

YORK UNIVERSITY

Department of Human Resources

Job Posting – CPM (Confidential, Professional and Managerial Employees)

Position Title: Curator of Collections and Contemporary Art Engagement Reports To: Director/Curator	Job Code: 955231 CPM Salary Grade: F Faculty/Department: AGYU
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I. JOB PURPOSE:

In consultation with the Director/Curator, the Curator of Collections and Contemporary Art Engagement (hereafter referred to as Collections Curator) is responsible for managing York University's art collection, maintaining its safe keeping, and developing policy in relation to ethical procurement, storage, exhibition, and loans with a particular focus on developing best practices for the stewardship and collection of Indigenous and cultural objects and artworks.

The Collections Curator will work with the Director/ Curator in relation to artwork acquisitions, assisting and guiding the Acquisitions Committee constituted of internal and external members. They will work with Advancement in vetting artwork donation requests and bringing these requests to the Acquisition Committee. They will develop contracts for new acquisitions and loans. They will work with the Director/Curator and Advancement to generate revenue related to artwork acquisitions and to prepare foundation and project grant applications in relation to the art collection and collection related exhibitions.

Essential to this position is researching and developing programming related to the art collection and the overall management of the art collection, cataloguing, photography, maintenance and restoration, deaccessioning, lending, borrowing, international and domestic shipping, customs, insurance, inventory, climate control, security, and archival and storage spaces in line with the AGYU strategic plans and vision.

A key aspect of the position is related to the AGYU's drive towards accessibility, and as such the Collections Curator will manage and oversee the transition of the University's art collection into a Visible Vault available for internal and external research. The new Visible Vault will have a study area and be accessible for individual research and class study. They will ensure the safe keeping of the University's art collection while making it available for study. As part of the goal toward accessibility, the Collections Curator will be responsible for bringing the art collection catalogue online in a searchable database, which will require knowledge across disciplines and platforms from art history to website development. They will require knowledge of rights and reproduction copyright law and will manage interns, contract, and student employees in organizing and developing content for this public database.

In relation to the AGYU collections, the Collections Curator will contribute to the discourse of art collecting, building relationships with artists, art organizations, collectors, and gallerists as part of building community and knowledge around the practice of art collecting. Using the University's art collection as their base, they will engage with the public and university communities across multiple platforms from exhibitions to performances, including lectures, publications, and diverse forms of public engagement.

As a member of the AGYU curatorial team, the Collections Curator will join in leading efforts to ethically and responsibly develop collections and documentation across subject areas. This position

will advance initiatives to diversify the social and cultural perspectives represented in art collections and to support interdisciplinary research and learning in the field of contemporary art.

2. MAJOR DUTIES:

A) Curatorial: With the direction and guidance of the Director/Curator, the Collections Curator manages the Visible Vault and ensures safe conditions for the University's art assets. A key to safeguarding the art collection is developing ethical practices for its maintenance, exhibition, and public engagement and developing policies around its research, loan, safe-keeping, and presentation. This involves ensuring accessibility to the art collection through student engagement, collaboration with scholars internal and external, the development and presentation of exhibitions, working with artist to engage the collection, and the development and maintenance of a searchable online database. The Collections Curator will be responsible for programming exhibitions, performances, and events in relation to the University's art collection as well as programs that engage with collecting as a practice. They will conduct ongoing research, which will include travel, to build knowledge of contemporary art practices in the field of collections and collections management.

B) Marketing and Publicity: Working in consultation with the Director/Curator and all AGYU staff, the Collections Curator will develop, maintain, and activate a public online database of the University's art collection. This database will require constant maintenance and updating. They will write press releases for the events that they promote and at times will work with graphic designers to develop unique visual signatures to distinguish their programs. They will be responsible to write in-gallery wall texts related to the University's collection and the programs they develop. They will be required to give public presentation about the AGYU and the University's collection.

