

Role: Libraries Curator	Region / Department: Conservation and Policy Directorate
Reports to: Head of Collections	Pay Band: Grade 5 Lower - £39,521 - £43,541 pro-rata, per annum & Essential Business Car User allowance, £3,800 per annum
Location: Edinburgh HQ, but with flexibility under our Hybrid Working guidelines	Type of Contract: 40 Hours per week, initial contract for three years
COST CENTRE : 2001	ACTIVITY CODE (e.g.: VSZ): CL2 Project Code: P240006 Fund: R050

JOB PURPOSE

The historic library collections held by the National Trust for Scotland provide a rich and varied record of readership and intellectual history across more than 40 historic properties. The Libraries Curator will lead initiatives to bring these collections to life for our visitors and open them up for researchers, both in person and digitally. Displayed and managed within historic settings, the current lack of centrally managed and accurate book listing hinders research, interpretation, and storytelling. With expertise in book history and rare books cataloguing, the Libraries Curator will work with external stakeholders and colleagues across the Trust to spearhead initiatives to catalogue and preserve the collections, open them up for research and enhanced visitor engagement, and to raise the profile of these collections both nationally and internationally.

SHORT-TERM PROJECT ACCOUNTABILITY

- The priority for this role will be to develop and promote a project to audit and catalogue the NTS library collections to professional standards. Within the first year, the post-holder will review existing collections data and systems, pilot potential cataloguing project models with support from external consultants and stakeholders and work closely with the fundraising team to seek support for an ambitious programme of cataloguing, public engagement and collections research. The priorities for the following years, and the longer-term extension of this role, will depend on the outcome of this initial development phase.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Plan and deliver a series of projects in book cataloguing to ensure a consistent standard of cataloguing across NTS properties, including recruiting and managing temporary staff, and managing project budgets to ensure targets and standards are met
- Deliver long-term improvements to the management of library collections at NTS through ongoing internal advocacy and contributions to strategic planning, both regionally and centrally
- Build and maintain key stakeholder relationships across the historic library sector, representing NTS at national and international sector events where appropriate
- Develop and implement policies for the management, cataloguing and development of library collections at the Trust to recognised professional standards
- Develop research strategies, and build partnerships to align external research requests with NTS research priorities

- Support the development of innovative visitor experiences and engagement activities relating to, and using, our library collections, both in person and online
- Build and maintain relationships with colleagues across NTS, to support better care, and security of library collections, as well as improved access and interpretation – this will be done in partnership with regional curators, regional conservators, and with property staff
- Promote NTS library collections nationally and internationally by researching the collections and sharing the outcomes with using the Trust's main digital channels, and through external professional networks.
- Other duties and responsibilities which may arise, ensuring that any work produced is outcome led, focused on delivery, and meets the needs of historic properties.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

Qualifications

Essential

- University Degree/Post Graduate Diploma in Information and Library Studies OR equivalent professional experience, such as 5 years experience of working with rare books in a professional library role
- Driving License, valid for driving within the UK

Desirable

- Training and experience in book conservation and collections management
- Project and/or personnel management qualification

Experience

Essential

- Experience and confidence in applying recognised international standards for the cataloguing of rare books, particularly with DCRM.
- Bibliographic knowledge of early modern printed books
- Demonstrable experience of using library collections management systems/databases
- Strong team player
- Experience of managing projects in a cultural heritage environment
- Excellent time management and ability to deal well with changing priorities and multiple stakeholders
- Excellent communication skills – both written and presentational
- Dynamic approach to making books 'come alive' through innovative interpretation and promotion and use of social media

Desirable

- Understanding of the principles of conservation and the practicalities of caring for rare books within historic buildings.
- An interest in integrated collections management across museums, archive and library collections
- Knowledge of a foreign language
- Line Management experience

- Experience of using library cataloguing module of 'Axiell Collections' collections management system
- University level course of study in book history or demonstrable research interest in book history

DIMENSIONS AND SCOPE OF JOB

Scale

- The National Trust of Scotland holds library collections at properties throughout Scotland (estimated at around 80,000 volumes), as well as a small central staff reference collection.
- Only c.7000 volumes have been catalogued onto Axiell Collections, and these records are not uniform, so the role will be responsible for bringing cataloguing up to standard across the collections
- Much of the significance of the collection is unknown until cataloguing can be completed. This role will be instrumental in improving knowledge of and access to the collection
- The post holder will be responsible for the planning and overseeing a project to ensure that the book collections located at around 40 visited properties will eventually be catalogued to an appropriate standard – this role is currently funded for the development phase of this vision, but we expect the role to extend for at least the duration of the major project, subject to funding.
- The post holder will be required to travel from time-to-time to properties and offices across Scotland. Many of these sites are not currently accessible by public transport, so driving will be required.
- Many of our library collections are located in historic properties where access to parts of the collections is only possible by use of the stairs.

