

Role Description

Conservation Manager

POWERHOUSE

Cluster	Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport
Department/Agency	Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences
Division/Branch/Unit	Conservation
Role number	50050926
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 9/10
ANZSCO Code	139999
PCAT Code	1119192
Date of Approval	May 2025
Agency Website	Powerhouse.com.au

Agency overview

The Powerhouse Museum is located at the intersection of arts, design, science, and technology and plays a critical role in engaging communities with contemporary ideas and issues. It is the custodian of more than half a million objects of national and international significance and is considered one of the finest and most diverse collections in Australia. We are undertaking a landmark \$1.2 billion infrastructure renewal program, spearheaded by the creation of the new museum, Powerhouse Parramatta; expanded research and public facilities at Powerhouse Castle Hill; the heritage revitalisation of the iconic Powerhouse Ultimo; and the ongoing operation of Sydney Observatory.

Primary purpose of the role

The Conservation Manager is responsible for setting the vision and strategic direction for the conservation and care of the Powerhouse's nationally and internationally significant collection.

The Conservation unit is responsible for the care and management of the collection according to standards appropriate to Australian conditions and in accordance with legislative obligations, strategies and actions and in line with accepted National Standards. The team has major responsibility for ensuring the preservation, maintenance, conservation, storage and protection of the collection. Conservation develops policy outlining the high-level principles and guidelines that the Museum follows to achieve its aim of caring for and protecting its collections.

This role leads a multidisciplinary team to deliver outstanding conservation outcomes across preventive care, research, exhibitions, loans and capital development projects, while positioning the Powerhouse at the forefront of global conservation practice. This position plays a key role in shaping collection policies, influencing institutional priorities, managing cross functional projects and representing the institution in national and international forums.

Key accountabilities

- Develop and implement strategic plans for conservation and collection care that align with the Powerhouse vision, research agenda and public engagement strategies.
- Inspire, develop and mentor a multidisciplinary conservation team fostering an environment of innovation, knowledge exchange and excellence. Recommend, develop, evaluate and implement

policies, procedures, operational plans, and initiatives pertaining to conservation and collection care.

- Ensure all conservation activities align with the highest ethical standards, legislative frameworks, sustainability goals and collection risk management best practices.
- Promote and support conservation research projects, material studies, scientific analysis and innovative conservation methodologies ensuring outputs position the Powerhouse as a leader in ethical, sustainable and culturally safe conservation practices globally.

General requirements

- Promote a continuous learning and innovation culture, ensuring the team is equipped to meet current and future design challenges. Support career development initiatives and succession planning to build high-performing teams that align with Powerhouse's strategic goals.
- Identify opportunities for process enhancements across the team's projects. Drive initiatives to increase efficiency and improve working practices to improve output quality and team performance.
- Adhere to all obligations, responsibilities, and legislative requirements under current Work Health & Safety (WHS) Acts and Regulations, ensuring all areas under supervision are monitored for WHS risks and hazards and are reviewed regularly.

Key challenges

- Working collaboratively with Museum staff who are physically distributed across multiple sites;
- Fostering and building a strong leadership and interdisciplinary culture

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Head of Collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive overall direction, instruction and guidance from as well as providing updates on key projects, issues and priorities; keep informed.
Collections Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively working to optimise opportunities and shared strategic planning and programming
Curatorial and Production Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively working to optimise opportunities and shared programming
Programs and Engagement Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance opportunities for collection access
External	
Ministry officers, government departments, auditors, insurers, legal advisors, freight agents, consultants, contractors, suppliers, other international, national and state cultural institutions, professional consultants, members of the public and educational institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure excellent customer service, and maximise relationships and opportunities
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representing Powerhouse Museum and its activities and policies

Role dimensions

Decision making

- High level of autonomy and is accountable for the delivery of programs and services across Conservation, working within approved plans, budget and quality standards
- Delegated authority in decisions relating to staff approvals, allocation of work to team members and monitors progress.
- Refers to Head of Collections for decisions requiring significant change, project outcomes or timeframes; require a high administrative or financial delegation; or submission to Executive.
- Plans, leads and organises the work of the Conservation team to achieve agreed business objectives and performance criteria
- Submits reports, analysis, briefing and other forms of advice in final form with minimal input from supervisor

Reporting line

Head of Collections

Direct reports

Conservation unit

Budget/Expenditure

As per Powerhouse delegations

Key Knowledge and Experience

- High level awareness and understanding of physical preservation; collections risk management frameworks, knowledge of collection care and conservation policy, procedures and standards
- High level written and oral communication skills; analytical and decision-making skills; project management and strategic planning skills
- Direct experience in delivery of conservation and collections preservation programs
- Significant experience in policy and strategy development and implementation.
- Proven experience in managing people within a large multi-disciplinary museum or business environment.

