relevant prospects and donors and developing funding bids in collaboration with V&A colleagues; stewarding donors and potential donors
Leading
Playing a leadership role in the community of Senior Curators, Curators and Assistant Curators that will span the four curatorial teams.
Contributing to departmental planning and budgeting and ensuring adherence to museum processes, and innovation in these processes; taking responsibility for budgets and other resources allocated to the department
Managing 3 Curators, allocating work based on knowledge, skills and available time and resources, providing clear instructions and specifications; recognising the achievement and performance of others and giving them credit; providing others with regular feedback and coaching in a constructive manner; motivating team members by making them feel valued; celebrating success; encouraging an open, safe and approachable environment by listening and not judging
Ensuring familiarity with relevant legislation (Access, health and safety, GDPR, FOI) and committing to good practice and adherence to V&A policy

Undertaking, as a senior member of the Department, projects or managerial responsibilities as delegated by the Chair which will change from time to time

The above job description is intended to be an outline of the duties and responsibilities for this role. This is not exhaustive, and it is likely to change over time. You may be expected to undertake other duties that are commensurate with this role

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Specific	Academic background and record of scholarship and publication in a relevant field, as well as demonstrable evidence of a variety of interests and breadth of knowledge beyond the specialist field
	Experience of working as a curator or senior curator in a comparable institution, with extensive experience of collection development, care and documentation and working with registrars, conservators, scientists and art handlers, as well as collectors, dealers and donors
	A demonstrable interest in, and enthusiasm for, telling stories about collections through temporary and permanent collection displays, exhibitions, publications, learning and engagement; a track record in innovative display and exhibition curating, and working with learning specialists, content developers, marketing and communication specialists; a creative approach to the ways in which the museum might develop in this field
	Excellent communicator, with the ability to communicate knowledge of specialist field to a wide audience while maintaining high scholarly standards; a good public speaker and lucid writer; a credible representative of the museum, effective in influencing within and beyond the institution
	Demonstrable ability to contribute to the wider work of an institution, whether in developing policy, contributing to projects or national and international programmes or partnerships or generating income: ability to propose and implement innovative ideas
	Practical and organisational skills: meticulousness, a keen attention to detail in all aspects of work; experience of playing a leading role in the organisational implementation of object installations, displays or exhibitions
	Experience of people management and development; ability to manage cross-departmental teams
	Strong interpersonal skills: diplomatic and sensitive in dealing with a wide range of people from the general public to lenders, collectors and dealers; outward looking and at ease with collaborating with colleagues and other scholars in the field
Demonstrable computer skills and ability to manage information systematically and accurately; a thorough understanding of online collections management systems	
Knowledge of at least one other modern European language	

Core Skills	Excellent standard of written English and highly numerate with the ability to carry out complex numerical analysis
	Significant interpersonal and consultative skills, including the ability to communicate, present, negotiate, influence and build credibility with colleagues and external parties
	Experience of using MS Office and other relevant IT systems to an intermediate / advanced level
	Significant experience of managing and prioritising a high workload and multiple complex issues and tasks in a changing environment with tight deadlines
Behaviours	Respects others' expertise, time, perspectives and contribution.
	Takes responsibility for delivering on actions, achieving high-standards and learning from mistakes
	Open to change , new ideas and suggestions; looks for opportunities for improvement and self-development
	Works with others outside their own department in a collaborative, understanding, and, engaging way. Actively leads and manages others, taking ownership of corporate decisions and role models positive behaviours.
Desirable	