



PEOPLE'S  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM

# People's History Museum

Textile Conservator



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# 1. Job Description: Textile Conservator

**Salary:** £22,627

**Contract:** Full time, fixed term for 9 months

**Hours:** 35 hours per week, with flexible working and consideration of job-share.

**Annual leave:** 22 days plus bank holidays

**Responsible to:** Conservation Manager/Officer

**Responsible for:** Supervising volunteers where appropriate

**Location:** People's History Museum and off-site stores (central Manchester), with occasional home working available.

**Other benefits:** Pension with GMCA pension fund; 20% discount in PHM shop and Open Kitchen Cafe & Bar; flexible working policy.

## Job Purpose

To support People History Museum's (PHM) vision of being the 'go to place' for democratic engagement, and the home of ideas worth fighting for. The Conservator will contribute to this through the care and conservation of all the collections, including the banner and textiles collections, and the delivery of the highest standards of service within the Textile Conservation Studio (TCS). This includes Preventive Conservation; supporting exhibitions, displays and events; and core duties such as storage improvement and documentation.

The Conservator will join the Conservation Team in delivering conservation treatments of external commissions conducted by TCS to generate income for the museum. Working alongside the Conservation Officer and Conservation Manager, large projects will be completed as a team, with individual and collaborative decision-making.

## Key Responsibilities:

### Collections display and access

- Undertaking all aspects of conservation work, including: work on the museum's historic banner and textile collection; examination, assessment, documentation and photography; and advising on the object collections
- Undertaking handling, storage, display and transport of the museum's banner, textiles and object collections to ensure their preservation
- Assisting with the programme of external conservation work including compilation of conservation reports and recommendations for future care, with accurate time estimates and costings
- Maintaining appropriate written, electronic and photographic records, including updating of PHM's Collections Management System (KeEmu)
- Taking responsibility, with colleagues, for the care and conservation of the museum's collections in storage, on the permanent galleries and in changing exhibition spaces
- Monitoring all collection displays in PHM's galleries and exhibition spaces
- Providing advice and guidance for colleagues as to environmental, display, handling and storage requirements for all collections
- Supporting access for visitors and all museum audiences including schools, community and academic interest groups

- Supporting the implementation of the Digital Plan in relevant areas of conservation work
- Delivering Conservation Studio tours and Gallery Tours as required
- Responding efficiently to enquiries from the public, academics and other colleagues
- Facilitating research of the collection

### **Collections care**

- Packing and storing objects adhering to museum and conservation standards
  - Handling objects and supporting their use safely, including helping to install and remove objects from exhibitions and displays
- Photography and object labelling to support documentation of objects and banners
- Undertaking pest management practices throughout the building
- Ensuring TCS, banner store and other stores are maintained in a clean and safe condition

### **General support**

- Working across teams and departments to ensure collections access to audiences
- Assisting with the daily administration of TCS
- Keeping abreast of new technology in particular computerised systems and being prepared to undertake agreed training
- Undertaking other duties as required and as commensurate with the level of responsibility
- Performing all tasks in line with the museum's Equal Opportunities, Environmental and Health and Safety policies
- Contributing to PHM's CRM systems as appropriate; performing all tasks in compliance with Data Protection and GDPR Regulations

### **Professional development and advocacy**

- Keeping abreast of best practice in relation to all conservation disciplines, including textiles
- Identifying and supporting PR, marketing and social media opportunities to promote the museum and develop the profile of conservation work
- Promoting conservation work in the museum's media focused activities as required
- Representing the conservation studio and the museum in the conservation community in person and on social media platforms

## **2. Values, Knowledge and Skills**

This role is designed for early-career candidates who have recently completed a professional qualification, but are yet to gain paid or permanent employment in the sector. We are looking for someone who can demonstrate their knowledge and skills across the following criteria, with the opportunity for on-going training and development to support the successful candidate once in post.

We are an equal opportunities employer and are fully committed to providing opportunities to all; however, this role involves working in our stores, which are not as accessible as we would like. Please do contact us if you would like to discuss any adjustments you may need, or would like more information about the accessibility issues.

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

- Recognised professional qualification in textile conservation
- Sound understanding of the Professional Standards in Conservation
- Knowledge and interest in the varied materials that make up a textile collection covering historic and contemporary materials
- Knowledge of and experience using digital technologies and IT, such as use of social media platforms, and/or photography
- Basic knowledge of social and economic barriers to equality, and an enthusiasm for helping to overcome these

### **Skills and Abilities**

- A high level of manual dexterity, attention to detail and ability to undertake repetitive tasks
- Good organisational skills and ability to work methodically
- Strong communication skills including the ability to be creative when communicating information with others
- Able to work independently or as part of a team
- Strong problem solving skills

### **Values and Behaviours**

- Able to work on varied projects simultaneously and to multiple deadlines
- Interest in developing within the specialism of textile conservation and across other disciplines of conservation
- A strong commitment to equity and improving diversity and access across the museum and its audiences

### **3. Diversity and Inclusion Information**

PHM prides itself on being a welcoming and inclusive organisation, profoundly committed to advancing equality and diversity in the broadest sense. We value the benefits that diverse perspectives bring to PHM's work for people of all ages to learn about, be inspired by and get involved in ideas worth fighting for; ideas such as equality, social justice, co-operation, and a fair world for all.

