

Conservation Hiring Resource for Heritage Institutions

Introduction

The Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property (CAC) and the Canadian Association of Professional Conservators (CAPC) have jointly developed these job descriptions to help Canadian heritage institutions to determine the level of qualifications they are seeking when hiring preservation professionals. Emphasis is put on the use of accurate and meaningful language in advertising employment opportunities in the conservation profession. Notably, the words “conservator” and “conservation” have real and specific meanings when they are used in the heritage sector and this set of documents aims to clarify those meanings for human resources staff and for heritage institution managers, executives, and board members.

The CAC and the CAPC aim to support heritage institutions looking to create or add to their conservation / preservation departments and to encourage the hiring of conservation students, emerging conservators, and established professionals.

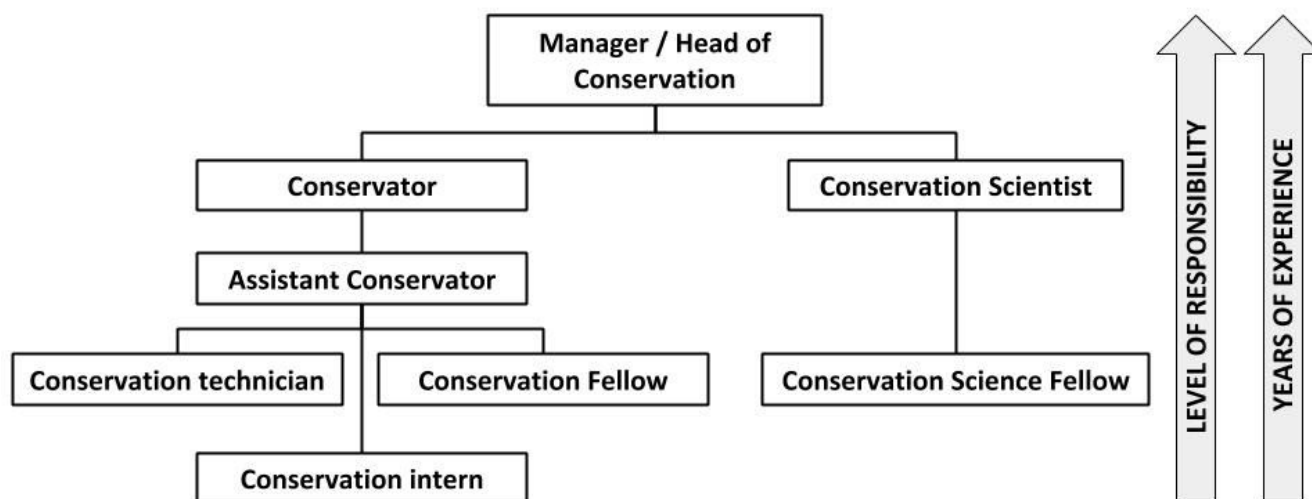
Using the Hiring Resource

Within the hiring resource eight job types have been used to describe conservation/preservation positions. These descriptions range from departmental managers to technicians, as well as scientists and conservators at various levels of experience and training. Each job type is characterized by listings of typical:

- Summary of duties
- Education and experience
- Level of responsibility/authority and reporting relationships
- Salary bands

Each hiring entity will have particular circumstances that make their hiring process unique. The accompanying guidelines can help identify and select practices and job description language that are common throughout the Canadian heritage sector.

Positions at a Glance



Full details of each job type are available within the hiring resource.

If your position does not fit the description of these conservation positions, please consider the following examples of non-conservation positions in the heritage field: Museum/Gallery Registrar ([NOC 5212](#)), Curator ([NOC5112](#)), Heritage Interpreter ([NOC 5212](#)), Museum Technician ([NOC 5212](#)), Curatorial Assistant ([NOC 5212](#)), Exhibition/Museum/Gallery Preparator ([NOC 5212](#)), Library/Archive/Museum/Gallery Manager ([NOC 0511](#)), etc.

Disclaimer: The above is not meant to be an exhaustive nor an overarching list of positions found in the heritage field. Please consult the Government of Canada's [National Occupational Classification](#) for further information about some of the job titles recognized in the heritage field and how they are classified.

