



Natural
History
Museum

Candidate pack

Head of Exhibitions



Full time, permanent

About Us

The Natural History Museum is one of the world's best-loved visitor attractions, as well as a leading science research centre and commercial event space. We use the unique collection of more than 80 million objects that we look after and our unrivalled expertise to tackle the biggest challenges facing the world today. Each year, we welcome more than five million visitors to our family-friendly exhibitions, products and experiences at our sites in London and Tring. But we reach many times that number through our national, global and digital activities and initiatives.

We're at a pivotal moment in our history. Our new strategy sets out our ambition to play a central role in tackling the increasing threats facing the natural world. We have ambitious plans leading up to our 150th anniversary in 2031 and are looking for talented people who share our mission and are excited to help drive these changes. Along the way, we aim to offer you a supportive and nurturing environment, and the opportunity to be part of a high-performing team.

Diversity and inclusion matter to us

We welcome applications from everyone! Diversity, inclusion and the feeling of belonging matters to us. By attracting people from a broad range of backgrounds we can continue to look at the world with fresh eyes and find new ways of doing things. We offer a stimulating and professional working environment. All our staff work to embody our behaviours of being curious, ambitious, pioneering, teaming up, acting with pace and sharing the wonder.

We know we have more to do, but we're committed to making sure that everyone who works here feels valued, respected and that they can thrive.

Thriving at the Museum: the way we work

Our vision is a future where both people and planet thrive. To accomplish this, we're delivering an ambitious strategy by 2031 to create advocates for the planet. To achieve this shared goal requires each of us to behave in ways that help everyone to thrive. We are proud to work at the Museum and have identified the qualities we all need to embody to reach this shared ambition.



We're ambitious. To make a difference on a global scale we have to push the boundaries and be big and bold not only in our thinking but in the goals we set. We act with integrity, but this doesn't mean we're rigid or inflexible. We drive ourselves and others to be excellent at what we do and identify opportunities to make a difference to the organisation wherever we can.

We're curious. We never stop learning. We ask questions to advance our understanding, skills and professional knowledge and look outwards beyond the organisation to learn from others. We seek out and actively listen to different perspectives and to take time to reflect. We're thoughtful and always receptive to new ideas and ways of working.

We share the wonder. We are captivated by the natural world, proud of our treasures and trusted guardians of our collections. We relish telling stories to inspire others. We're passionate about what we do, sharing our own knowledge and expertise. We're proud of where we work and never take this for granted.

We're pioneering. We're not afraid to try something new. We experiment, embrace complex problems and use good judgment and evidence to innovate and take risks. Always adaptable, we're ready to change our approach. We don't dwell on setbacks or get preoccupied with problems – we find solutions.

We team up. We respect the expertise of others and recognise that we produce the strongest outcomes when we put the best ideas together. We trust each other, keep things simple and make it easy for others to do the right thing. We empower and support each other, sharing information, skills and experience so that all of us are equipped to succeed. We never let difficult moments develop into bad working relationships.

We act with pace. We prioritise action, are efficient and always focus our efforts where we know we can make the biggest impact. We don't wait to be told what to do - we take the initiative and deliver on our responsibilities with momentum. We're decisive and once a plan is set, we all get behind it to make it a success.



Role Summary

Delivering world class engaging special exhibitions enables us to deliver our Vision and Mission to a diverse range of audiences, at South Kensington and through our touring programme.

The role of Head of Exhibitions will lead the creative development of a programme of exhibitions at South Kensington, having responsibility for the content, interpretation and creative production of exhibitions, as well as strategic oversight of the exhibition programme which will deliver successful outputs for audiences.

The role will lead a team of Exhibition Leads and interpretation developers, working closely with the museum's Scientists and Curators, driving excellence, ambition and rigorous approach to the creation and curation of exhibitions. It will provide expert guidance and leadership to the team, based on the post holder's knowledge and experience of delivering exhibitions in the cultural sector.

This role will also be instrumental in shaping the forward programme for exhibitions, by developing new ideas and shaping the creative vision for the programme and individual projects.

The development and delivery of projects will require collaborative working with other teams across the museum to maximize the opportunity and impact of each exhibition in support of the Museum's strategy and its financial resilience.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Lead creative direction for special exhibition projects and the programme, being responsible for oversight of the creative process, managing and inspiring others to produce excellent exhibitions which align with the Museum's strategic and financial ambitions.
- Develop and deliver the strategic plan for exhibitions, refining its principles and setting ambitious targets for success.
- Oversee the interpretation and creative delivery of up to four accessible and engaging exhibitions a year that respond to a broad and diverse audience, evolving and refining approaches informed by audience research and advocacy.
- Lead the development of new ideas for exhibitions and their business cases. Identify opportunities, partnerships and stories that will deliver excellent and successful exhibitions for South Kensington and the touring market.
- Work closely with key partners, holding the relationship and facilitating successful creative collaborations.
- Lead the Exhibition Team of interpretation developers and interpretation exhibition managers. This team sits along-side the Galleries Team who are managed by the Head of Public Space Programme. Together, both teams form the Exhibitions and Galleries Team.

