

# Recruitment Information



## Principal Curator, Modern and Contemporary Design

## Principal Curator, Modern & Contemporary Design

£39,370 to £50,741 per annum plus membership of Civil Service pension scheme

This is an exciting opportunity to lead the team responsible for an expanding collection within the department of Art & Design at National Museums Scotland. As head of section, you will have overall responsibility for the post-1850 collections of European decorative art and design. The Art & Design collection as a whole represents excellence, creativity and innovation in sculpture, metalwork, ceramics, glass, furniture, woodwork and fashion and textiles. In recent years, the Modern & Contemporary section has developed an outstanding corpus of applied art by gift, purchase and commissioning. This has built up a fine representation of contemporary crafts including studio ceramics, glass and jewellery. A particular strength is the fashion and textile collection, including substantial acquisitions relating to Jean Muir and Bernat Klein.

These collections are housed not only at the National Museum of Scotland but also at the National Museums Collection Centre. You will lead, manage and participate in research and public programmes and work on the award-winning Art & Design galleries. In addition, you will be expected to contribute to the temporary exhibition calendar and to National Museums Scotland's contemporary collecting. Candidates will have a demonstrable area of expertise in a related field and should be fluent in the dialogue between craft, art, design and technology. The post-holder will also be required to support and deputise for the head of department in developing this dynamic department to achieve its aims and ambitions.

You will have a degree/postgraduate qualification (or equivalent) in a relevant subject, plus proven relevant work experience. An excellent communicator with proven research and publication skills, you will be organised, methodical, adept at problem solving, a team worker and a good thinker. You will have experience in managing staff and projects, and will have good ICT skills.

You are provided with a job description and person specification for further detail about the post.

To make an online application for this post and to find further details of this post and of all our vacancies please visit [www.nms.ac.uk](http://www.nms.ac.uk).

The closing date for completed applications is **Friday, 26 March 2021**. Please state reference number NMS20/1071. Applicants who are shortlisted can expect to participate in a selection event that is currently scheduled to take place on **Wednesday, 14 April 2021**. The selected candidate would be expected to take up the role in August 2021, or as soon as possible after this date.

***Please note that CVs are not considered as part of applications and will not be forwarded to the shortlisting process.***

National Museums Scotland is committed to being an Equal Opportunities Employer. We are keen that our workforce profile reflects the diversity of our visitors and audiences. Therefore, all jobs at National Museums Scotland are open to everyone and we encourage applicants from all backgrounds, irrespective of sex, gender identity, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age. We welcome candidates who think they have the required skills and can make a contribution in this key role.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>Post Title:</b> Principal Curator, Modern and Contemporary Design		
<b>Department:</b> Art and Design	<b>Section:</b> Modern and Contemporary Design	
<b>Directorate:</b> Collections	<b>Grade:</b> 2	<b>Hours:</b> 37 (net)
<p><b>Purpose of Post:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To be responsible for the management of a section and the curation of its collections, in support of the overall strategy and objectives of National Museums</li> <li>▪ To develop leadership, management and participation in the research activities of the section</li> <li>▪ To develop specialist knowledge about the specified collections and enable the widest possible access to them, in line with National Museums' objectives</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Key Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be responsible for the overall curation of the collections within the section, aiming to achieve best practice, in line with National Museums' policies and procedures. This covers activities relating to acquisitions, loans, collections care and documentation</li> <li>▪ Develop the leadership, management and participation in the research activities of the section, in line with National Museums' policy and programme</li> <li>▪ Develop understanding of overall relevant collection requirements and their potential, in order to contribute to departmental strategic planning</li> <li>▪ Be responsible for staff / projects / budgets and other resources allocated to the section</li> <li>▪ Ensure appropriate access to the collections is provided and managed effectively</li> <li>▪ Represent National Museums and the collections in the national and international academic and cultural sectors, and give professional advice</li> <li>▪ Develop, lead and contribute to projects using the collection, such as exhibitions and preparation of material for publications and educational activities</li> <li>▪ Lead the section's participation in outreach activities which are the National Programmes of National Museums</li> <li>▪ Lead the section's participation in Learning &amp; Programmes activities, to reach a wide variety of audiences</li> </ul>		

**Key Responsibilities:**

- Manage the section's contribution to National Museums' digital programmes
- Identify potential funding opportunities and develop funding bids, to support strategic priorities for the department in line with National Museums' policies
- Ensure appropriate management of volunteers supporting curatorial work, to keep their contribution focused and recognised
- Promote and ensure compliance with the legislative framework (e.g. health & safety) and any special requirements of the collection (e.g. radiation)
- Support and deputise for the Keeper
- Commit to good health & safety and access practice and ensure familiarity with National Museums' health & safety and access policies, procedures and guidelines

