

Job Description

Lead Museum name: Dorset County Museum

Job Title: Thomas Hardy Exhibition Project Curator

Job Reference No: 2019/2

Location: Dorchester

Responsible to: Executive Director / CEO

Working Days/Hours: 0.6 FTE

Contract Durations: 22 months to May 2021

Salary: £23,500 pro rata

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Wessex Museums Partnership is a thriving consortium of the four principal museums across Dorset and Wiltshire that tell the stories of Wessex from prehistory to now, namely: Poole Museum, Dorset County Museum, The Salisbury Museum and Wiltshire Museum. Over 300,000 people visit the partner museums each year.

Our ambition is: to inspire more people to explore and enjoy the outstanding art and heritage of the region and to understand its significance to their lives. By sharing the amazing story of the region in new and exciting ways, we aim to make a major contribution to the cultural, social and tourism economies of Dorset and Wiltshire.

It is an exciting moment for the Wessex Museums Partnership as from April 2018, we have been designated one of the Arts Council England's new National Portfolio Organisations. As such we have an ambitious programme to deliver over the next three years. As a result, the Partnership is looking for a Project Curator to lead on the development and delivery of a major temporary exhibition about the life of Thomas Hardy, opening in May 2021. Staged simultaneously across all four partner venues, this exhibition will explore Hardy's relationship with Wessex (in both its historical and fictional senses) using literary sources, costume, textiles and social history collections. Collectively the four exhibitions will take the visitor on a journey of discovery to explore the stories of Hardy and the urban, Hardy and the rural, Hardy and the sea, and Hardy and the ancient world.

MAIN PURPOSE:

- Exhibition concept development and interpretation planning
- Leadership of content research, object selection and image research

- Identification and administration of object loans
- Coordination and delivery of exhibition text, label writing and catalogue production
- Oversight and management of exhibition installation and fit out process

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To deliver four simultaneous temporary exhibitions relating to Thomas Hardy opening at Dorset County Museum, Poole Museum, Wiltshire Museum and Salisbury Museum in May 2021, working with the Exhibition Project Team and external Exhibition Designers as appropriate
2. To refine the exhibition concept and development of a supporting interpretation plan, determining a consistent exhibition look and feel, 3D design principles and graphic approach.
3. To undertake research, make final object selections, write text panels and labels, identify images (including relevant copyright permissions), plan interactive concepts and collate other information as required in support of the exhibition interpretation plan, working with support from curators in the Exhibition Project Team as appropriate
4. To lead on the identification of loan objects, and act as registrar responsible for the arrangement, management and logistics of these loans.
5. To research and write an accompanying exhibition catalogue, including writing the catalogue text and identifying suitable images, and working with the Editorial Committee at the Dorset County Museum on its final production and distribution.
6. To work closely with the Exhibition Project Manager on budget setting, budget management, and the production of briefing documents for external designers and other suppliers, supporting the procurement process as required.
7. To lead the meetings of the Exhibition Project Team, overseeing and ensuring the delivery of agreed work packages, with support from the Exhibition Project Manager and Project Sponsor as required.
8. To oversee the delivery, management and coordination of the exhibition build and installation process, working with and supported by curatorial teams from the individual partner venues.
9. To assist with the development of a learning, education and outreach programme connected to the exhibition, working with staff from the relevant learning teams from the individual partner venues.
10. To support the development and delivery of a promotional and digital strategy connected to the exhibition, working with the partnership Marketing and Digital Officer and staff from the individual partner venues as necessary
11. To support the delivery of successful fundraising initiatives and grant writing applications, working with the partnership Fundraising and Development Manager and staff from the individual partner venues as necessary

12. To travel in Dorset and Wiltshire (and to other areas of the UK) in pursuance of the responsibilities of the post in an agreed timely manner, including lone-working and the carrying of materials in a vehicle.
13. To undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time commensurate with the level of the post.
14. To participate in training and development commensurate with the level of the post.
15. To comply with all decisions, policies and standing orders of the Wessex Museums Trust, and any relevant statutory requirements, including the Equality Act, the Health and Safety at Work Act and Data Protection Act.

The details contained within this Job Description may be varied or altered from time to time.