

# HEAD OF COLLECTION

Overall responsibility for the care, protection, development and future use of the British Council Collection (including the Mabey Collection, the Historic Crafts Collection, the Visual Arts Library and Archive) wherever it is stored or displayed globally. The person in this role is responsible for the day to day management of the Collection and Collection services at the British Council Workshop ensuring that all procedures and practices employed to protect and share the Collection are fit for purpose and meet set high standards in line with Museum Association guidelines.

This role is responsible for the Collection and acquisitions strategy and policies ensuring that the Collection is accessible to the widest possible audience both digitally and physically. Working in collaboration with colleagues across the British Council to promote the collection internally and externally and developed mixed funding and financially sustainable working practices to ensure a sustainable business model is in place that is in line with the British Council's global arts strategies.

The role holder is responsible for all legal and governance control of the Collection, including but not limited to audit reporting, formal loans processes including loan agreements and negotiations, acquisitions process including procurement processes and formal accessing into the Collection.

The person in this role will also have responsibility for the development of a new British Council Collection centre, working with external consultants and global estates to design and deliver a storage facility to the specific requirements of the Collection. This person will then lead and manage the move of the Collection from its current home to the new storage facility on completion.

## Role Information

Role	Pay Band	Location	Duration	Reports to:
Head of Collection	British Council Pay Band 8	London	Indefinite	Director, Visual Arts

## Role purpose

Overall responsibility for the care, protection and development of the British Council Collection. Manage all day to day running of the Collection including the loans programme, displays in the British Council's global estate and the Library and Archive. Lead on the drafting and implementation of a Collection strategy. Work with the Director of Visual Arts on the development and implementation of the British Council's acquisitions policy. This role will also oversee the development and delivery of a new Collection centre and manage the move of the Collection to the new storage facility.

## Strategic Business Unit overview:

The **British Council** was founded to create 'a friendly knowledge and understanding' between the people of the UK and wider world by making a positive contribution to the countries we work with, and in doing so making a lasting difference to the UK's international standing, prosperity and security. The programmes we use to do this are wide-ranging and cover the arts, education, English, science and society.

Our UK **Arts team** works with the British Council's global network of offices to achieve significant impact and change by finding new ways of connecting and seeing each other through the arts. Our team in the UK has three main groupings: We have six art form teams; three cross-disciplinary teams; and three country-specific teams in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our aim is to see stronger creative sectors across the world that are better connected with the UK. We believe arts and culture are vital to prosperous, secure societies, and that offering international cultural connections and experiences strengthens their resilience. We are uniquely able to make a difference thanks to our extensive and diverse networks in the UK and internationally, enabling us to respond to the individual context of each place we work in. [Link to Vision on internet.](#)

In the **Visual Arts team** we use our connections and understanding of the UK contemporary art sector to advise and support our international colleagues on working with museums, galleries and artists within cultural relations programmes and provide a link to the UK. . We work in partnership with museums, galleries and artists to develop projects to encourage showcasing, collaboration and professional exchange, and to build relationships between the museum, gallery and art communities in the UK and around the world.

The British Council Collection began in 1938 with a modest group of works on paper and has grown to more than 8,500 artworks, including paintings, drawings, sculpture, photography, film and multimedia, by over 1,250 artists. The Collection promotes artists who have contributed to the development of British art by purchasing their work at a significant stage in their careers and enabling it to reach a global audience. The British Council's Visual Arts team helps these objects to travel around the world as part of our international exhibitions. We also loan works to museums and galleries in the UK and overseas, and we invite curators from around the world to engage with our Collection, learn about how we manage it and select works to display in their home country.

## Main opportunities/challenges for this role:

- **Business review:** review the role of the Collection and produce plans for future sustainability, with regard to paid for services, and other income streams both internal and external, to ensure that targets for loans and exhibitions, and related operating costs can be met
- **New Collection Centre:** as a key member of the project team working on delivering a new permanent and sustainable home for the British Council Collection, you will contribute expertise and leadership, to create a fit for purpose facility which will help to increase access to and use of the Collection both in the UK and overseas
- **Risk and process management:** risk review all current Collection activity and processes, ensuring all are robust and compliant, including internal and external audit reporting, valuations, insurance, data accuracy, copyright, website and database security
- **Governance:** in collaboration with Corporate Directorate ensure top level governance of the Collection is robust and future proof
- **Maximising loans and promoting the Collection:** develop plans to ensure that the British Council Collection is one of the hardest working collections in the UK, by working with Director of Exhibitions to develop sustainable Collection exhibitions for the future, incorporating training and skills development into projects, and increasing loans to museums and galleries both in the UK and overseas, and further increasing access to the Collection via digital platforms.
- **Finance and fundraising:** taking an entrepreneurial attitude to all expenditure and income, driving efficiency and cost savings, identifying and implementing commercial opportunities, and spearheading fundraising for the Collection, in collaboration with the British Council's Partnerships team.

