Paper Conservator Touring Exhibitions

Part-time 17 hours per week (2.5 days)
Fixed Term to 31 March 2030
Salary £37,614 - £41,138 per annum pro rata
Plus generous benefits package
On site with flexible working

About the role

We are delighted to announce a new opportunity for a Paper Conservator to join our Conservation Department at the National Galleries of Scotland.

We are seeking a skilled and collaborative Conservator to help us share our collection with audiences around the world. You must have practical hands-on experience in the conservation of paper within an art gallery, museum or similar cultural or heritage organisation. Ideally, you will have a degree with a recognised post-graduate conservation qualification in Paper Conservation or substantial practical experience.

To succeed in this post, you'll enjoy being resourceful, proactive, testing out new ideas, and providing solutions. You will have excellent interpersonal skills and be a clear communicator. With strong organisation skills you will have the ability juggle several projects simultaneously.

Our extensive works on paper collection is often on the move. You'll be at the heart sharing this collection with the widest possible audience ensuring that works from our rich and varied collection travel safely, sustainably and look their very best when on display. Your work will play a vital role in delivering our wider strategy, supporting our Public Offer, equalities, and environmental priorities.

You'll help preserve the collection while enabling us to deliver a generous lending programme from our diverse collections, also an ambitious number of exhibitions across our galleries. Through research and outreach, you will deepen knowledge of the collection and help attract new audiences to engage with it.

This is more than just a conservation role. It is an opportunity to make a lasting difference to the way we care for, understand and share our collection.

About the Touring Programme

National Galleries of Scotland is launching an ambitious international touring programme contributing to our aim to make art work for everyone. This new initiative builds on past touring success and increases opportunities for the collection to be shared with audiences across the world. The touring programme is also part of our strategy to grow our income to ensure our future financial sustainability.

Work has already begun and we are recruiting a number of posts to support taking the touring programme forward. The programme will run initially to 31 March 2030. The success of the initiative will determine next steps for both the programme and the team supporting it.

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You will help to deliver this ambitious new initiative. This is an excellent opportunity for a results-driven individual to demonstrate their impact and contribute to shaping the success of the programme.

The difference you'll make

The role sits within our Paper Conservation section within the Conservation Department. You will also work closely with colleagues specialising in frames, preventive conservation, paper, sculpture, and time-based media. Together, we are a collaborative department where everyone strives to keep abreast of recent developments within the wider profession. Knowledge-sharing, research, and innovation are encouraged and celebrated. You will have the chance to develop and embed professional approaches to painting conservation across the collections.

Reporting to the Lead Paper Conservator your core activities will include:

- Assessing the condition of works on paper (including prints, drawings, photographs, books and archival material for our busy touring exhibition and short-term loan programme.
- Preparing works for travel with a focus on preventive conservation measures and rigorous documentation.
- Delivering a variety of interventive paper conservation projects with sensitivity, skill and imagination while undertaking research and exploring new ways of working, where appropriate.
- Developing appropriate methodologies for documenting works on paper including entering information into our collections management database.
- Supporting the other paper conservators with exhibition preparation and delivery.
- Communicating and collaborating frequently with colleagues from across the organisation, for example, other conservators, conservation and art handling technicians, members of collection management and curators.
- Delivering a variety of interventive paper conservation projects with sensitivity, skill and imagination while undertaking research and exploring new ways of working, where appropriate.
- Keeping abreast of developments in the paper conservation sector and undertaking appropriate art historical and heritage science research to enhance our knowledge of the collection and inform working practices.
- Delivering activities to widen our audiences and encourage engagement with conservation.
- Working with and supervising volunteers, placement students, and external conservation specialists.

Who we are looking for

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

- A recognised qualification in paper conservation with at least two years' experience post- graduation, ideally within the museums sector.
- Experience of assessing and preparing works for loan and implementing solutions for safe transport and public access.
- A track record of delivering a range of paper conservation projects with the ability to carry out research and devise innovative solutions to new challenges.

- Excellent time-management and organisational skills, with the ability to prioritise and deliver under pressure.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to produce clear, accurate and well-structured documentation.
- The ability to work effectively as part of a team, and the confidence to take on a leading role when required.
- Strong connections within the paper conservation sector, and commitment to continuous professional development.
- Knowledge of relevant Health and Safety regulations.
- Excellent IT skills, including MS Office and image processing software.
- Experience of using a collections management database.
- Professional accreditation through the Institute of Conservation (ICON) PACR scheme, or a clear commitment to work towards this.

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 2.6 million visitors in 2025.

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 Equality, 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.

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
£37,614 - £41,138 per annum pro rata. Starting salaries will normally be at the minimum rate depending on experience.

Hours
17.5 hours (2.5 days) per week excluding a one-hour unpaid lunch break each full day. The actual days of working will be fixed but might be Monday to Wednesday, however these can be flexible and discussed at interview stage. The majority of these days will be working on site with the occasional opportunity to work remotely. We're also committed to supporting flexible working options for everyone which includes flexible working, and flexitime policies.

Holidays
When you first join, you'll get 36.5 days holidays per year pro rata (including public and privilege holidays). After 5 years your annual leave will increase to 41.5 days pro rata.

Where you'll be based
You will be based at the Modern One, 75 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3DS where free car parking is available on site. However, you will work across all of our Galleries based in the heart of Edinburgh - the National, Portrait, and Modern Two – and will also work regularly at our off-site art stores.

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 Thursday, 12 November 2026.

Please note that the successful candidate will be subject to Basic Disclosure Scotland security clearance. This role is also subject to Civil Aviation Authority regulations which require a 5-year background check to meet the required security measures.

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