**Expected Outcomes:**

- Significant contributions at senior level to curatorial and management activities
- Development of extended knowledge and external profile of collections and related subjects
- Developing knowledge applied and disseminated in research and public programmes
- Management and use of collections, in line with National Museums' standards
- Effective management of staff and resources

**Reports To:**

Keeper of department

**Facts and Figures:**

**Budget:** Delegated responsibility for elements of Departmental budget - also responsible for seeking and drafting external funding bids

**Staff Managed:** Section members (currently 4), plus volunteers and contractors where appropriate.

**Indirect Staff Managed:**

**Other:** Responsibility for a section of the national collections of historical importance, financial value, and scholarly significance

**Thinking Skills (Judgement / Decisions Made):**

- Assessment of other people's work, including their presentation of subject / collection / project information
- Judgement and interpretation of the section's collections, to analyse their strengths, care requirements, context and potential development and research direction
- Knowledge and appraisal of external context, to inform decisions
- Application of National Museums' collection management policies and procedures to the section's collections
- Communication, planning and organising skills, both internal and external
- Problem solving, by providing innovative solutions to novel problems, if necessary
- Recognition of issues which require upward referral
- Dealing with management issues (staff, budget, projects) for the section

**Communication and Contact:****Internal:**

- Head of Section and other curators
- Collections Management department
- Conservation & Analytical Research department
- Director of Collections
- Exhibitions
- Learning & Programmes
- Resources and Facilities staff

**External:**

- Visitors and enquirers
- Other museums and related organisations

**Communication and Contact cont:****External cont:**

- Other museums and related organisations
- Academic peer group, national and international
- Potential partners, sponsors and donors
- Media
- Volunteers
- Borrowers and lenders

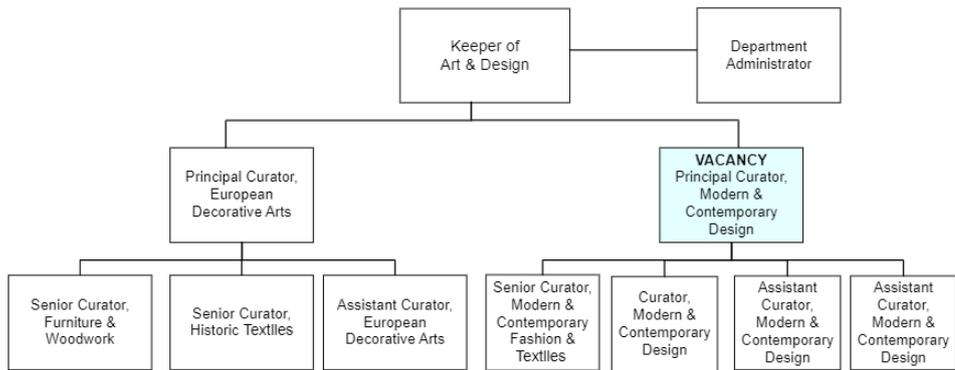
**Most Challenging Parts of the Job:**

- To balance multiple priorities
- To manage the section's collections, extend accessibility, and develop further specialist knowledge
- To contribute to finding strategic solutions for sectional and Collections Directorate issues
- To coordinate and integrate the section's activities within the department
- To foster external relationships effectively
- To develop a high research profile

**Other Requirements, e.g. Multi-site Working, On Call, etc:**

Must be willing to travel as the duties require, e.g. other National Museums' sites, courier duties, fieldwork, or as representative of National Museums to external bodies

**Organisational Chart:**



**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

<b>Post Title:</b> Principal Curator, Modern and Contemporary design		
<b>Department:</b> Art and Design	<b>Section:</b> Modern and Contemporary design	
<b>Directorate:</b> Collections	<b>Grade:</b> 2	<b>Hours:</b> 37 (net)

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Essential or desirable</b>	<b>Evidence assessed by</b>
A relevant first degree, or equivalent experience	Essential	Certificate
A postgraduate degree in a relevant subject, or equivalent experience	Essential	Certificate
Knowledge of interpretation of collections by different means to a variety of audiences	Essential	Selection Event
Developed knowledge of and enthusiasm for relevant subject area	Essential	Selection Event
Knowledge of cultural sector context and relevant external bodies	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Understanding and knowledge of best practice standards in collections management	Essential	Selection Event
Knowledge of potential health & safety issues relevant to the specialist area	Essential	Selection Event
Established profile in area relevant to National Museums' collection	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Developed knowledge of relevant collections in section	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Postgraduate qualification in Museums Studies, Heritage Management or equivalent	Desirable	Certificate
Ph.D. in a relevant subject or equivalent experience	Desirable	Certificate