- Line-manage members of the Exhibition Team.
- Support best practice, be responsible for developing, and enhancing process and practices, and implementing them through the life cycle of projects, knowledge share within the Exhibitions and Galleries team.
- Lead the annual special exhibition business planning process, defining long-term financial targets. Collaborate with Commercial, Marketing, Touring, Digital teams to develop robust business cases and promotion of special exhibitions. Feed into the monitoring of progress against annual targets.
- Across multiple exhibition projects, plan and allocate resources within the team so that competing demands are managed, and outputs are delivered efficiently on time.
- Provide senior leadership and representation for special exhibitions on Boards and across a range of Museum activity.
- Work in close alignment with the Design Studio, Central Projects Office, Audiences and Global Touring - aligning ambition and resources for special exhibitions. Support their processes such as procurement, design briefs, project delivery, evaluation.
- Work with Science, and support the Exhibition Team to deliver robust research plans and ensure intellectual integrity and a collections-focused approach.
- Externally advocate for the Museum at national and international level supporting sector-leadership.
- Support a programme of ongoing gallery maintenance.
- As part of the Public Programmes Leadership Team proactively contribute to the successful delivery of the activities of the Department.
- Other activities which support the delivery of this role.

What we're looking for

Experience:

- Substantial experience of delivering galleries or temporary exhibitions, with a focus on engaging the public with science through collections.
- Experience of creative direction, and delivering ambitious, creative exhibitions with intellectual integrity.
- Experience of managing teams, a broad range of internal stakeholders, collaborating across teams and influencing others in order to achieve successful outputs for audiences to meet strategic ambitions and values.
- Experience of leading a team of diverse practitioners working on multiple projects with competing timelines.
- Proven experience of delivering imaginative interpretation, and a deep understanding of content.

Knowledge:

- In-depth understanding of interpretive planning, exhibition & exhibit (interactive) design and production.
- Understanding of the exhibition sector, excellence and best practice, and of its commercial demands and opportunities.
- Understanding of learning within a Museum environment.
- Understanding of audiences needs in relation to science and museums.

Skills

- Proven ability to deliver multiple projects on time, to budget and to a high standard.
- Highly organised and able to manage competing demands and to strategically prioritise
- Effective communicator, with high level influencing skills able to advocate and work with senior managers, leaders and high profile external stakeholders
- Able to create a culture of development, high performance and people management that leads to improved outputs. Experience of leading teams, and line managing.
- Able to align functions, resources and to deploy people and skills optimally to achieve strategic priorities.
- Uses long-term, innovative thinking and networking to stimulate new opportunities or solutions and early identification of corporate risks.
- Effectively operates within the Museum's project and programme framework ensuring that appropriate governance structure is in place.

Key information

Salary: £60,000 per annum, grade 3

Hours: Full time, 36 per week

Contract: Permanent

The Museum supports flexible working with the role onsite a minimum of 3 days a week.

All positions at the Natural History Museum are conditional subject to receipt of:

- Proof that you are legally entitled to work in the UK
- A Basic Disclosure Check from the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS)
- Satisfactory references covering the last 3 years of your employment or education
- Health clearance

Our benefits

In addition to competitive salaries, we offer a wide range of benefits to help you thrive both personally and professionally.



Wellbeing and work-life balance

- Generous annual leave allowance of 27.5 days holiday plus public holidays
- Enhanced sickness pay to support you through periods of illness
- Wellbeing provision including Mental Health First Aider support and regular learning sessions on wellbeing topics
- Flexible working and hybrid working arrangements where the role allows
- A 24/7 employee assistance programme including face to face counselling sessions
- Occupational health advice and support
- Eye care vouchers for display screen users
- Supportive policies to help you manage life events, for example becoming a carer, menopause, transitioning at work



Financial

- Generous defined contribution pension scheme with employer contribution up to 10% of salary
- Life insurance that will pay 4 times your salary to a beneficiary in the event of your death in service
- Season ticket and cycle loans to help you spread the cost of cycling to work
- Rental deposit loan scheme – to help you spread the cost of a deposit on a rental property
- 20% discount in our NHM shops both online and in store
- Discounts in our on site restaurants and coffee shops, and use of our staff canteen at South Kensington
- Discounts at local shops and restaurants within the South Kensington area



Cultural and lifestyle

- Free entry with your NHM staff pass to a wide range of museums and galleries across London and around the UK
- Every staff member is entitled to 10 complimentary tickets each year to give to friends and family

- Access to the Civil Service Sports and Social Club for a small monthly fee, offering a range of benefits such as discounted tickets to visitor attractions and gym membership discounts
- Access to the NHM Sports and Social Association for a small fee which provides access to our fitness centre at South Kensington and a range of activities and clubs including football and yoga



Family friendly

- Enhanced pay for maternity, paternity and adoption leave
- Flexible working and hybrid working arrangements where the role allows
- Supportive policies to help you manage fertility treatment
- Paid special leave to help you manage unexpected life events or to make caring arrangements

How to apply

To apply, please complete an online application through our [recruitment portal](#).

The closing date for applications is 23:59 on 4 January 2026.

First stage assessment for this role is likely to take place in week commencing 12 January 2026.

How we hire

We want everyone to be able to perform at their best throughout our hiring process. We've put together some information about how we hire as well as tips for completing your application and taking part in our assessment process. You can find this information on our careers site [here](#).

Reasonable adjustments

We welcome applications from disabled candidates, and are committed to adapting our recruitment processes to make sure all candidates can perform at their best. If you require adjustments to our application process or require materials in a different format, contact us at hrteam@nhm.ac.uk.

If you need adjustments to the assessment stage of our hiring process, indicate this on your application form and we'll contact you before the assessment to put these in place.

We're part of the Disability Confident Scheme and guarantee an interview to all disabled candidates who meet the minimum shortlisting criteria for the role.