

OXFORD UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

<b>Job title</b>	Head of Collections
<b>Division</b>	GLAM
<b>Department</b>	Museum of Natural History
<b>Location</b>	Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3PW
<b>Grade and salary</b>	Grade 9: £47,263 - £54,765 per annum, with discretionary increments to £59,828
<b>Hours</b>	Full time
<b>Contract type</b>	Permanent
<b>Reporting to</b>	Director, Museum of Natural History
<b>Vacancy reference</b>	135810
<b>Additional information</b>	Applications for a part-time role with a minimum 0.6FTE will be accepted

## The role

Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUMNH) has collections of 7 million specimens that range across zoology, palaeontology, mineralogy, petrology and archives, with particular strengths in entomology and vertebrate palaeontology. Each year, it receives over 750,000 visitors and has a wide-ranging programme of exhibitions and events.

The new Head of Collections will be responsible for all aspects of collections management, staffing and funding and she/he will take the lead in the strategic development of the collections, including storage, digitisation, search and discovery, and research facilitation. The postholder will work closely with the Head of Public Engagement to utilise the collections in the development of public engagement programmes and learning initiatives, including pre-school, primary and secondary schools, out-of-school-hours activities, university teaching and adult learning. The Museum is also planning a major redisplay within the public areas and the postholder will make a significant contribution to the masterplanning.

The Museum of Natural History is divided into four sections: Collections, Operations, Public Engagement and Research. Together with the other heads of sections, the postholder will be part of the Museum's senior leadership team and will work with that team to provide leadership for day-to-day operations, the implementation of an ambitious new strategic plan, and the continuing strategic development of the institution.

The Museum of Natural History is part of the Gardens, Libraries and Museums division of the University of Oxford, and works closely with the other GLAM institutions across a range of



shared services, principally administrative and back-office functions. There are also a number of major GLAM capital initiatives in which the postholder would take an active role. One of these is a project to create two new, shared collections stores with integrated research and object-based teaching facilities, which is currently at the design stage.

The Head of Collections will represent the Museum both internally within the University of Oxford and externally within the broader museum and cultural community to ensure that it is well networked and able to undertake effective horizon scanning. The Museum of Natural History is one of the world's major university science museums, and the Head of Collections will have responsibility for the continued development of its national and international networks and partnerships, and also ensure that it fulfils its leadership obligations within the sector as a leading regional and national institution.

Working with the University of Oxford's Development Office, the postholder will take a proactive role in generating income for the museum through research grants, trusts, foundations, and the cultivation of individual and corporate philanthropy.

## **Responsibilities**

The Head of Collections has overall responsibility for all collections in the Museum of Natural History, for their management, and for their strategic development. The Head of Collections is a member of the Museum's Senior Leadership Team and will thus have an important role in the leadership and strategic development of the Museum as a whole.

### **Strategic**

- Have responsibility for the strategic development of the care and documentation of the collections, their digitisation, physical and digital access and their use for research, teaching and public engagement
- Lead the development of collections strategy across the museum with the heads of individual collection areas: Life, Earth and Print & Digital
- Assist in the development of strategic planning for the museum and the delivery of targeted and timely activity against the strategic plan
- Be an active and engaged member of the senior leadership team in the Museum and contribute to the development of strategy, the allocation of resources, and the integrated development of Museum activity
- Work with other Heads of Collections across the Gardens, Libraries & Museums to develop an integrated collections strategy for GLAM and for the University
- Represent the Museum of Natural History on strategic and operational committees and working groups within the University of Oxford
- Represent the Museum of Natural History and its strategic interests on external groups and committees – locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Oversee and implement collections policies, including Spectrum and other national standards, together with the Accreditation and Designation processes of Arts Council England.
- Oversee the environmental monitoring and IPM programmes

### **Collection development**

- Provide leadership on collections projects in relation to storage, digitisation, search and discovery, and research facilitation
- Work with the collections team to further improve the utilisation of the collections for research within the University of Oxford, in other UK and international higher education institutions and museums, and amongst the 'expert amateur' community

- Work closely with the Head of Public Engagement to enhance the utilisation of the collections in the development of public engagement programmes and learning initiatives, including pre-school, primary and secondary schools, out-of-school-hours activities, and adult learning.
- Develop initiatives across the Gardens, Libraries and Museums to further embed object-based learning in the teaching programmes of the University of Oxford and other higher education institutions
- Contribute to the Museum redisplay project and lead collections involvement

### **Management and leadership of staff**

The Head of Collections has day-to-day responsibility for the staff within the collections (currently numbering 20), in addition to direct involvement with:

