

Collections Assistant – Stores Move

The assignment will be conducted through the University of Cambridge Temporary Employment Service and will be based and line managed within the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology

Assignment hours: 36.5h, Monday to Friday

Assignment duration: Start date of either 30.9 or 14.10, until 28.2.2025

Hourly rate: £13.50

Responsible to: Collections Team Coordinator and Project Administrator (Stores Move, MAA)



How to apply:

Please forward a CV and 1-page covering letter, with details of two referees, the Museum team (admin@maa.cam.ac.uk) to let us know of your interest by 5pm on 19 September 2024 at the latest. Please also use this email address for any general enquiries about the role. The HR paperwork will then be completed with the Temporary Employment Service HR team.

Collections Assistant – Stores Move

Purpose of the assignment

This is a chance to be part of the most ambitious collections project undertaken at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA) for generations: the inventory, assessment and relocation of a quarter of a million artefacts in MAA's off-site stores to a new central Cambridge facility.

As one of a team of Collections Assistants, supervised by the Collections Team Coordinator, you will inventory, photograph, assess, pack and transport objects from their current location, and install the collections in their new home. You will be trained in all areas of practical collections work and be involved in every aspect of the move. This will be an intense but exciting project, working to challenging targets, but offering a unique opportunity to engage with hugely diverse world-class collections. You will be contributing to a friendly and supportive environment where curiosity and learning are encouraged.

Key responsibilities

- Inventory and document the collections, with focus on archaeological material, following MAA's procedures and documentation guidelines, ensuring accuracy and clarity of data.
- Identify, troubleshoot and resolve collection issues as they arise, with guidance from the Collections Team Coordinator, Collections Managers and Curators.
- Prepare and pack the collection appropriately for safe transport and permanent storage, meeting MAA's standards, and update locations on MAA's FileMaker database. Carry out specialist packing of complex or large artefacts. Assist with transport of artefacts and rehousing in the new reserve collection facility.
- Undertake safety training, adhere to training and risk control measures so as to carry out work safely.
- Support and contribute to external communications about the project including print, online and social

media. Support facilitating access for visitors as directed by the Collections Team Coordinator.

- Carry out the work with due respect for cultural sensitivities relating to diverse objects. You may encounter a small number of human remains within the collections and a professional and sensitive approach is vital. Adapt practice to the specifics of objects in accordance with MAA guidelines and protocols.
- Contribute to an open-minded, respectful and inclusive working environment.



Person Specification

CRITERIA	Essential	Desirable
Experience		
Experience in working with museum collections including object handling, packing, assessment and documentation		✓
Experience of working with archaeological or ethnographic collections		✓
Skills		
Demonstrable interest in museums and collections	✓	
Computer literacy	✓	
Manual dexterity for object handling	✓	
Good oral and written communication skills	✓	
Good interpersonal skills with ability to work with colleagues and external contacts, with discretion	✓	
Excellent attention to detail	✓	
Ability to organise own time and work	✓	
Appreciation of culturally sensitive issues related to collections at MAA		✓
Awareness of issues and procedures in collections care		✓
Knowledge of current professional standards (SPECTRUM) procedures and ethics in museum practice		✓
Awareness of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) procedures		✓
Qualifications		
A Level or equivalent	✓	
Relevant museum qualification		✓
Additional Requirements		
Ability to work independently and as part of a team	✓	
Valid UK driving license		✓



The Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology

The Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology (MAA) is one of the most important collections of its kind in the UK. The collections in our care span nearly 2 million years of human history and prehistory, and all inhabited continents, from the archaeology of the Cambridge region to ancient Egypt, and ethnographic artefacts and photographs from Papua New Guinea to the Arctic .

MAA is part of a consortium of eight University of Cambridge Museums and the Botanic Garden (UCM). It is a sub-department of the Department of Social Anthropology and is a key resource for teaching and research, particularly in partnership with the departments of Social Anthropology and Archaeology.

The collections are Designated for their national and international importance, and attract visitors from across the world. We maintain a programme of temporary exhibitions and loans to major exhibitions within the UK and internationally. For information about MAA's staff, collections and programmes see www.maa.cam.ac.uk.

