



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Education, Culture and Employment	Senior Conservator	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
71-3716	Yellowknife	Culture and Heritage / HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Senior Conservator is responsible for preserving and conserving the archival and museum collections held by the Government of the Northwest Territories at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. The Senior Conservator must follow established practices and standards of conservation science, while acting in accordance with professional ethical guidelines to ensure the physical safety and integrity of the historical and cultural record of the Northwest Territories (NWT).

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC), the Senior Conservator reports to the Director, Culture and Heritage, within the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The incumbent monitors and safeguards the material condition and physical care of collections of over 70,000 museum objects, as well as 1,405 linear meters of text and 640,000 images among other records in the NWT Archives. This is done by assessing, recommending, and undertaking preventative actions, and, when necessary, executing conservation treatments.

The Senior Conservator manages the conservation program with a budget of approximately \$18,000 and has signing authority up to \$10,000. The incumbent may supervise interns, casual employees, and staff working on special projects. While many of the objects and archives are irreplaceable, the collections under the Senior Conservator's care are insured for over \$74M.

The duties of the Senior Conservator enable the Division to fulfill its responsibilities to care for items under the *Archives Act*, the *Archaeological Sites Act*, the GNWT Culture and Heritage-related policies, as well as professional industry requirements of the Code of Ethics and Guidance for Practice of the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property and of the Canadian Association of Professional Conservators. The Conservator works closely with



colleagues in the PWNHC, primarily the Territorial Archivist, Manager of Collections, Senior Exhibit Designer, Director, as well as the Manager of Museum Building Operations.

The job includes moving objects (up to 10lbs daily), storage boxes (up to 40lbs, once a week), and using up to 8-foot ladders once a week. Treating objects may involve stretching, standing, and moving objects once a week.

The incumbent may be exposed to hazardous chemicals and materials such as dust, mold, or toxic materials from contact with objects, and is required to follow proper safety measures.

The incumbent may be required to travel for the purpose of packing and shipping materials or giving workshops in small communities (1-2 times per year). Occasionally the Senior Conservator may be asked to provide conservation assistance in remote such as archaeological sites (less than once a year).

Due to technical skills and expertise, the Senior Conservator plays a key role in most emergency situations, and may be contacted out of office hours to deal with emergencies where the safety of collections is at risk. In the event of an emergency or incident where museum or archival collections may be impacted, the incumbent may be asked to work overtime.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Manage Conservation Activities to preserve the museum and archival collections at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC).

- Assess and make recommendations to the Director, Culture and Heritage (CH) regarding the physical integrity and safety of Archival and Museum Collections and execute those recommendations with the Territorial Archivist and Manager of Collections.
- Create and undertake yearly interventive conservation treatment plan by working with Territorial Archivist and Manager, Museum Collections, to identify institutional needs.
- Work with the Manager, Museum Collections, and Territorial Archivist to manage risks to the collections, and to work together to develop and implement recommendations for preservation including storage upgrades, housing, and treatments.
- Develop and document all environmental standards, including conservation treatments, condition reporting, and all other conservation-related information in accordance with records management standards.
- Create, update, and manage condition reporting for all collections held at the PWNHC.
- Ensure all conservation-related information is entered and maintained on the NWT Archives and museum databases.
- Set environmental standards and monitor conditions for collections storage and exhibit areas to ensure maximum physical integrity of objects and records in collaboration with the Manager, Museum Building Operations and Security staff.



- Manage any urgent and immediate conservation issues related to museum and archival collections, such as pest infestations by carrying out treatments, and/or working with staff and contractors to prevent and resolve problems.
- Working with the Senior Exhibit Designer, plan for and address conservation requirements for the exhibit or display of artifacts/archival materials and materials on loan from other institutions and/or individuals.
- Arrange for and or undertake inspections, condition reporting, and treatments as required for preservation of museum and archival collections and development of exhibits.
- Advocate for the preservation of cultural heritage in policy development and in day-to-day operations, and at senior levels of institutional management.
- Keep abreast of current research and practices in the conservation field, including current research on Indigenous heritage management, and apply this knowledge to the job.
- Maintain professional relationships in the conservation field.
- Act as an institutional resource on conservation matters and make recommendations on conservation matters when requested.
- Undertake research on treatments and objects as necessary.