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Essential or desirable</b>	<b>Evidence assessed by</b>
ICT skills in Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook and use of databases	Essential	Application / Certificate
Driving licence	Desirable	Licence

<b>Experience</b>	<b>Essential or desirable</b>	<b>Evidence assessed by</b>
Proven experience in relevant museum or similar environment	Essential	Application
Experience of collections management good practice in museum or similar collections	Essential	Application
Experience of financial planning responsibility	Desirable	Application
Experience of managing projects involving other people and inter-disciplinary relationships	Desirable	Application / Selection Event
Record of intellectual and practical contribution to exhibitions	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Record of publication in area of specialism and / or public presentations to a variety of audiences	Essential	Application / Selection Event

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<b>Post Title:</b> Principal Curator, Modern and Contemporary design		
<b>Department:</b> Art and Design	<b>Section:</b> Modern and Contemporary Design	
<b>Directorate:</b> Collections	<b>Grade:</b> 1	<b>Hours:</b> 37 (net)
<p><b>Purpose of Post:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To be responsible for the management of a section and the curation of its collections, in support of the overall strategy and objectives of National Museums</li> <li>▪ To lead, manage and participate in the research activities of the section</li> <li>▪ To develop specialist knowledge about the specified collections and enable the widest possible access to them, in line with National Museums' objectives</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Key Responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be responsible for the overall curation of the collections within the section, aiming to achieve best practice, in line with National Museums' policies and procedures. This covers activities relating to acquisitions, loans, collections care and documentation</li> <li>▪ Determine, lead, manage and participate in the research activities of the section, in line with National Museums' policy and programme</li> <li>▪ Develop strategic plans to meet overall relevant collection requirements and their potential</li> <li>▪ Be responsible for staff / projects / budgets and other resources allocated to the section</li> <li>▪ Ensure appropriate access to the collections is provided and managed effectively</li> <li>▪ Represent National Museums and the collections in the national and international academic and cultural sectors, and give professional advice</li> <li>▪ Develop, lead and contribute to projects using the collection, such as exhibitions and preparation of material for publications and educational activities</li> <li>▪ Lead the section's participation in outreach activities which are the National Programmes of National Museums</li> <li>▪ Lead the section's participation in Learning &amp; Programmes activities, to reach a wide variety of audiences</li> </ul>		

**Key Responsibilities:**

- Lead the section's participation in Learning & Programmes activities, to reach a wide variety of audiences
- Manage the section's contribution to National Museums' digital programmes
- Identify potential funding opportunities and develop funding bids to support strategic priorities for the department, in line with National Museums' policies
- Ensure appropriate management of volunteers supporting curatorial work, to keep their contribution focused and recognised
- Promote and ensure compliance with the legislative framework (e.g. health & safety) and any special requirements of the collection (e.g. radiation)
- Support and deputise for the Keeper
- Commit to good health & safety and access practice and ensure familiarity with National Museums' health & safety and access policies, procedures and guidelines

**Expected Outcomes:**

- Significant contributions at senior level to curatorial and management activities
- Extended knowledge and external profile of collections and related subjects
- Knowledge applied and disseminated in research and public programmes
- Management and use of collections, in line with National Museums' standards
- Effective management of staff and resources

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Keeper of department

**Facts and Figures:**

**Budget:** Delegated responsibility for elements of departmental budget - also responsible for seeking and drafting external funding bids

**Staff Managed:** Section members (currently 4), plus volunteers and contractors where appropriate

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**Other:** Responsibility for a section of the national collections of historical importance, financial value, and scholarly significance

**Thinking Skills (Judgement / Decisions Made):**

- Assessment of other people's work, including their presentations of subject / collection / project information
- Judgement and interpretation of the section's collections, to analyse their strengths, care requirements, context and potential development and research direction
- Knowledge and appraisal of external context to inform decisions
- Application of National Museums' collections management policies and procedures to the section's collections
- Communication, planning and organising skills, both internal and external
- Problem-solving by providing innovative solutions to novel problems, if necessary
- Recognition of issues which require upward referral
- Dealing with management issues (staff, budget, projects) for the section

**Communication and Contact:**

**Internal:**

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**External:**

- Visitors and enquirers
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- Academic peers group, national and international
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**Communication and Contact cont:**

