

Role Description

Assistant Research Curator



Department/Agency	Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport/Museums of History NSW
Division/Branch/Unit	Curatorial & Collections Division / Curatorial & Research Team
Role number	51016161
Classification/Grade/Band	Assistant Curator Grade 2
Senior executive work level standards	Not Applicable
OSCA Code	511112
PCAT Code	3119192
Date of Approval	July 2022
Agency Website	http://www.mhnsw.au

Agency overview

Museums of History NSW brings together a portfolio of iconic museums, rich collections and heritage sites, the nation's oldest archive collection, vital recordkeeping services and expert staff.

We bring history to life by sharing the stories of our places and collections. Through the State Archives Collection, we manage NSW's official documentary heritage, supporting government transparency and the public's right to access information.

These two roles do not just sit side by side – they inform and enrich each other. By preserving and making accessible our places, collections and archives, we create opportunities for people to explore the past and better understand their own place in the world. By supporting lifelong learning and inviting people to come together, we promote civic literacy, empathy, wellbeing and belonging.

We believe that history belongs to everyone. This is the promise and the purpose of MHNSW.

Museums of History NSW is a state cultural institution, established under the Museums of History NSW Act 2022. It is an agency of the NSW Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport (DCITHS).

Primary purpose of the role

The Assistant Research Curator provides curatorial research services that contribute to the interpretation, documentation, promotion and development of collections to create informative, compelling and engaging research-based curatorial content that meets the objectives of Museums of History NSW's strategic and business goals.

Key accountabilities

- Provide assistant curatorial research services that contribute to the interpretation, documentation, promotion and development of MHNSW's collections and assist in creating informative, compelling and engaging research-based 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 contemporary research methodologies to produce outcomes that 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 Research Curator and Manager, Research 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 research 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

Internal

Who	Why
Manager, Research	• Receive guidance in relation to research program priorities and deliverables. • Collaborate to conceive, plan and develop research opportunities and outcomes across the Research team's service functions. • Collaborate to achieve curatorial performance objectives.
Head of Curatorial and Research	• Receive guidance in relation to individual work plans and research program priorities and deliverables. • Receive guidance from in relation to curatorial and research outcomes, policies and procedures. • Receive guidance from and provide regular updates on projects, issues and priorities. • Provide ongoing support to in relation to aspects of the history, significance, care and conservation of collections.
Curatorial Team	• Collaborate to conceive and develop curatorial outcomes across the curatorial service functions. • Actively participate in team meetings and team development activities.
Research Team	• Collaborate, communicate and share information in order to deliver Team goals and outcomes. • Actively participate in team meetings and team development activities. • Support peers to grow their knowledge, skills, networks and practices in the curatorial sphere.

Who	Why
Production and Experience Team	• Collaborate with to develop and deliver engaging and creative visitor experiences incorporating exhibition, display and place-based platforms, as directed. • Develop and supply curatorial content and outcomes to inform the creative development of exhibitions, displays and place-based experiences, as directed.
City & House Museums Portfolio Teams	• 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 and Heritage Teams	• Develop and supply accurate, informative and knowledgeable curatorial insights and strategies for Collections & Access and Heritage 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 collections.
Commercial Services Team	• Collaborate with to maximise commercial revenue and provide curatorial advice to guide the upkeep of the properties and collections.
Experience & Learning Team	• Collaborate with to develop curatorial content for programs (education and public), as directed. • 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.
Development and Fundraising Team	• Collaborate with to develop and present accurate, informative, knowledgeable and engaging curatorial insights that result in increased support for and engagement with MHNSW, as directed.
Marketing & Audience Insight Team	• 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	• 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.

Who	Why
	Develop and supply accurate, informative, knowledgeable and engaging curatorial insights and strategies for staff to incorporate into presenting complex information about MHNSW's collections as defined in the primary purpose.
State Records Authority NSW	Collaborate with to conceive, plan and develop curatorial opportunities and outcomes that profile the State Archives collection.

External

Who	Why
Cultural organisation, government bodies, community groups and heritage/history sector	- Liaise with in relation to project outcomes. - Maintain effective lines of communications to enable implementation of projects. - Develop and maintain functional working relationships and networks. - Collaborate with to gain support for and facilitate special project across MHNSW.
Contractors, consultants and services providers	To create and deliver interpretation projects.

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, Research

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 research-based interpretation projects in a cultural, museum or heritage environment.



- Familiarity with current research methodologies and approaches, and evidence of their application to public-facing outcomes.
- 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.

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.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	• Keep up to date with contemporary knowledge and practices • Seek and take advantage of opportunities to learn and apply new skills • Commit to achieving challenging goals • Seek and respond positively to constructive feedback and advice • Examine and reflect on your performance	Adept
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively Communicate clearly, pay attention to others and respond with understanding and respect	• Tailor communication to suit the needs, backgrounds and perspectives of diverse audiences and address barriers to participation • Clearly explain complex ideas and arguments to individuals and groups • Create opportunities for others to contribute • Share information with other teams and business units to enable informed decision-making • Write clearly and concisely in a range of styles and formats • Use contemporary communication channels to share information, engage and interact with diverse audiences • Pay attention and encourage others to express their views	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively Collaborate with others and value their contribution	• Build a supportive and collaborative team environment • Share information and learning across teams • Acknowledge outcomes that were achieved by working together effectively • Share information with others to solve problems together • Support others in difficult situations • Use collaboration tools, including digital technology, to work effectively with others	Intermediate
 Results	Deliver Results Achieve results by using resources efficiently and committing to quality outcomes	• Seek and apply specialist advice when needed • Complete work tasks within set budgets, timeframes and standards • Take the initiative to progress and deliver your own work and that of the team or business unit • Contribute to assigning responsibilities and resources to ensure the team or business unit achieves goals • Identify any barriers to achieving results and resolve these where possible • Proactively change or adjust plans when needed	Intermediate
 Results	Plan and Prioritise Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	• Understand the team and business unit's goals and set work tasks that contribute to meeting them • Set and develop team goals and plans, and use feedback to inform planning • Respond proactively to changing circumstances and adjust your plans when necessary • Consider how immediate and longer-term organisational issues might affect the achievement of your team and business unit goals • Adapt and respond proactively when priorities and work environments change	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Project Management Understand and use effective ways to plan, coordinate and control projects	• Research and analyse data at a basic level to inform and support the achievement of project deliverables • Contribute to developing project documents and resource estimates • Contribute to reviews of progress, outcomes and future improvements • Identify when projects differ from their plans and tell your supervisor	Intermediate

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identify 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.

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	Intermediate
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Foundational
 Personal Attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Be inclusive and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate
 Relationships	Commit to Customer Service	Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	Intermediate
 Relationships	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Intermediate
 Results	Think and Solve Problems	Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	Intermediate
 Results	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for your actions, and follow legislation, policy and guidelines	Intermediate

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Foundational
 Business Enablers	Technology	Understand and use available technology to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and use procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Foundational