People Management and key relationships

- The Libraries Curator reports to the Head of Collections who manages the Collections Team
- Also reporting the Head of Collections are two Archivists, the Curator of Plant collections, and the Collections Manager, who manages the Collections Conservation and Management team within the collections team.
- The Collections team sits within the Conservation and Policy Directorate, alongside the building conservation, archaeology, nature conservation, gardens, policy and health and safety teams.
- As a central function, the collections team works closely with regional curators, regional managers, property-based managers, and the collections care staff who manage the heritage collections on a daily basis.
- Although titled Libraries Curator, this role, along with the Curator of Plant collections, has a different focus from the regional curators in the Public Engagement and Research Directorate. The primary focus of this role is on collections management and care to enable and support engagement with the book collections. Whereas the roles of the four regional curators in the PE&R team are primarily focused on engagement and interpretation, with a secondary function to support improvements in collections management.
- The Libraries Curator has no permanent line reports, but will be expected to recruit and line manage a number of temporary project staff, and freelance contractors, once a cataloguing project is in place.

Finance Management

- This post does not hold an operational budget. However the postholder will manage project budgets up to £1million, and will need to use the MS Dynamics finance system to monitor budgets, and to raise and approve purchase orders.

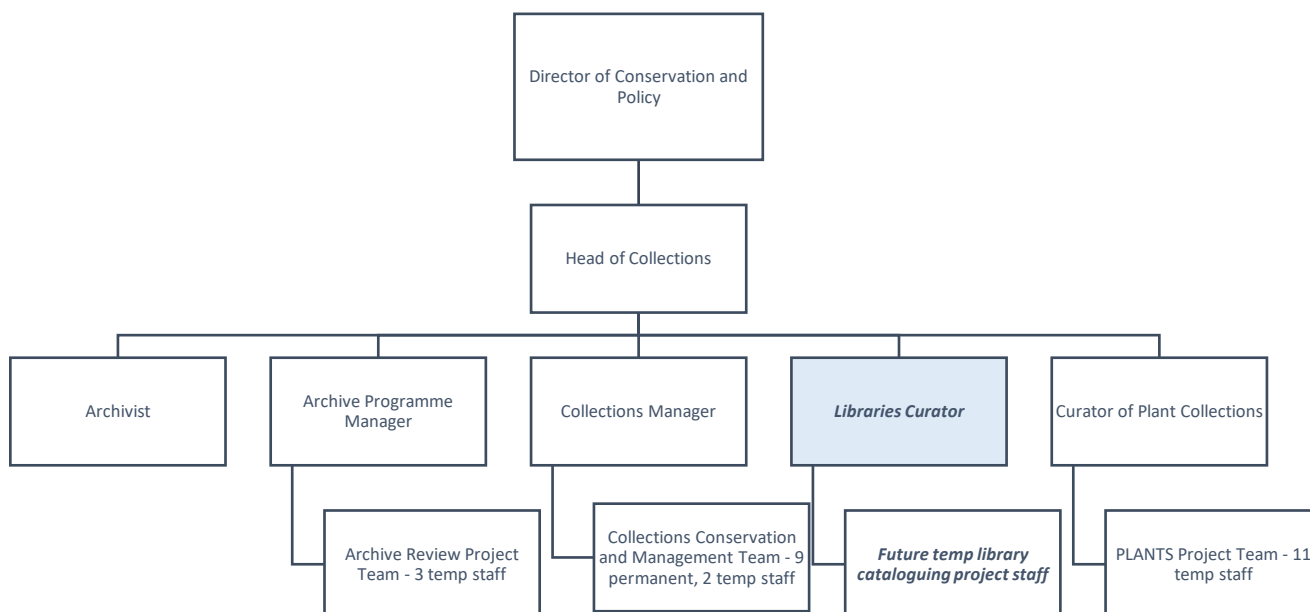
Tools / equipment / systems

- The post holder will be expected to be able to use equipment designed for safe access to and movement of books.
- In addition, they will be expected to have proficiency in the following:
 - Use of Axiell Collections, or a similar library collections management database
 - Use of Microsoft 365 software packages
 - Use of online research tools and finding aids
- The post-holder will be trained in the use of the Trust's finance system (MS Dynamics) and responsible for raising Purchase orders and monitoring and reporting on project budgets

Example key performance indicators and targets

- The post-holder will be required to ensure that the backlog of uncatalogued books is addressed and that existing records are standardised and where necessary improved.
- The post-holder will make the collections accessible through social media stories, research, publication, display and interpretation opportunities.
- The post-holder will adapt existing NTS collections management methodologies to assess and record significance and condition of the book collections to feed into the NTS conservation performance index

Place in organisational structure:



The Purpose, Context, Key Responsibilities, and Person Specification reflect the requirements of the job at the time of issue. The Trust reserves the right to amend these with appropriate

consultation and/or request the post-holder to undertake any activities that it believes to be reasonable within the broad scope of the job or his/her general abilities.

Applications

Interested applicants should forward their Curriculum Vitae (CV) OR an Application Form to the People Department, The National Trust for Scotland, by email via workforus@nts.org.uk, by Sunday 28th July 2024.

- Please ensure your CV includes your full name and contact details
- The CV file sent to us should be titled with your first initial and surname
- When submitting your CV please state the position and job location of the vacancy you are applying for in the subject title or body of your email: For example "Libraries Curator – Hermiston Quay" and include a short cover letter

Interviews are planned for Thursday 15th August at Hermiston Quay, Edinburgh.