## Main accountabilities:

### Strategy and planning

- As a recognised expert in art collection care, the Head of Collection contributes to the development of both the medium-term strategy and annual business plan for the British Council Collection and Collection care facilities, including the strategic and practical short and long-term storage solutions.

### Programme Development and Delivery

- As a senior member of the Arts Team, contributes to the development of the British Council's activity in relation to the Collection ensuring that all activities are designed to high professional and technical standards, and contribute optimally to the achievement of the British Council and UK government objectives.
- Leads a team of specialist staff who oversee the security, maintenance and logistical arrangements for storage and movement of the British Council Collection.
- Manages the British Council Workshop and storage facilities to international museum standards and in compliance with the regulations laid down by the National Security Adviser for the safe keeping of works in public collections and to meet the conditions of the British Council insurance and Indemnity Scheme.
- Provides professional advice and support and quality assurance to all stakeholders including project partners – UK and international organisations, curators, artists and professional networks on the development, delivery and implementation of the work required to deliver all elements of the British Council's work in relation to the Collection.
- Implements and adapts team work plan(s) in the light of revised requirements, operational changes and local social/economic or political events.
- Ensures all aspects of the Collection programme are of high quality, financially sustainable and aligned with the British Council's strategic priorities while reflecting the needs of external stakeholders and demonstrating cultural sensitivity.
- Put in place a clear management structure and frameworks to ensure standardised and efficient project delivery.

### **Customer/market focus**

- Contributes to the development and delivery of the thought leadership strategy for the British Council Collection, so that the British Council is recognised by external stakeholders and audiences as a respected, credible authority in the field of collection care.
- Works with communications colleagues to develop a communications strategy for the Collection to widen access both online and offline, and raise the profile of the Collection with the British Council, nationally and internationally

### **Sector/subject expertise**

- Keeps up to date on best practice and new technologies to ensure the physical and environmental safety for all works of art on loan to the British Council and in the British Council Collection.
- Builds and maintains external networks to access, absorb and apply professional best practice in all areas of project and programme delivery. Look for opportunities to showcase this excellence to the UK arts sector and internationally.

### **Relationship and stakeholder management**

- Develops and maintains excellent relationships and communication with internal and/or external colleagues, partners and stakeholders to build a clear understanding of their needs and experiences, to inform and enable continuous improvement in the quality of service delivery.
- Builds and maintains excellent relationships with internal partners and stakeholders in the UK and across the global network, to ensure effective, integrated and joined-up delivery of agreed programme objectives in a complex matrix environment.
- Develops and maintains trust-based relationships with a range of key practitioners (artists, curators, galleries, museums, arts institutions), partners, organisations, suppliers, contractors and stakeholders (in the UK and worldwide) to ensure the smooth delivery the loans programme, acquisitions programme and any other projects required.

### **Risk and compliance**

- Uses British Council protocols, combined with previous experience and detailed knowledge of the resource requirements, to assess a range of risks to service delivery (e.g. storage, transportation, display). Ensures appropriate contingency plans are in place and implemented promptly to ensure appropriate levels of security and manage delivery safely and effectively in challenging or high-risk circumstances.
- Investigates any reported instances of non-compliance with agreed corporate risk management policies (e.g. child protection, security policies, financial protocols, anti-fraud measures), and takes appropriate remedial action, including escalation to more senior colleagues as required.
- Responsible for all aspects of Health and Safety within the British Council Workshop and advises on all H&S matters during the installation of an exhibition (e.g. the use of specialist lifting equipment and hazardous materials). Also responsible for writing HSE method statements and ensuring that staff have the correct professional training.

### **Analysis and reporting**

- Uses management information, analysis and personal operating experience to identify and make recommendations on improvements to team ways of working, processes, procedures and/or resources that will enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
- Implements a range of reporting procedures and holds staff to account for maintaining them, to ensure that results are accurately recorded, thereby enabling timely and effective operational decision-making.

### **Commercial, financial and resource management**

- Using agreed British Council systems and processes, plans and manages the Collection, acquisitions and Collection store building maintenance budget.
- Conducts monthly and year-end reporting on income and expenditure, adhering and contributing to risk management and operational processes, and actively applying learning

from this to improve financial planning, management and performance.