C) Administrative: In support of the overall objectives of the AGYU, the candidate maintains the art collection database, overseeing its safe-keeping and proper insurance protocols. They are required to ensure proper humidity controls and track and lead restoration needs of works in the collections. Annually they must oversee an inventory of the works in the collection, preparing condition and location reports. The Collections Curator projects annual costs related to the maintenance and development of the collection, including the hiring of art handlers and professional art restorers. They manage, develop, and raise budgets related to their specific programs including writing project grant applications and fundraising requests for the collections. The Collections Curator will manage and coordinate the development and maintenance of records on all art works/objects owned by York University, including records of provenance, purchase or donation, photographs, evaluation, insurance, condition, and location.

Supervisory: In consultation with the Director/Curator, schedules and supervises staff tasks related to the operations of the Visible Vault and exhibition of collection related works; supervises various casual and work-study staff.

D) Health & Safety:

- Be familiar with the Occupational Health & Safety Act and Regulations and University health and Safety procedures as they apply to the workplace.
- Ensure that safe workplace procedures required by management are in place in the Visible Vault, and during restoration of art works in the collection.
- Be the primary employee responsible for the Visible Vault to insure that work and study areas in this space are free from hazardous materials.

3. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. *Supervises on a Direct Basis:*

Positions Supervised

Work-Study

Casual Staff (from YCW to installers)

Total number of staff supervised:

No. of Incumbents

varies

varies

1-6 full and part-time positions

B. *Nature of Supervisory Responsibility:*

Manage contract staff in relation to working with the art collection database and in the reception and maintenance of the study area in the Visible Vault. Responsible for training, performance, absence, and attendance management. Determine staffing requirements and workload distribution. Provide overall direction and leadership to contract staff and schedule and assign work.

Non-Staff

Mentor, delegate work to, and oversee student volunteers and graduate assistants. Recruit and create production schedules for and supervise restoration contractors and art handlers. Work with installation art handlers when presenting art collection related exhibitions in the galleries and off-site as needed.

4. PERSONAL CONTACTS:

a. Contacts

York Facilities

Purpose

physical plant issues in relation to the Visible Vault; maintain humidity controls for proper art storage; manage and determine art collection insurance

Department heads, faculty and students

collaboration on discursive programming in relation to the University's art collection, build opportunities for students and faculty to research the art collection;

Indigenous councils and leaders

seeks Indigenous consultation in relation to Indigenous art objects in the University's art collection; develop policy that is specific to Indigenous objects; create opportunities for the Indigenous council to share knowledge and engage with the collection.

Community groups

engage diverse communities through the art collection from local organizations to national professional art institutions

Artists, writers, curators

works with developing exhibitions and establish acquisitions program

Gallery and museum staff	collaborates with sharing best practices and develop co-ownership and co-productions possibilities
Media relations	promote new AGYU acquisitions
Designers, coders	develop and maintain online art collection database
Individuals and corporate donors, embassies	fundraising in relations to art acquisitions and programming
Arts councils and foundations	project-based funding in relation to art acquisitions, new commissions, and collection-related exhibitions and residencies
Conservators, gallery preparators, production, contractors	Art collection restoration and safekeeping, exhibition installation

5. DECISION MAKING:

In consultation with the Director / Curator, the Collections Curator will: make decisions regarding the safekeeping, storage, presentation, and loan of York University's art collection; coordinate the Acquisitions Committee and manage and develop acquisition proposals; research and actualize curatorial programs in relation to the art collection, working with artists, guest curators, art historians, writers, designers, scholars, and contractors; manage budgets related to art acquisition and art collections related programs; Collaborate with Director/Curator and AGYU staff to envision the above responsibilities in relation to the whole of AGYU's program; and works to support artists, further art discourse and build audiences and accessibility in relation to York University's art collection.

6. DIRECTION RECEIVED:

Reports to and works under general direction of the Director/Curator with independence of action within the duties and responsibilities outlined above.

7. FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONTROL:

Raise, develop, and control collection-related exhibitions budgets. Raise, develop, and control education and outreach budgets related to art collecting. Manage budgets for restoration of art works and budget related to art collection database.