The collections are extraordinarily diverse, materially and culturally as well as in terms of size and fragility. They represent the cultural heritage, history and creative spirit of peoples in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Oceania and Europe including the UK, covering the earliest periods of human prehistory to the work of contemporary artists, scholars and activists. We also hold one of the UK's most extensive collections of global textile and costume, substantial Roman sculptures, fragile plaster casts and boats from across the world among many others. They have cultural significance to communities locally and around the world, as well as important research value, and MAA is committed to addressing and exploring their histories, making them available to the widest possible audience. The collections can be searched through MAA's online public catalogue at www.collections.maa.cam.ac.uk.

MAA works closely with research partners in the University and beyond, including institutions, communities, artists and practitioners across the world. Current and future projects include



The Stores Move Project

In 2020 MAA embarked on the most ambitious collections project in generations: the move of 300,000 artefacts from the archaeology and anthropology collections, and from 162 countries, from the Museum's current off-site stores to a new facility – the Centre for Material Culture (CMC) – near the heart of Cambridge.

Generous funding from the University of Cambridge Investment Fund has supported the refurbishment of the historic Cold War Cambridge Nuclear Bunker for use as a collections storage and study centre, with 1700 m² of artefact storage and a 114m² workroom and teaching space. It has also supported a full-time team of Collections Assistants, workshop technicians and Coordination roles to process artefacts and move them to the CMC.

Since the team started work in September 2020 more than 85% of the collections have been documented, condition- and hazard-checked, photographed, repacked and moved to the new facility. Updated records with images have been uploaded to MAA's [online catalogue](#), with more than 56% of the MAA collections now digitised and online. Anthropology collections have been largely completed, and archaeology collections will be the focus for the remainder of the project. In March 2023 approval was given by the University to expand the project team, to make up for the disruption to work caused by the

COVID pandemic in 2020 and 2021. The project, now in its final year, is predominantly working with archaeological collections from the Americas and anthropological collections from Asia and the Arctic.

As part of this dedicated team, you will work with colleagues on the project including the Collections Managers for Archaeology and Anthropology, Research Associate in Conservation and the Senior Curators for Anthropology, World Archaeology and European Archaeology to make the internationally significant collections cared for by MAA digitally and physically accessible, for local audiences, students, researchers and stakeholders from communities and nations of origin. This is a unique project, offering unparalleled exposure to a unique collection and to the practices of care, documentation and access that we follow at MAA. The emphasis is on continuous learning and sharing, whatever our role, and always with our audiences and international partners in mind as the end users of everything we do. We now in the final stage of the project and proud to be creating an enduring legacy of accessibility, transparency and inclusion.



Right to work in the UK

We have a legal responsibility to ensure that you have the right to work in the UK before you can start working for us. If you do not have the right to work in the UK already, any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon you gaining it.

References

Offers for the assignment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Screening Checks

This assignment requires a basic disclosure (criminal records) check and security check. Any offer of employment we make to you will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of this check; whether an outcome is satisfactory will be determined by the University.

Information if you have a disability

The University welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring fair treatment throughout the recruitment process. We will make adjustments to enable applicants to compete to the best of their ability wherever it is reasonable to do so and, if successful, to assist them during their employment.

We encourage you to declare any disability that you may have, and any reasonable adjustments that you may require. This will enable us to accommodate your needs throughout the process as required. However, applicants and employees may declare a disability at any time.

If you prefer to discuss any special arrangements connected with a disability, please contact the Museum Manager, who is responsible for recruitment to this position.

Equality & diversity

The University has built its excellence on the diversity of its staff and student community. We aim to be a leader in fostering equality and inclusion, and in promoting respect and a sense of belonging for all. We encourage applications from all sections of society. All appointments are made on the basis of merit. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy, along with a range of diversity networks for women, black and minority ethnic and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff. More details are available here: <http://www.equality.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

The University has a bronze Race Equality Charter aware, with framework for improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within higher education. Furthermore, the University's Athena SWAN award recognises and celebrates good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women.