- Manages annual budgets for maintenance and service acquisition including professional equipment, plant and materials necessary for the preparation of high-value works of art and undertakes detailed resource planning to enable cost effective, high quality delivery of operational activities of the team.
- Leads the negotiation/structuring of local deals to achieve required operational goals, drawing appropriately on the input and expertise of other colleagues/external advisors as required to protect the British Council's interests effectively.
- Contributes to the corporate risk and compliance framework on behalf of Visual Arts and is responsible for liaison with Global Estates over issues of maintenance, service contracts, visitor listing records and all aspects of the Service Level Agreement.
- Within agreed British Council procedures and schedules of delegated authority, manages and reports on variances to plan, controlling key areas that impact on cost and service provided (e.g. people, processes, resources, suppliers)

### Leadership and management

- Leads a team of people and resources which may be in multiple locations, ensuring clear communication of goals and expectations.
- Identifies requirements and recommends training and development provision to build improved operational capability within the team.
- Puts in place processes, resources and support to ensure any staff with line management responsibilities in their area deploy appropriate coaching, performance feedback and sickness/absence management techniques to maximise staff productivity and motivation in a high volume/pressurised delivery environment.
- Contributes actively to the effective decision-making and planning across the global organisation, and leads specific British Council initiatives and projects as required.

### Role Requirements:

Threshold requirements:		Assessment stage
Passport requirements/ Right to work in country	EU Passport/existing right to work in the UK	Shortlisting
Person Specification:		Assessment stage
Qualifications		
<i>Minimum / essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment Stage</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educated to degree level or equivalent experience</li> </ul>	Shortlisting
Job Specific Knowledge and Experience		
<i>Minimum / essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Assessment Stage</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proven experience of collection management and knowledge and experience if managing archives and libraries, including picture libraries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An understanding of global museum and galleries infrastructure and trends.</li> <li>• Knowledge and experience of collection relocation and art</li> </ul>	Shortlisting

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of collection care, conservation, art handling and international courier best practise.</li> <li>• Experience and understanding of international museum standards.</li> <li>• Experience of using collection management database systems.</li> <li>• Good, wide knowledge of modern and contemporary British art.</li> <li>• A broad up-to-date network of contacts within the UK Museum and Gallery sector</li> <li>• The ability to make critical judgements across genres</li> <li>• Experience of managing large teams including formal line management</li> <li>• The ability of write effectively for a variety of different audiences.</li> </ul>	<p>storage requirements, including health and safety, building maintenance and management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A broad up-to-date network of contacts within the international museum and gallery industry.</li> <li>• Experience of developing collections policy and plans in relation to acquisitions, use and access.</li> <li>• Proven experience of strategic leadership and business planning.</li> <li>• Experience of implementing innovative funding and partnership working models</li> </ul>	
<p><b>British Council Core Skills</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment Stage</b></p>	
<p><b>Communicating and Influencing – Level 4</b> Uses formal and informal negotiating and motivation techniques to influence others' behaviour and persuade them to think and act differently, while respecting difference of view and culture.</p>	<p><i>Shortlisting AND Interview</i></p>	
<p><b>Planning and Organising – Level 4</b> Shapes forward plans for 3-5 years ahead for a major unit or multiple units, taking account of British Council strategy and the need to manage contingencies, risks and impact.</p>	<p><i>Shortlisting AND Interview</i></p>	
<p><b>Managing Finance and Resources – Level 4</b> Negotiates and agrees the resources for a defined area as part of forward planning, monitoring progress and adjusting resources or priorities to meet goals.</p>	<p><i>Shortlisting AND Interview</i></p>	
<p><b>Managing Risk – Level 3</b> Has track record of analysing potential risks, promoting risk awareness, and holding others to account for their practices.</p>	<p><i>Shortlisting AND Interview</i></p>	
<p><b>Managing People - Level 3</b> Provides full line management to a team where all members are working in a similar area of expertise or business. Scope includes planning, setting objectives, role modelling an inclusive culture, recruitment, development and performance management.</p>	<p><i>Shortlisting AND Interview</i></p>	
<p><b>British Council Behaviours</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment Stage</b></p>	
<p><b>Creating shared purpose (MORE DEMANDING)</b> Creating energy and clarity so that people want to work purposefully together</p>	<p><i>Interview</i></p>	
<p><b>Connecting with others (MORE DEMANDING)</b> Actively appreciating the needs and concerns of myself and others</p>	<p><i>Interview</i></p>	

<p><b>Making it happen (MOST DEMANDING)</b> Achieving stretching results when faced by change, uncertainty or major obstacles</p>	<p><i>Interview</i></p>
<p><b>Being accountable (MOST DEMANDING)</b> Showing real dedication to the long-term mission of the British Council or the team</p>	<p><i>Interview</i></p>
<p><b>Shaping the future (MORE DEMANDING)</b> Exploring ways in which we can add more value</p>	<p><i>Performance Management Only</i></p>
<p><b>Working together (MOST DEMANDING)</b> Creating the environment in which others who have different aims can work together</p>	<p><i>Performance Management Only</i></p>