We recognise we currently under-represent Black people and People of Colour, disabled, and LGBTQ+ people and those with intersecting identities in our workforce; PHM is actively working to address this and encourage applications from these backgrounds. While the successful candidate will be selected purely on merit, in the event of a tie between two candidates with equal experience, we may select a candidate who helps us better represent the communities the museum serves.

This role involves working in our stores, which are not as accessible as we would like. While every effort will be made to accommodate access requirements, we are unable to make certain changes due to the nature of the building. If you would like more information, or you would like to discuss any required adjustments with us, please do get in contact.

PHM is committed to a flexible working policy, and supports job-sharing. Work hours are completed on a weekly-basis (unless otherwise agreed) with any overtime accruing Time Off in Lieu. Very occasional evening and weekend work may be required.

## 4. How to Apply

To apply, please send a completed application form ([available from on PHM's website](#)) to [Charlie.corkin@phm.org.uk](mailto:Charlie.corkin@phm.org.uk). If you require the application form in a different format, please get in touch to discuss your application.

If you are unable to email your written application, please post a hard copy to People's History Museum, Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester, M3 3ER.

The closing date for applications is **Thursday 22 July 2021 at 12 noon**. Interviews will be held on **Friday 30 July 2021**. Each application will be assessed against the criteria for the roles, as published in this document. Candidates will be invited to bring their portfolio to share at interview, if they have one.

If you have any questions regarding your application, or would like to arrange a chat to discuss the role, please contact Charlie Corkin at [charlie.corkin@phm.org.uk](mailto:charlie.corkin@phm.org.uk)

## 5. About Us

People's History Museum is the national museum of democracy, telling the story of its development in Britain: past, present, and future. We provide opportunities for people of all ages to learn about, be inspired by and get involved in ideas worth fighting for; ideas such as equality, social justice, co-operation, and a fair world for all.

PHM began in the 1960s when a group of activists started to collect radical and working class history material. The collection grew over the years to include the largest Trade Union Banner collection in the world, along with key objects linked to particular events and people, including Thomas Paine, Chartists, Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners, and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. PHM now holds a collection of over 60,000 objects and an adjoining archive holding over 800 linear metres of archival materials, which are both designated as being of national importance. Between these, PHM tells the story of over 200 years of people fighting for their ideas and beliefs; from early reformers in the Civil War to climate justice and the Black Lives Matter campaigners today.

We are committed to diversifying the stories that we tell, and decolonising our approach to our collections in an intersectional way, bringing minoritised and previously ignored stories to the forefront of history, including the histories of migration and ethnically minoritised communities, Black British history, LGBT+ history, disabled people's history and the ways in which these intersect.

The Textiles Conservation Studio is a core part of the museum, and the telling of these stories; facilitating access to collections of all materials for display, loan, and research. The studio is specially designed and set up for the conservation of the large textile banners that are so important to our collection, and we are proud to be highly recognised for this work across the spheres of both conservation and union history. It's not just textiles though, our collection is made up of a huge variety of materials from silk and plaster, to hardboard and PVC; and more and more we are working to maximise the public access to all of these areas of the collection.

As part of our role within the museum the Textiles Conservation Studio provides a conservation service to external individuals and organisations, conserving, and thus allowing access, to diverse and local stories across the country, and raising money for the day to day running of the museum.

The museum currently welcomes a local, national and international audience (totalling 125,000 people each year, pre-Covid-19) as well as reaching people online through our digital activities. We are keen to involve audiences and communities in all aspects of our work and to use models of co-curation, collaboration and crowdsourcing when developing and delivering our programmes of exhibitions and events. Engaging people directly in the work of the museum helps to ensure we are representative of many different communities and able to provide an inclusive space for their voices, stories, and ideas.

The museum employs 36 members of staff and has an additional team of freelance staff, a steering group and community programme team supporting our programmes, and volunteers and placement students.

PHM is an independent museum, charitable trust and company limited by guarantee, and is funded mostly by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Culture and Social Impact Fund. Additional funding is sourced through trust and foundation funding, visitor donations, sponsorship, and our Radicals scheme, along with the work of the museum's Trading Company, which runs our shop, café and venue hire services.

For more information about the museum and its collection, check out our [story](#) and [collections page](#).