

Art Fund Vivmar Curatorial Traineeship

Full-time

Fixed Term for 22 months (November 2025 until August 2027)

Salary £27,363 – £28,491 (pay award pending)

Plus generous benefits

About the role

We're offering a unique opportunity to take your first steps into the museum and gallery world through a new Curatorial Traineeship. You don't need previous experience working in an art gallery, or even a degree in art history. What matters most is an interest in art, an openness to learning, and a passion for making collections accessible and inclusive.

The National Galleries of Scotland is delighted to partner with Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums in hosting this traineeship. Art Fund Vivmar Curatorial Traineeships are generously supported by The Vivmar Foundation.

The traineeship offers a chance to gain in-depth, hands-on experience across two major Scottish institutions. It is designed to support those who are eager to build a career in curatorial practice, especially individuals from diverse or marginalised backgrounds who may not have previously considered working in the arts.

You will receive structured training in curatorial skills, including practical development in collection management software. Our strong team culture will provide you with guidance, mentoring and ongoing support as you build confidence in working with collections and engaging diverse audiences.

You will spend 16 months based in Edinburgh with the National Galleries of Scotland. From March 2027 you will transfer to Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums for 6 months, with your time split between the [Aberdeen Art Gallery](#) and [Aberdeen Treasure Hub](#). There is a travel and accommodation allowance to support the varied locations of this traineeship.

More information about Art Fund and its work can be found at www.artfund.org

The difference you'll make

At the National Galleries of Scotland you will help deliver key strategic priorities, in particular Equity, Diversity and Inclusion commitments, in relation to the national collection and audience engagement. You'll have the opportunity to work across the Modern & Contemporary Art and Portraiture & Photography Curatorial teams. Your main focus will be on collaboration across these collection areas (1900 to present day) and related audience-focused outputs.

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Playing an active role across our Curatorial teams, your duties will focus on:

- Supporting programme planning and delivery for exhibitions at the Portrait and Modern One, particularly working with living artists.
- Working across our day-to-day curatorial activity, including cataloguing and provenance research, and contributing to the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Review of our collection.
- Undertaking projects or responsibilities as delegated by senior colleagues which will change from time to time.
- Experiencing the work across our organisation through collaboration with other teams including Learning & Engagement, Research, Conservation and Collections Management, Digital, and Marketing and Communications.

With Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums your duties will focus on:

- Providing project support and delivery. This will involve an on-going artist self-portrait commissioning project and re-display of the Art Gallery's portraiture gallery.
- Undertaking research to improve the identification of sitters and supporting figures, and currently unidentified artists within the portraiture collection. This will enhance the museum's database records.
- Being involved in the identification of future artists for the commissioning of works to enhance the diversity of the portraiture collection, as well as supporting artists already involved in this work.
- Supporting the development of and helping to guide the direction of a co-creation project to re-imagine the current Aberdeen Art Gallery portraiture gallery.

Who we are looking for

To succeed in this role, you'll need the following range of knowledge, skills, and experience:

- Ability to collaborate as part of a team and to work flexibly and calmly under pressure.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to work collaboratively as part of a team and communicate effectively with colleagues across the organisation.
- A flexible and proactive attitude, able to adapt to different working environments and manage competing priorities calmly and efficiently.
- Good organisational skills with strong attention to detail, especially accuracy in record keeping, data input, and handling collections or exhibition tasks.
- A commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and an interest in making museums and galleries more welcoming and representative of different communities.
- A demonstrable interest in visual art, culture, or heritage through personal experience, voluntary activity, education, or self-directed learning.
- Willingness to learn, ask questions, and take on new challenges with support.

It would also be great if you have:

- Although not essential, experience of working or volunteering in a museum, gallery, library, archive, or cultural organisation would be an advantage.
- Knowledge or lived experience that brings fresh perspective to under-represented stories or voices in museums and galleries.

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- Some experience supporting projects, events, or exhibitions in any context (e.g. school, community, digital platforms).
- Research or writing skills, particularly if you've used them to explore themes of art, history, identity, or storytelling.
- Familiarity with using digital tools or social media to share ideas or connect with audiences.

We are National Galleries of Scotland

Our three Edinburgh galleries are the National, Modern and Portrait. We house and look after Scotland's amazing world-class art collection – one of the finest in the world. Step inside and explore treasures from Botticelli and Titian to the very best modern art to contemporary portraits of pop culture icons. And, as you'd expect, the world's greatest collection of Scottish art, our national collection. We also have an outstanding collection of Western art from the late Middle Ages to the present day.