**External cont:**

- Media
- Volunteers
- Borrowers and lenders

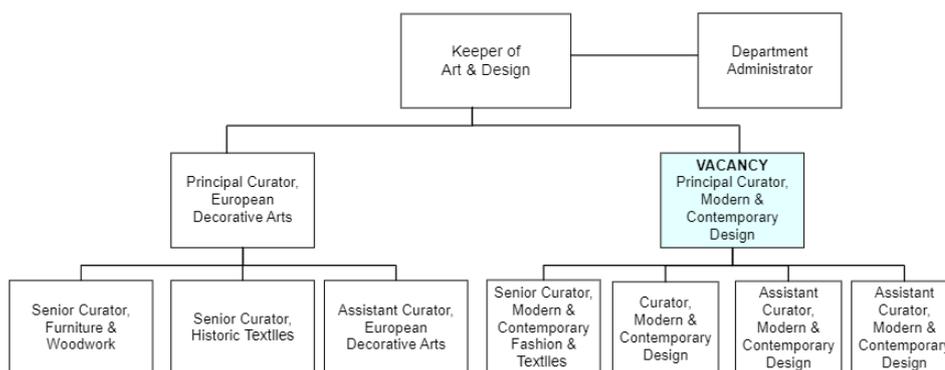
**Most Challenging Parts of the Job:**

- To balance multiple priorities
- To manage the section's collections, extend accessibility and develop further specialist knowledge
- To find strategic solutions for sectional and Collections directorate issues
- To coordinate and integrate the section's activities within the department
- To foster external relationships effectively
- To build on a high research profile

**Other Requirements, e.g. Multi-site Working, On Call, etc:**

Must be willing to travel as the duties require, e.g. other National Museums' sites, courier duties, fieldwork, or as representative of National Museums to external bodies

**Organisational Chart:**



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<b>Directorate:</b> Collections	<b>Grade:</b> 1	<b>Hours:</b> 37 (net)

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Essential or desirable</b>	<b>Evidence assessed by</b>
A relevant first degree, or equivalent experience	Essential	Certificate
A postgraduate degree in a relevant subject, or equivalent experience	Essential	Certificate
Established profile in area relevant to National Museums' collection	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Knowledge of interpretation of collections by different means to a variety of audiences	Essential	Selection Event
Developed knowledge of and enthusiasm for relevant collections and / or subject area	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Knowledge of cultural sector context and relevant external bodies	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Understanding and knowledge of best practice standards in collections management	Essential	Selection Event
Knowledge of potential health & safety issues relevant to the specialist area	Essential	Selection Event
Postgraduate qualification in Museum Studies, Heritage Management or equivalent	Desirable	Certificate
Ph.D. in a relevant subject or equivalent experience	Desirable	Certificate

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Essential or desirable</b>	<b>Evidence assessed by</b>
ICT skills in Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook and use of databases	Essential	Application / Certificate
Multi-disciplinary approach and skills to scholarship	Desirable	Selection Event
Driving licence	Desirable	Licence

<b>Experience</b>	<b>Essential or desirable</b>	<b>Evidence assessed by</b>
Proven experience in relevant museum or similar environment	Essential	Application
Experience of collection management good practice in museum or similar collections	Essential	Application
Experience of managing projects involving other people and inter-disciplinary relationships	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Record of intellectual and practical contribution, e.g. through exhibitions, conferences and colloquia	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Extensive record of publication in area of specialism and / or public presentations to a variety of audiences	Essential	Application / Selection Event
Experience of financial planning responsibility	Desirable	Application

National Museums Scotland has a Competency Framework with six competencies. Individuals for this job (at both grades) are expected to demonstrate competence in all of these and will be assessed from the Application Form, and, if you are invited to attend, at the Selection Event.

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Detail</b>
<b>Building Relationships</b> Works effectively and professionally as part of their team and cooperates with others across the organisation; collaborates and networks externally for specific outcomes and projects; forms partnerships, nationally	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Helps others understand other National Museums Scotland's roles and functions internally and externally</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates an understanding of conflicting outlooks and a willingness to find common ground</li> <li>▪ Proactively manages the expectations of internal and external senior stakeholders, in terms of interdependencies, responsibilities and outcomes</li> <li>▪ Builds and maintains a strong external network to look for opportunities for external collaboration</li> </ul>

