



Job description: Curator and Collections Manager

Job title	Marion Makinson Curator
Reporting to	Chief Executive
Key responsibilities	<p>Manage and care for the Chawton House collection and Library.</p> <p>Lead a collections review</p> <p>Review and develop collections management and conservation procedures.</p> <p>Develop a good working knowledge of the collection to facilitate academic and public engagement.</p> <p>Manage the work of a team of collections volunteers.</p>
Hours	<p>0.7 FTE</p> <p>Some evening and weekend working may be required.</p>
Salary	£26,000.00 FTE
Location	Chawton House, Alton. Some travel, including overnight travel, may be required.
Duration	25 th November 2019 – 31 st March 2021

Chawton House is an historic house and estate once owned by Jane Austen’s brother Edward Knight and frequented by his sister who lived close by in a cottage he owned. It is home to two significant collections: one of women’s writing (1600 – c.1830) and one of the conjoined remainders of the property and libraries of the Knight family from Chawton House and Godmersham Park. The collections include a large quantity of printed material and rare books, but also art works, decorative arts, furniture and ephemera. The charitable objectives are to preserve the House and grounds for the benefit of the public, and to promote the study of early women’s writing. Having operated as an academic library until 2016, Chawton House is now open to the public seven days a week, has a lively events and exhibition programme and is seeking Museum Accreditation. This post is named in memory of a former volunteer and benefactor of Chawton House.

Purpose of the role

The purpose of the role of Curator is:

- To care for and conserve the collections of Chawton House, developing new Spectrum-compliant policies and procedures, leading a collections review, and processing loans and new acquisitions.
- To develop a good working knowledge of the collections and House to facilitate wider engagement and realise the potential of the collection.

Key areas of responsibility

Collections Management

- To be responsible for the care and conservation of the Chawton House and Knight collections.

- To conduct a collections review and forward plan for the development of the collections.
- Review the collections management system and collections documentation.
- Working with the Visitor Experience Manager, General Manager and the Chief Executive, manage the collections movements required for the House re-hang over Winter 2020.
- Review loans procedures, and manage all incoming and outgoing loans.
- Complete the collections elements of Museum Accreditation.
- Manage a team of collections volunteers and interns.

Collections knowledge and engagement

- Develop a working knowledge of the Chawton House collection, Knight collection, and the history of the Chawton House and estate.
- Create new content about the collections and House for a variety of audiences.
- Work with the Visitor Experience Manager, Communications and Public Engagement Manager, interns and collections volunteers in the creation of temporary exhibitions and displays.
- Lead House, exhibition and collections tours.
- Work with the Visitor Experience Manager to create a Chawton House retail offer and the Gardener to use the collection to inspire future garden plans.
- Assist Chief Executive in fundraising to support collections development, including acquisitions.

Partnerships

- Develop good working relationships with similar and local collections.
- Working with the Communications and Public Engagement Manager and Post Doctoral Researcher, develop relationships with researchers, academics and subject specialists to open up the collection to new users and audiences.

Other

- Represent Chawton House at events and meetings.
- Occasional Duty Management, including at least one lunch cover each week.
- To undertake other duties as required which may reasonably be requested of this role or are appropriate to this level of post.

This job description is not all encompassing. Over time the emphasis may alter without changing the general character of the role. Duties will be periodically reviewed with the post holder, and revised and updated in consultation if required.

Benefits

You are entitled to the following employee benefits:

- The annual leave allowance is 25 days and public holidays pro rata. TOIL operates, including if the post holder is required to work a public holiday.
- Access to the Pension Scheme including employer contributions
- Staff discount in the café and shop
- Access to professional development opportunities
- Art Fund Curator pass, free entry to other Historic Houses members and use of *Gardeners World 2for1* pass.

Personal specification

Essential criteria	Assessed at application	Assessed at interview
Experience of collections care and management of a library, books/manuscripts or literary collection.	X	X
Knowledge and experience of museum, archive or library special collections, especially access, conservation, object handling and collection management	X	X
Familiarity with the subject matter: early women's literature and the life and works of Jane Austen	X	X
Experience of SPECTRUM compliant collections management procedures	X	X
Good oral and written communication skills	X	X
Experience of working with volunteers and/or interns	X	X
Evidence of strong practical and organisational skills, demonstrating initiative, ability to prioritise and manage time, with an appetite for getting things done		X
Experience of developing and implementing changes to policy or procedure	X	X
Independent worker who is flexible and will work as part of a team		X
Desirable		
Experience of managing installation/de-installation of temporary exhibitions and changing permanent displays	X	X
Understanding of collections management and curatorship in an historic house	X	X
Understanding of the principles of good project management	X	X
Good customer care skills		X