Essential requirements

- Relevant tertiary qualifications or equivalent experience working in a collecting institution.
- National Police check for employment purposes

Capabilities for the role



The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.



The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

FOCUS CAPABILITIES			
Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent the organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way and encourage others to do so Act professionally and support a culture of integrity Identify and explain ethical issues and set an example for others to follow Ensure that others are aware of and understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate Act to prevent and report misconduct and illegal and inappropriate behaviour 	Adept
	Manage Self Show drive and motivation, an ability to self-reflect and a commitment to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a professional role model for colleagues, set high personal goals and take pride in their achievement Actively seek, reflect and act on feedback on own performance Translate negative feedback into an opportunity to improve Take the initiative and act in a decisive way Demonstrate a strong interest in new knowledge and emerging practices relevant to the organisation 	Advanced
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively Collaborate with others and value their contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage a culture that recognises the value of collaboration Build cooperation and overcome barriers to information sharing and communication across teams and units Share lessons learned across teams and units Identify opportunities to leverage the strengths of others to solve issues and develop better processes and approaches to work Actively use collaboration tools, including digital technologies, to engage diverse audiences in solving problems and improving services 	Adept
	Influence and Negotiate		Adept

FOCUS CAPABILITIES

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate from an informed and credible position Lead and facilitate productive discussions with staff and stakeholders Encourage others to talk, share and debate ideas to achieve a consensus Recognise diverse perspectives and the need for compromise in negotiating mutually agreed outcomes Influence others with a fair and considered approach and sound arguments Show sensitivity and understanding in resolving conflicts and differences Manage challenging relationships with internal and external stakeholders Anticipate and minimise conflict 	
 Results	Deliver Results Achieve results through the efficient use of resources and a commitment to quality outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek and apply the expertise of key individuals to achieve organisational outcomes Drive a culture of achievement and acknowledge input from others Determine how outcomes will be measured and guide others on evaluation methods Investigate and create opportunities to enhance the achievement of organisational objectives Make sure others understand that on-time and on-budget results are required and how overall success is defined Control business unit output to ensure government outcomes are achieved within budgets Progress organisational priorities and ensure that resources are acquired and used effectively 	Advanced
	Think and Solve Problems Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and apply critical-thinking techniques in analysing information, identify interrelationships and make recommendations based on relevant evidence Anticipate, identify and address issues and potential problems that may have an impact on organisational objectives and the user experience Apply creative-thinking techniques to generate new ideas and options to address issues and improve the user experience 	Adept






FOCUS CAPABILITIES

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Business Enablers	Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek contributions and ideas from people with diverse backgrounds and experience Participate in and contribute to team or unit initiatives to resolve common issues or barriers to effectiveness Identify and share business process improvements to enhance effectiveness 	
	Understand and apply effective planning, coordination and control methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand all components of the project management process, including the need to consider change management to realise business benefits Prepare clear project proposals and accurate estimates of required costs and resources Establish performance outcomes and measures for key project goals, and define monitoring, reporting and communication requirements Identify and evaluate risks associated with the project and develop mitigation strategies Identify and consult stakeholders to inform the project strategy Communicate the project's objectives and its expected benefits Monitor the completion of project milestones against goals and take necessary action Evaluate progress and identify improvements to inform future projects 	Adept
 People Management	Manage and Develop People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and clearly communicate roles, responsibilities and performance standards to achieve team outcomes Adjust performance development processes to meet the diverse abilities and needs of individuals and teams Develop work plans that consider capability, strengths and opportunities for development Be aware of the influences of bias when managing team members Seek feedback on own management capabilities and develop strategies to address any gaps Address and resolve team and individual performance issues, including unsatisfactory performance, in a timely and effective way Monitor and report on team performance in line with established performance development frameworks 	
	Engage and motivate staff, and develop capability and potential in others		Adept

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identifying performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes however may be relevant for future career development.

COMPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES			
Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	Adept
	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Demonstrate inclusive behaviour and show respect for diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Communicate clearly, actively listen to others, and respond with understanding and respect	Adept
	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Intermediate
 Results	Plan and Prioritise	Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Adept
	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for own actions, and adhere to legislation, policy and guidelines	Adept
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Intermediate
	Technology	Understand and use available technologies to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Adept
	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and apply procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Intermediate
 People Management	Inspire Direction and Purpose	Communicate goals, priorities and vision, and recognise achievements	Intermediate
	Optimise Business Outcomes	Manage people and resources effectively to achieve public value	Intermediate
	Manage Reform and Change	Support, promote and champion change, and assist others to engage with change	Intermediate