and internationally, for mutual benefit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps make connections for people, putting people in touch to facilitate cooperation and collaboration</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communicating &amp; Engaging</b></p> <p>Uses interpersonal skills flexibly to communicate, influence, persuade and negotiate to ensure a shared understanding and commitment to act</p>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates with credibility and authority, presenting a compelling point of view</li> <li>Considers the needs of National Museums and its staff in determining appropriate communication and channels</li> <li>Influences and persuades senior stakeholders and gains commitment of others to act and achieve outcomes</li> <li>Delivers difficult messages constructively to staff, customers and others when required</li> <li>Keeps lines of communication open at all times for feedback and exchange</li> </ul>
<p><b>Focusing on your Customers</b></p> <p>Places the customer at the heart of what we do; engages, listens and responds to deliver excellent service; creates an outstanding experience and supports a culture of service excellence, both internally and externally</p>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively finds out what our diverse customers want by consumer research and testing</li> <li>Analyses the needs of our customers and takes action to enhance and improve customer service</li> <li>Develops and effectively manages a network of existing and potential customers, internally and externally</li> <li>Supports colleagues in meeting and managing the expectations of their customers</li> <li>Ensures customer focused processes, frameworks and systems are in place and operate effectively</li> </ul>
<p><b>Improving &amp; Innovating</b></p> <p>Builds personal and organisational capability to think creatively and continuously improve National Museums Scotland, to enable it to excel and lead within the sector</p>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitors the external environment for emerging trends and opportunities and shares this information</li> <li>Positively manages resistance and blocks to change and innovation through engaging with others</li> <li>Initiates changes that contribute to continuous improvement</li> <li>Proactively manages the impact of innovation and change on staff and stakeholders</li> <li>Gives honest constructive feedback on staff's ideas and, where appropriate, feeds them into short and long-term planning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leading &amp; Managing</b></p> <p>Sets direction and standards to drive individual, team and organisational performance by involving, supporting, developing and enabling staff and others to effectively contribute to the present and the</p>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates understanding and commitment to the department and organisational priorities and programming.</li> <li>Adapts management style to suit the circumstances and diversity of our workforce.</li> <li>Shares knowledge, expertise and best practice with others to help them develop and perform.</li> <li>Cares about the needs of the team, listens to and acts on feedback.</li> </ul>

future of National Museums Scotland		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges under-performance, clarifies expectations of good performance and stretches good performers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Planning for Success</b></p> <p>Realistically plans tasks and manages workload; develops programmes and manages projects in consultation with stakeholders, within existing resources, and makes informed decisions for effective delivery</p>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans complex activities effectively – sets milestones, collaborates with a range of stakeholders to ensure effective delivery and compliance</li> <li>Sets parameters and measures to monitor the outcomes from plans and projects</li> <li>Manages and maximises the use of resources to ensure deadlines, quality indicators and efficiency targets are met, and solutions developed</li> <li>Knows when to stop analysing and make the best decision with uncertain or limited information</li> <li>Ensures effective processes exist to deliver outcomes across the organisation</li> </ul>



### Salary

The salary range is £39,370 to £50,741 per annum. Salary on appointment will be subject to qualifications and experience and will normally be within the bottom quarter of the pay range. Pay, including pay progression, is reviewed in negotiation with the recognised trade unions, with an annual settlement date of 1 April.

Where an internal candidate successful applies for a post which is the same grade as their current post, they will transfer to the new post on the same salary with pay progression as normal.

### Hours

Normally a five-day week of 37 hours, excluding lunch breaks. Normal hours of attendance are Monday to Thursday 08:30 to 17:00, Friday 08:30 to 16:30. As an alternative, a flexible working system is in operation.

### Location

This post is based at the National Museum of Scotland site in Chambers Street, Edinburgh with travel to other Museum sites as required.

### Duration of Appointment

This is a full-time permanent post.

### Probation

New employees are on probation for a period of six months from date of appointment.

### Pre-employment Checks/Eligibility to Work in the UK

Any offer of employment will be made subject to:

- receipt of references which are satisfactory to National Museums Scotland and cover the full three-year period prior to the date of appointment.
- completion of a Basic Disclosure Scotland check, the result of which must be satisfactory to National Museums Scotland. The cost will be refunded.
- completion of a health declaration form, which is satisfactory to National Museums Scotland.
- receipt of documentation confirming eligibility to work in the UK.

Please note that where more than one candidate is assessed as having met the criteria for the post, National Museums is obliged to offer the post to an eligible candidate who already has the right to live and work in the UK (a settled worker), before considering a candidate for whom a Certificate of Sponsorship application would be required. This is because any such application would need to show that no suitably qualified settled worker is available for the post.

### Selection Process

We use a competency-based selection process. If you are invited to a selection event you will be asked to participate in activities that will enable us to assess your performance against our Competency Framework. Details of our competencies can be found in the Person Specification.

