

Role Description

Assistant Curator



Cluster	Department of Enterprise, Investment & Trade
Agency	Museums of History NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Programming, Production & Audience Division/ Curatorial & Research Team
Location	Sydney
Classification/Grade/Band	Assistant Curator Grade 2
Role Number	CUR011
ANZSCO Code	511112
PCAT Code	3119192
Date of Approval	July 2022
Agency Website	www.mhnswnsw.au

Agency overview

Museums of History NSW (MHNSW) is an executive agency within the NSW Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade and reports to the NSW Minister for the Arts. MHNSW is administered under the Museums of History NSW Act 2022.

MHNSW brings together the museums, historic houses and associated collections previously in the care of Sydney Living Museums with the vast collection of more than 13 million items held by the NSW State Archives. This includes one of the world's most complete and important collections documenting colonisation.

Providing greater access to and understanding of our state's rich and varied histories, stories and cultures is paramount to MHNSW with truth-telling and respect at the core of our approach. With a formidable asset base worth \$1.6 billion, we are focused on growing, managing, preserving and providing public access to the State Archives Collection and the objects, materials, buildings, places and stories that shape the historical, social, political and cultural identity of NSW.

MHNSW also operates commercial services that contribute significantly to the organisation's sustainability, including retail, food and beverage, venue hire, commercial records storage, records management, digitisation and consultancy services.

Primary purpose of the role

Provide assistant curatorial services to interpret, document, promote and develop collections and create informative, compelling and engaging curatorial content to ensure the objectives of MHNSW's strategic and business goals are met.

Key accountabilities

- Provide assistant curatorial services to interpret, document, promote and develop MHNSW's collections and assist in creating informative, compelling and engaging curatorial content for a portfolio of identified curatorial projects and initiatives contributing towards MHNSW's annual program, special projects and strategic initiatives.
- Undertake research and develop compelling and informative curatorial content to increase visitor access to, and audience engagement with, MHNSW collections, both on site and online.
- Employ a range of contemporary platforms and place-making approaches to engage audiences and promote MHNSW's scholarship and storytelling in the fields of social, cultural and public history as represented by MHNSW's collections.
- Actively support MHNSW's research agenda to build the agency's knowledge base, and conduct research as directed.
- Work with relevant infrastructure and systems to archive, manage and facilitate access to research findings and curatorial insights for internal and external customers.
- Contribute informative, knowledgeable and engaging curatorial insights into MHNSW's collections to assist in securing support from donors and supporters, and engagement with volunteers, members and MHNSW partners.
- Support the supervising Curator to implement collection development strategies and initiatives and provide advice on potential acquisitions to ensure compliance with relevant collection policies.

Key challenges

- Maintaining a balanced work program consisting of a diverse range of assistant curatorial services that variously collaborate, partner and support MHNSW teams and functions to deliver on organisational priorities.
- Supporting a portfolio of projects, initiatives and activities simultaneously while to ensure curatorial outcomes are delivered in accordance with planning and production milestones.
- Collaborating with a range of internal teams and external stakeholders to ensure curatorial imperatives are developed and maintained through project lifecycles.

Key relationships

Who	Why
Internal	
Manager Curatorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receive guidance from in relation to individual work plans and curatorial program priorities and deliverables.• Collaborate with to conceive, plan and develop curatorial opportunities and outcomes across the curatorial service functions.• Provide timely, relevant and helpful advice on all curatorial aspects of MHNSW collections as defined in the primary purpose.• Collaborate with to achieve curatorial performance objectives.
Curatorial Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with to conceive and develop curatorial opportunities and outcomes across the curatorial service functions.• Actively participate in team meetings and team development activities.• Support peers to grow their knowledge, skills, networks and practices in the curatorial sphere.
Research Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate, communicate, and share information in order to deliver Curatorial and Research Team outcomes.• Actively participate in team meetings and team development activities.