Generating revenue related to art work acquisitions from donations to grant writing

This revenue will fluctuate annually from \$50,000 to 1,000,000

In relation to art collections, acquisitions, and related programs, participates in and has responsibility for contributing to core grant applications (total for AGYU \$360,000 per year) and secure funding from foundations, project grants, consulates, foreign arts councils, and individual donors.

Other major accountabilities, e.g., information, materials, buildings, equipment, etc.

Working with insurance providers to determine the appropriate coverage for the University's art collection. Responsible for operating the Visible Vault and study area, ensuring security and environmental conditions are in place. Determine restoration and care needs for the University's art collection. Establish protocols and best practices for acquisition and deaccessioning artworks. Develop programs that are directed at promoting and making the art collection accessible to scholars, students, and community members.

8. QUALIFICATIONS:

A. Educational Requirements:

Post-Graduate MA degree with emphasis on fine art, art history, curatorial studies or archival studies, or equivalent experience.

This position requires the candidate to produce a verification of degree(s), credentials(s), or equivalencies from accredited institutions and/or international equivalents at the time of interview.

B. Experience Requirements:

Must have worked as a curator within a public arts organization or institution for a minimum of 6 years. At least two years' experience working with public or private art collections. Must have experience relevant to the exhibition and presentation of contemporary art. Must demonstrate recent contribution to the development of critical thought in the procurement, presentation, acquisition, and deaccession of art collections in the public realm.

B. Knowledge and Skills:

- Knowledge of art collecting practices both public and private, with a discursive understanding of best practices in relation to building and caring for a legacy art collection.
- Essential that the candidate have critical and discursive skills to both support and critique art institutional thinking from art collection practices to working with a diversity of artists' practices.
- The ability to implement anti-racist and anti-oppression working methodologies when engaging artists and audience is essential. These practices will be applied to the acquisition, exhibition, loan, and maintenance of York University's art collection.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills for writing publications, press releases, grant and fundraising applications, speaking with the media and public advocacy is a necessity.
- Must have experience developing and presenting exhibitions from public and private art collections, mounting exhibitions within gallery spaces.
- Experience commissioning artworks and working with artists in a social engaged manner is essential.
 - The candidate must be knowledgeable of potential partners having knowledge and networks within public museums and galleries both local and international. This knowledge will be applied to potential exhibition collaborations, commissions, and co-ownerships in relation to York University's art collection.
- Knowledge and networks within community and education-based art organizations to develop cooperative programs as well as gain knowledge of contemporary art practices.
- Knowledge of government granting agencies at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels with a proven track record of grant writing with successful outcomes. Knowledge of individual donors, collectors, and businesses and corporations who are ethical donors and receptive to supporting contemporary art an asset.

- Understanding and working knowledge of museum standards in relation to art work storage and preservation. Practical experience with art-handling and shipping is a must with professional knowledge of insurance protocols and condition reporting.

9. THE WORK ENVIRONMENT AND THE PHYSICAL/SENSORY DEMANDS:

The Art Gallery is a high-paced intensive environment where the Collections Curator must attend to numerous projects and programs consecutively. Attention to detail and strict deadlines is required.

The candidate will periodically work within art installation conditions with evening and weekend work. Travel for exhibition and program research purposes as well as for other gallery related business is involved.

Higher than normal sensory effort required and the need for high level of accuracy/precision to attend to fulfilling artistic requirements of artist(s) and exhibition themes when mounting/overseeing exhibition installations, critiquing art etc.

It is a social and collaborative environment that engages with the public and works with a multiplicity of stakeholders from local and international artists to community and student groups.

AGYU occupies colonized Indigenous territories, and out of respect for the rights of Indigenous people we accept our collective responsibility to recognize our colonial histories as well as their present-day manifestations and to honour, protect, and sustain this land. AGYU promotes 2SLGBTQIAP positive spaces & experiences and works towards being barrier free. It is an environment that is committed to anti-racism. We work to eradicate institutional racial biases and develop accountable programs that support Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. AGYU is an artist-centered organization that has a commitment to research and expression, which includes building audiences for contemporary art.