2. Administer the conservation program.

- Manage the activities and initiatives of the conservation program to align with the division's mandate, goals, priorities, and budgets.
- Develop and oversee annual workplan for the conservation program.
- Contribute to strategic plans and support the priorities of the institution and provide expert advice to the Director on matters related to cultural heritage preservation.
- Act as a member of the divisional management committee and sit on other planning and strategic committees as needed.
- Oversee staffing, organization, priorities, practices, budgeting, reporting and engagements of conservation program within the CH Division.
- Develop, review, and update policies, directives, guidelines, and procedures for conservation work in the CH Division.
- Establish and recommend program priorities and objectives and ensure that they are aligned with key GNWT corporate processes and documents.
- Develop and manage an annual program budget, including variance reporting in accordance with GNWT *Financial Administration Act*.
- Seek third party project funding when necessary.
- Work with the Manager, Museum Collections, and Territorial Archivist to ensure that collections database functions meet conservation documentation and management standards.
- Maintain OHS standards of Conservation Lab.



- Review NWT Archaeologist permit applications to ensure archaeologists address conservation/preservation requirements of collections being excavated in the Northwest Territories, according to the *Archaeological Sites Act* and Regulations.
- Advise on packaging and shipping of archaeological collections in accordance with conservation standards and archaeological regulations.
- Provide conservation advice, services, and expertise to other GNWT programs, land claim and self-government organizations and community heritage groups as capacity allows.
- Manage and supervise staff such as interns by assigning tasks, works plans, schedules, and monitoring work.
- Develop and facilitate training seminars, discussions and presentations for community museums and divisional staff as time and budget allows.
- Advise Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Government Organizations, and private museums in hamlets, towns, and municipalities in the territory, on a project basis as well as on an as and when needed basis regarding the conservation of objects, conservation standards, and facilities (object care and display).

3. Advise on environmental and system requirements to building systems at the PWNHC.

- Advise the Director on environmental standards and requirements for building condition and the needs of collections (on display and in storage) to ensure the facility maintains proper environmental standards for collections for preservation of in-house and on loan collections.
- Chair the Division's Pest Management Team to ensure that there is an up-to-date Integrated Pest Management Plan for the PWNHC.
- Make recommendations to the Director regarding guidelines and procedures to execute pest management plan.
- Oversee pest management contracts as required and in conjunction with the Manager, Museum Building Operations, and/or make recommendations to program Managers, Director and Assistant Director for pest management in the PWNHC.

4. Plays a key role in PWNHC emergency management, disaster planning, and business resumption.

- Support the PWNHC/CH in developing, maintaining and revising Emergency Preparedness, planning and response at the PWNHC with respect to museum and archival collection safety in collaboration with other staff.
- Assist the Territorial Archivist and Manager, Museum Collections to develop response and salvage plans for their collections.
- Advise the Assistant Director in emergency response planning and recovery, including ensuring staff are trained in emergency response procedures related to the safeguarding of museum and archival collections.



- Support the CH Division in business resumption planning and recovery activities related to object safety after an emergency incident.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

Many daily tasks require meticulous attention to detail and focused concentration. The incumbent uses multiple senses including the sense of smell to detect environmental and potential conservation problems with archival and other objects. The incumbent requires a high degree of manual dexterity to perform precise techniques in the treatment of artifacts and archival material.

Mental Demands

No unusual demands.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of technical aspects of conservation science and how to apply these to the preservation of objects and records.
- Knowledge of conservation philosophy, procedures, and codes of conduct and ethics and museum/archival collections preservation management.
- Knowledge of museum, art galleries, archival practices and industry standards.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire and apply knowledge of the cultures and history of the North.
- Knowledge and skills regarding collections database management systems.
- Organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Financial management and administrative skills.
- Verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Research, analysis, problem solving and practical application of research to the preservation of collections.
- Interpersonal and collaboration skills.
- Ability to supervise, guide and mentor people in developing roles.
- Ability to interpret, analyze and apply conservation theory, standards and practice.
- Ability to define strategic objectives, develop strategic plans and implement solutions.



- Ability to navigate and manage stressful situations in the event of a disaster.
- Ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively and to act with tact and diplomacy.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A Master's degree or graduate certificate in Conservation and three (3) years of experience working in the field of Conservation in a museum, art gallery, or archives.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security

- No criminal records check required
- Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- French required (must identify required level below)
Level required for this Designated Position is:
ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION
Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)
READING COMPREHENSION:
Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)
WRITING SKILLS:
Basic (B) Intermediate (I) Advanced (A)
- French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- Required
- Preferred