Who	Why
Museum Portfolio Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide curatorial advice and support on the care and presentation of collections. • Maintain effective working relationships. • Develop and supply accurate, informative, knowledgeable and engaging curatorial insights and strategies for portfolio staff to use in presentations, tours, programs and other forms of interpretation. • Work with to manage resources and increase self-generated income where possible. • Collaborate with to develop and deliver engaging and creative visitor and place-based experiences at properties.
Collections & Access Services Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice to, and develop curatorial recommendations in regard to different conservation, collection and built fabric challenges. • Develop and supply accurate, informative and knowledgeable curatorial insights and strategies for Collections & Access Services staff to incorporate into presenting complex information about MHNSW's collections as defined in the primary purpose. • Contribute curatorial content towards the documentation of MHNSW's collections. • Provide advice to inform, and support the implementation of, appropriate procedures for collections care, disaster procedures and heritage conservation planning, works and asset management
Commercial Services Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with to maximise commercial revenue and provide curatorial advice to guide the upkeep of the properties and collections.
Production & Experience Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with to develop curatorial content for programs (education and public). • Develop and supply accurate, informative, knowledgeable and engaging curatorial insights and strategies for Experience & Learning staff to incorporate into presenting complex information about MHNSW's collections as defined in the primary purpose.
Philanthropy & Corporate Partnerships Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with to develop and present accurate, informative, knowledgeable, and engaging curatorial insights that result in increased support for and engagement with MHNSW.
Marketing Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with to ensure audience insights are incorporated into curatorial scoping and content development. • Collaborate with to develop marketing and communications campaigns, and author content for publication to promote exhibitions, collections and stories, curatorial outcomes and practices. • Contribute curatorial content that enriches MHNSW's membership program and increases member engagement with MHNSW.
Staff across MHNSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with on curatorial issues and discussions relating to the MHNSW collections as defined in the primary purpose. • Contribute to MHNSW-wide issues and share specialised curatorial knowledge and insights. • Maintain effective and collaborative working relationships. • Develop and supply informative, knowledgeable and engaging curatorial insights and strategies for staff to use in presentations, tours, programs and other forms of interpretation. • Work with to manage resources and increase self-generated income where possible. • Collaborate with to conceive, plan and develop curatorial opportunities and outcomes that profile the MHNSW collection.

Who	Why
External	
Cultural organisation, government bodies, community groups and heritage/history sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with on issues relating to the curatorial work at MHNSW. • Develop and maintain effective working relationships. • Work with media as directed. • Liaise with to promote and develop scholarship and knowledge of MHNSW's collections as defined in the primary purpose.

Role dimensions

Decision making

This role:

- Takes active ownership of own work.
- Has a high level of autonomy and is accountable for the delivery of work assignments and projects on time and to expectations in terms of quality, deliverables and outcomes.
- Refers to supervisor for decisions that require significant change to strategic approach; that are likely to escalate; cause undue risk; create substantial precedent; or are outside of delegations limits.
- Prioritises and manages multiple tasks and demands including matters with critical turnaround times.
- Maintains efficient lines of communication.

Reporting line

This role reports to Manager Curatorial.

Direct reports

Nil

Budget/Expenditure

Nil

Essential requirements





- Tertiary qualifications in history/museums studies/heritage interpretation or related field and experience working in a cultural, museums or heritage environment.
- Experience in researching, writing, developing and evaluating innovative and engaging interpretation projects in a cultural, museum or heritage environment.
- Experience working with a wide range of software applications used to maintain and update information eg, Microsoft Suite, records databases and collections management systems.
- Willingness to work across MHNSW sites and ability to travel to multiple locations.

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.

Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage	Intermediate
	Act with Integrity	Foundational
	Manage Self	Adept
	Value Diversity	Intermediate
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Adept
	Commit to Customer Service	Intermediate
	Work Collaboratively	Intermediate
	Influence and Negotiate	Intermediate
 Results	Deliver Results	Intermediate
	Plan and Prioritise	Intermediate
	Think and Solve Problems	Intermediate
	Demonstrate Accountability	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Finance	Foundational
	Technology	Intermediate
	Procurement and Contract Management	Foundational
	Project Management	Intermediate

Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
Personal Attributes Manage Self	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for and take advantage of opportunities to learn new skills and develop strengths Show commitment to achieving challenging goals Examine and reflect on own performance Seek and respond positively to constructive feedback and guidance Demonstrate a high level of personal motivation
Relationships Communicate Effectively	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailor communication to the audience Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups Monitor own and others' non-verbal cues and adapt where necessary

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework

Group and Capability	Level	Behavioural Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for others to be heard • Actively listen to others and clarify own understanding • Write fluently in a range of styles and formats
Relationships Work Collaboratively	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a supportive and co-operative team environment • Share information and learning across teams • Acknowledge outcomes which were achieved by effective collaboration • Engage other teams/units to share information and solve issues and problems jointly • Support others in challenging situations
Results Deliver Results	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete work tasks to agreed budgets, timeframes and standards • Take the initiative to progress and deliver own and team/unit work • Contribute to allocation of responsibilities and resources to ensure achievement of team/unit goals • Seek and apply specialist advice when required
Results Plan and Prioritise	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the team/unit objectives and align operational activities accordingly • Initiate, and develop team goals and plans and use feedback to inform future planning • Respond proactively to changing circumstances and adjust plans and schedules when necessary • Consider the implications of immediate and longer term organisational issues and how these might impact on the achievement of team/unit goals • Accommodate and respond with initiative to changing priorities and operating environments
Business Enablers Project Management	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform basic research and analysis which others will use to inform project directions • Understand project goals, steps to be undertaken and expected outcomes • Prepare accurate documentation to support cost or resource estimates • Participate and contribute to reviews of progress, outcomes and future improvements • Identify and escalate any possible variance from project plans