We're a space for thinking, dreaming, doing, and playing. Soak up the art. Meet friends in the cafés. Have a family picnic surrounded by the sculptures in the Modern grounds. Be inspired by our amazing art films. Choose your own experience. There is no one way to enjoy Scotland's national collection. We are yours to discover.

As well as displaying our art at our three Edinburgh sites, we also share it through an active programme of partnership across Scotland, the rest of the UK and abroad, as well as online.

We conserve and research our collections and we are committed to reaching the widest possible audience through our ambitious plans. Visitor numbers to our sites in Edinburgh totalled an average of 2.5m visitors a year in the years prior to the global pandemic.

What's important to us

We make art work for everyone. That's our purpose and it drives everything we do. This is an exciting time for us, as we move forward with our engaging strategic vision: Art for Scotland: Inspiration for the World.

We're putting our audience at the heart of what we do. Matching Scotland's rich collection, our expertise and creativity with the needs and wants of our visitors. Finding new ways to connect with more people and create an innovative, inclusive organisation that can meet the challenges of our ever-evolving world.

We're committed to looking at how we operate as well as how we engage our audiences. We will play our part in tackling the Climate Emergency, and we're embedding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in the way we work. We want everyone to feel a sense of belonging and freedom to be themselves at work or at play with us.

Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums

Who we are: Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums is a public sector organisation and forms part of Aberdeen City Council. The team also provide care of and access to the Aberdeenshire Council's accumulated archive and strives to achieve the same ambitions for that collection as it does on behalf of Aberdeen City Council.

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The city's collection has grown over centuries, and has been shared with the public since 1885, first through the Aberdeen Art Gallery, then the wider museums and archives services at Aberdeen City & Aberdeenshire Archives, Maritime Museum, Treasure Hub, Provost Skene's House and Tolbooth Museum. Exploring, re-interpreting and using the collection can help all of us explore our past, share our present and inspire our future, showing the best of Aberdeen to the world. Visitor numbers across our site exceeded 330,000 in year June 2024 to June 2025.

Our purpose is to share the city's collection in engaging ways. To do this we need to care for and understand the collection, create opportunities for people to access the collection and venues, promote and enhance what's on offer, become more resilient and sustainable, and ensure we are relevant and accessible to all.

Our vision is to be a place for people to explore Aberdeen's identity and culture, and its connections to the world – making Aberdeen a better place to live, work and visit.

We want to collect contemporary art and craft, objects with meaning and connection, and new and old stories about the city to reflect our city's culture in its many forms – creating a record of our city and its place in the world for future generations. We aim to contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous city. We want to open the doors to curiosity, enquiry and discovery, and look after the wonderful cultural collection and historic buildings we have been entrusted with.

What's on offer for you

Our colleagues will tell you great things about working here. We aim to ensure the National Galleries of Scotland is a great place to work, where our people thrive in a culture where we are trusted, empowered, and engaged to achieve our true potential. We offer a range of benefits to promote healthy working lifestyles for all our colleagues. Details specific to this role are:

Salary

£27,363 – £28,491 (pay award pending). Starting salaries will normally be at the minimum rate depending on experience.

Hours

35 hours per week excluding a one-hour unpaid lunch break each day. Occasional weekend work and flexibility with working schedule are essential and some early evening work may be required. We're also committed to supporting flexible working options for everyone which includes flexible working, working remotely and flexitime policies.

Holidays

When you first join, you'll get 36.5 days holidays per year (including public and privilege holidays).

Where you'll be based

For the first 16 months you will be based at National Galleries of Scotland: mainly between the Portrait, 1 Queen Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1JD and Modern One, 75 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3DR. However, you'll work across all of our Galleries based in the heart of Edinburgh - the National, Portrait, and Modern (One and Two).

For the final 6 months, you will be based at Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums where your time will be split between the Aberdeen Art Gallery, Schoolhill, Aberdeen, AB10 1FQ and Aberdeen Treasure Hub, Granitehill Road, Northfield, Aberdeen, AB16 7AX.

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Pension

We are a [Civil Service Pension](#) employer. You get to choose if you want a defined benefit or stakeholder pension. The benefits of joining the scheme include [generous employer contributions](#) to your future pension, life assurance, and options to increase your pension. If you join the alpha Civil Service pension scheme our contribution will be 28.97% for this role.

Other benefits

Family friendly working policies, free or discounted entry to various visitor attractions, staff discount at our shops and cafés, Cycle to Work Scheme, wellbeing support and services including our Employee Assistance Programme.

The closing date for completed applications is 12 noon on Monday 15 September 2025.

Please note that the successful candidate will be subject to Basic Disclosure Scotland security clearance.