- Line managing the heads of individual collection areas: Life, Earth and Print & Digital, including conservation
- Chairing the Museum of Natural History Collections Group
- Recruitment: job descriptions, short listing, interviewing
- Annual personal development reviews (PDRs)
- Disciplinary matters
- Staff training, promotion and development

### **Management of Honorary Associates and Volunteers**

- Recommendation of Honorary Associate positions
- Co-ordination and overall management of internships, work placements and students
- Liaising with voluntary groups, the community and industry (including schools, local natural history and other community groups), as well as grant agencies to secure sponsorship for events, publications and development projects
- Liaison and use of the museum wide volunteer service for the provision of collection volunteers

### **Funding & fundraising**

- Conception and initiation of projects to improve the collections (e.g. documentation, storage, access, research)
- Writing of grant applications and proposals and reporting to funding bodies
- Providing project details and specification of equipment to be used
- Budget and forward planning to forecast collection needs
- Leadership in the development of funding applications to trusts and foundations, and the management of funded projects
- Leadership in the area of development and fundraising, and to engage effectively and proactively with current and potential donors

### **Health & Safety**

- Responsibility for the Health and Safety within the Collections areas
- Represent Collections on the Museum Health & Safety committee

### **Individual Research & Teaching**

- The Head of Collections is expected to pursue research in a field relating to the collections and to obtain financial support for that research. No particular field or geographical area is stipulated
- At the discretion of the Museum Director, supervise undergraduate and/or postgraduate student projects
- Provide some undergraduate and/or postgraduate teaching. This may be in the form of lectures, practicals and/or field courses

## Essential selection criteria

- Good honours degree
- Proven ability to lead people and large multi-component projects
- Proven ability to develop and deliver strategic planning components for an institution
- A vision for the development of the collections, including documentation, digitisation and care, and their use for research, outreach and education
- Knowledge of collections and a specialist knowledge of appropriate curatorial techniques, including the management of digital documentation systems and digital image capture and processing
- Experience of initiating, designing and managing collections-based projects relating to stewardship and use for research and teaching
- Successful track record of income generation from grant-giving bodies such as research councils, trusts and foundations
- Experience of engaging with high-level stakeholders and funders
- Track record of representing an institution on local, regional and national boards, committees and organisations
- Established reputation within the museum, science and/or heritage community
- Highly effective communicator, both spoken and written

## Desirable selection criteria

- Possess an understanding of natural history and/or science museums and their operation
- Track record of collections-based research and publication
- Experience of fund-raising in relation to private individuals and corporations

## About the University of Oxford

Welcome to the University of Oxford. We aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

We believe our strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, while providing all our staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that enables everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is our strength, vital for innovation and creativity, we aspire to build a truly diverse community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While we have long traditions of scholarship, we are also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities. Income from external research contracts in 2015/16 exceeded £537.4m and is ranked first in the UK for university spin-outs, with more than 130 companies created to date. The University is also recognised as a leader in support for social enterprise.

Join us and you will find a unique, democratic and international community, a great range of staff benefits and access to a vibrant array of cultural activities in the beautiful city of Oxford.

For more information please visit [www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation)

## Museum of Natural History

Oxford University Museum of Natural History was opened in 1860 and houses the University's extensive scientific holdings of natural history, which are used for research, teaching, and public engagement with science. The holdings are currently organised into three collection areas: Earth, Life and Print & Digital. The Museum is 'Designated' by Arts Council England as having collections of national and international importance, and these comprise around 7 million specimens that are second in importance only to the national collections. The building, which is Grade 1-listed, is regarded as one of the finest examples of Victorian architecture in Britain, with its glass roof supported by iron pillars, and internal decoration that has a strong association with the Pre-Raphaelite movement.

The Museum is one of the most visited science museums in the UK with over 750,000 visitors per year, including over 37,000 school visitors, making it the most popular non-national science museum in the UK and the second most visited university museum in the world (behind the Ashmolean). The public engagement team have a national reputation for excellence and innovation, and offer a wide range of programming to a diverse audience base from under 5s through to older learners. The public engagement team works closely with the collections, research and operations teams to deliver the museum's ambitious strategic plan.

The museum programmes a series of contemporary science and society exhibitions. This series aims to connect the research power of academic departments with the University of Oxford with the very large audiences visiting the museum. This connection between research and the public is enabled by the third distinctive ingredient – the multiple award-winning public engagement team of the museum, in partnership with public engagement officers embedded within the departments. Together, these three components provide the University of Oxford with a unique combination of capabilities and opportunities for public engagement in research. Each interdisciplinary exhibition is based around a theme relating to the science of the natural environment that aims to draw together different strands of research from across the academic divisions, preferably in an area that has societal relevance or controversy, and aims to make complex concepts and datasets accessible to the general public in a balanced but authoritative way.

