

Job Specification – Collections Manager

Organisation: Showtown Museum

On behalf of: Blackpool Heritage and Museum Trust

Collections Owner: Blackpool Council

Location: Blackpool

Reports to: Senior Museum Leadership

Manages: Collections Officers, Assistants, and Volunteers

Contract: Permanent

Salary: Competitive, dependent on experience

Job Description

1. Job Purpose

To be responsible for the professional management, care, documentation, digitisation, access, and long-term stewardship of Blackpool Council's historic collections, held and operated by Showtown Museum on behalf of Blackpool Heritage and Museum Trust.

The postholder will ensure collections of local, regional, and national significance are preserved, documented, interpreted, and made accessible in accordance with Museum Accreditation, Spectrum, recognised archival standards where applicable, and relevant legislation. The role will **lead on collections management policy, accreditation, compliance, rights management, loans, and governance**, ensuring the highest professional, ethical, and legal standards are met.

The postholder will also take a **strategic and forward-looking role**, developing and delivering frameworks for digitisation, access, research use, inclusive practice, and funded collections projects in line with Showtown's forward plans and Blackpool Council's heritage strategy.

2. Key Responsibilities and Duties

2.1 Collections Management, Care, Access and Digitisation

- Manage the professional care, documentation, conservation, and **public and research access** to Blackpool Council's historic collections, including supervision of **reading rooms, study spaces, and researcher access**.
- Lead on **digitisation and digital asset management**, ensuring high-quality digital records, sustainable workflows, and integration with the museum's collections management system and online platforms.
- Ensure effective collections documentation, location control, data integrity, and digital records through the EMu collections management system.
- Oversee collections storage, environmental monitoring, and security across all relevant sites.
- **Lead the development, authoring, and delivery of long-term collections storage, care, and digitisation strategies**, ensuring future-proofed and sustainable stewardship.

2.2 Policy, Standards, Accreditation and Ethics

- **Lead the development, review, and implementation** of the full collections policy framework, including Collections Development, Documentation, Conservation, Digitisation, Access, Loans, and associated procedures.
- Act as the **lead officer responsible for Museum Accreditation**, including authoring applications, coordinating evidence, responding to requirements, and embedding accreditation standards operationally.
- Ensure compliance with Spectrum standards, the Museums Association Code of Ethics, data protection, copyright, and relevant legislation.
- Embed **ethical practice, decolonisation principles, and inclusive collections management**, ensuring policies and practice reflect contemporary sector standards.

2.3 Rights Management, Copyright, Licensing and Loans

- Act as **Showtown's lead officer for rights management**, copyright, licensing, and intellectual property relating to the collections, ensuring lawful, ethical, and commercially appropriate use.
- Serve as the museum's **Loans Officer**, with responsibility for all **outgoing and incoming loans**, including documentation, agreements, insurance, transport, and condition reporting.
- Advise colleagues on rights, reproduction, publication, and digital use of collection material.

2.4 Acquisitions, Disposals, Archives and Governance

- Oversee acquisitions and disposals through the formal Collecting Panel, ensuring processes are ethical, transparent, approved, and fully documented.
- Ensure Blackpool Council's ownership of the collections is recognised, recorded, and governed appropriately.
- Undertake **archive management duties** where applicable, ensuring alignment between museum and archival standards for mixed collections.

2.5 Staff, Volunteer and Professional Leadership

- Line manage and supervise collections staff and volunteers, setting priorities, allocating workloads, and ensuring professional standards are met.
- Provide training, mentoring, and professional development opportunities, including supervision of research users and students where appropriate.
- Foster a culture of accountability, continuous improvement, and best practice.

2.6 Funding, Projects and Digital Interpretation

- **Identify, develop, and submit funding applications** for collections care, digitisation, conservation, and research projects (e.g. purchase grants, project funding, multi-year programmes).
- Manage funded projects, ensuring compliance with funder requirements, reporting, and evaluation.
- Lead on **digital interpretation and online collections presence**, working with colleagues to expand access and engagement through digital platforms.

2.7 Academic Engagement, Research and Sector Representation

- Facilitate and oversee **research access**, including academic partnerships, publications, and supervised study.
- Represent Showtown within **professional, academic, and sector networks**, conferences, and forums, contributing to knowledge exchange and sector leadership.

2.8 Risk Management and Emergency Planning

- Lead on collections emergency planning, maintaining salvage priorities and participating in training and reviews.
 - Identify risks to collections and implement mitigation measures.
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3. Accountability and Decision Making

- Accountable for professional collections management practice, compliance, and accreditation outcomes.
 - Exercises professional judgement within agreed policies and budgets.
 - Responsible for authoring policies, strategies, accreditation submissions, and funding bids within remit.
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4. Person Specification

Qualifications

Essential

- Degree or equivalent professional experience in museum studies, heritage, conservation, archives, or related discipline.

Desirable

- Postgraduate qualification in collections or heritage management.
- Associate of the Museums Association (AMA) or working towards accreditation.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Essential

- Significant experience managing museum collections, including documentation, storage, access, and preventive conservation.
- Strong knowledge of Spectrum standards, Museum Accreditation, and collections governance.
- Experience of digitisation programmes and digital asset management.
- Experience of rights management, copyright, licensing, and loans administration.
- Proven ability to **lead policy development and accreditation processes.**
- Experience supervising staff, volunteers, and research users.
- Strong ICT skills, including collections databases and digital systems.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to work independently, exercising professional judgement.

Desirable

- Experience of archive management within mixed collections.
- Experience of **funding applications and managing funded projects.**



- Experience of academic engagement, publications, conferences, or sector representation.
- Experience working within a local authority or trust-managed museum environment.