Salary and benefit disclosure

We recommend that all jobs, fellowships and internship postings include information regarding salary range and benefits as a means to create transparency and equity within the hiring process.

We acknowledge that there are situations where curriculum internships are not paid. Nevertheless, we believe this limits diversity in the conservation and larger heritage community and discriminates against people from lower socio-economic groups. We recommend that internships be compensated at least at the provincial or territorial minimum wage rate.

Equal employment opportunity

We recommend that an employment equity statement is included in the hiring announcement. If your institution does not already have one, here is one that can be used.

“The (*hiring entity*) is fully committed to achieving an inclusive and diverse workforce. The (*hiring entity*) does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, colour, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, and is fully committed to removing barriers to employment.”

Further Help

For institutions without access to a conservator on staff, we recommend reaching out to a conservator from another institution to help through the hiring process and sit on the hiring board.

If you require further help through the hiring process (e.g. writing the job description, assessing the candidates, etc.) please contact CAC or CAPC for more guidance.

About the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property

CAC is a federally registered charitable not-for-profit organization that promotes responsible preservation of the cultural property that gives Canadians a sense of place, of history and of artistic expression. The CAC serves individual and institutional members to provide opportunities for networking, professional development, and information dissemination.

Contact: outreach@cac-accr.ca

About the Canadian Association for Professional Conservators

CAPC is a non-profit corporation which was established in 1971 with the primary aim of raising the standards of competence, integrity, and ethics in conservation in Canada. To accomplish this, CAPC has established criteria for the accreditation of conservators and conservation scientists. Membership in CAPC is voluntary. CAPC does not represent all qualified conservators working in Canada.

Contact: liaison@capc-acrp.ca

Glossary

Adapted from ICOM-CC *Terminology for Conservation*

Conservation

A specialized professional field in heritage care that encompasses all measures and actions specially aimed at preserving and respecting the material integrity and intangible value of heritage objects, with the goal of keeping them stable and accessible for future generations as opportunities to

remember, learn and progress collectively. Branches in conservation include preventive conservation, conservation science, remedial / interventive conservation, and restoration. Examples of heritage objects include historical buildings, monuments, archival documents, forms of art, historical tools and equipment, photographs, etc.

Conservation Science

A branch in conservation that encompasses all analytical testing and research aimed at understanding heritage objects' materials and deterioration mechanisms and improving techniques for conservation treatments and long-term preservation.

Examples of analytical techniques used in conservation science include X-ray fluorescence (XRF), Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), Polarized Light Microscopy (PLM), Raman Spectroscopy, Scanning Electron Microscopy-Energy Dispersive X-ray Spectroscopy (SEM-EDS), Pyrolysis Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (py-GC-MS), etc.

Preventive Conservation

A branch in conservation that encompasses all measures and indirect actions aimed at preventing or slowing down significantly the degradation of heritage objects. Preservation efforts are focused on managing risks to the heritage objects by acting on their environmental conditions, transport, housing and display. Preventive conservation practices do not directly affect the structure and appearance of the objects themselves.

Examples of preventive conservation measures and indirect actions include housing objects with stable preservation materials, monitoring and controlling environmental conditions, establishing protocols for emergency preparedness, etc.

Remedial / Treatment / Interventive Conservation

A branch in conservation that encompasses all direct actions taken on heritage objects aimed at stabilizing their material integrity and ceasing or slowing down their degradation. Remedial conservation treatments may not necessarily alter the appearance of the heritage objects.

Examples of remedial / interventive conservation treatments include consolidating brittle and cracked paint layers, deactivating and removing mould, desalinating ceramics, etc.

Restoration

Encompasses all direct actions taken on heritage objects, aimed at reinstating their original appearance as accurately as possible. Restorative treatments necessarily alter the appearance of the heritage objects to improve their readability, function and appreciation. Historically and today, restoration work may be undertaken by restorers who, while skilled, do not necessarily abide by a *Code of Ethics*. When undertaken by conservation professionals, restorative treatments do not compromise the material integrity of the object and are fully documented.

Examples of restoration include infilling losses, inpainting missing sections, revarnishing, etc.