**Earth Collections.** There are in excess of 350,000 fossil specimens in the museum, including over 4,700 type and figured specimens. Of particular importance are the Lower Palaeozoic invertebrates, the Jurassic vertebrates (including dinosaurs and marine reptiles) and Lyell's Tertiary molluscs. The collections also include around 33,000 minerals, meteorites and gemstones, and 100,000 petrological specimens of worldwide provenance.

**Life Collections.** Five million entomological specimens, with 30,000 catalogued types, constitute a globally leading entomology collection. They include major historic British collections, and foreign collections covering most orders, but are particularly strong in Old World butterflies, cockroaches and bees. There is also the important Pickard-Cambridge spider collection. The other zoology collections contain an estimated 300,000 specimens, including over 1,000 type and figured specimens. Most important are the worldwide collections of mammals, birds, and crustaceans, and internationally significant collections of other marine invertebrates. The Life Collections include historically and scientifically important material collected by the Tradescants, Darwin, Wallace and Livingstone. Only a small part of the collections is on public display in the museum court, and the majority of specimens are held in a variety of onsite and offsite stores.

**Print & Digital.** The archives contain internationally important material relating to the development of natural history, particularly geology and entomology, from the Enlightenment through the 19th century and into the 20th.

Current research within the museum includes is centred on four themes: animal origins, arthropod evolution, digital morphology, and heritage, culture & society. Related collections-based research is also undertaken in the nearby Department of Earth Sciences ([www.earth.ox.ac.uk](http://www.earth.ox.ac.uk)), the Department of Zoology ([www.zoo.ox.ac.uk](http://www.zoo.ox.ac.uk)) and the School of Archaeology ([www.arch.ox.ac.uk](http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk)).

For more information please visit: <https://www.oumnh.ox.ac.uk>

## **Gardens, Libraries and Museums Division**

GLAM comprises the Bodleian Libraries, four museums (Ashmolean, History of Science, Natural History, and Pitt Rivers), and the Botanic Garden and Arboretum. These are the major collections of the University and comprise one of the finest groups of university collections anywhere globally, collectively attracting over 3 million visitors per year. Whilst in their own way they provide services to the academic community (and others), they are also directly engaged in the academic endeavour of the University, including research and teaching.

The academic departments of the University are divided into four divisions: Humanities; Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences; Medical Sciences; and Social Sciences. The collections as a group have strong connections with all of the academic divisions.

For more information please visit: <https://glam.web.ox.ac.uk>

## **Working at the University of Oxford**

For further information about working at Oxford, please see:

[www.ox.ac.uk/about\\_the\\_university/jobs/professionalandmanagement/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/professionalandmanagement/)

## **How to apply**

If you consider that you meet the selection criteria, click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a user. You will then be required to complete a number of screens with your application details, relating to your skills and experience. When prompted, please provide details of two referees and indicate whether we can contact them at this stage. You will also be required to upload a CV and supporting statement which explains how you meet the selection criteria for the post. (Customise this statement to confirm the document(s) you would like the applicant to attach. See "[selecting the appropriate application form](#)" in our online guide to writing effective adverts). The supporting statement should explain your relevant experience which may have been gained in employment, education, or you may have taken time away from these activities in order to raise a family, care for a dependant, or travel for example. Your application will be judged solely on the basis of how you demonstrate that that you meet the selection criteria outlined above and we are happy to consider evidence of

transferable skills or experience which you may have gained outside the context of paid employment or education.

Please save all uploaded documents to show your name and the document type.

All applications must be received by **midday** on the closing date stated in the online advertisement.

#### **Information for Priority Candidates**

*A priority candidate is a University employee who is seeking redeployment owing to the fact that he or she has been advised that they are at risk of redundancy, or on grounds of ill-health/disability. Priority candidates are issued with a redeployment letter by their employing departments and this letter **must** be attached to any application they submit.*

**Full details of the priority application process are available at:**

**[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/red/redproc/prioritycandidate](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/end/red/redproc/prioritycandidate)**

Should you experience any difficulties using the online application system, please email [recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk)

To return to the online application at any stage, please click on the following link [www.recruit.ox.ac.uk](http://www.recruit.ox.ac.uk)

Please note that you will be notified of the progress of your application by automatic e-mails from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail** regularly to ensure that you receive all e-mails.