Collections Coordinator

For more information about the Koorie Heritage Trust, visit our website:

www.koorieheritagetrust.com
Position Summary

Reporting to the Curatorial Manager, the Collections Coordinator actively contributes to the registration, documentation (including coordinating relevant loans), care and preservation of the Koorie Heritage Trust’s unique and irreplaceable collections of Koorie and broader South East Australian Aboriginal art and artefacts, oral histories, photographic archives and reference library in accordance with professional museum standards. The Collections Coordinator also assists exhibitions curatorial staff with the development of exhibitions including the preparation and coordination of collections items included in exhibitions (whether temporary or permanent collections display).

Our artworks and objects collection contain over 3,900 items including historic artefacts and contemporary artworks ranging from boomerangs, shields, spear throwers, clubs, canoes, baskets, eel traps and possum-skin cloaks to carved emu eggs, ceramics, t-shirts, jewellery and sculpture. Included in our artworks and objects collection is our Picture Collection, which contain more than 900 items including 19th-century paintings by William Barak and Tommy McRae, contemporary paintings, drawings, collages and digitised images. We also hold a number of historical engravings from 19th century newspapers depicting Koorie life and cultural practices from a European point of view.

Our Photography Collection contains 48,000+ images including original and duplicate copies of historic and contemporary photographs, transparencies, negatives, born digital images and reference copies of images held by other organisations. Included in this collection are images of Koorie people, cultural heritage sites and significant cultural events.

Our Oral History Program and Collection helps us to keep the oral histories of South-Eastern Australia alive and ensures that cultural knowledge is preserved for future generations. Many of these audio and visual recordings share significant stories and links to family members. Our Oral History Collection encompasses an audio and visual collection of over 2000 recordings, predominantly interviews with Koorie people from all over Victoria.

We have approximately 4,000 items in our Reference Library Collection. The Collection includes our own publications, historic books, contemporary published works, unpublished documents, theses, serials, posters, maps and some published audio-visual items. Our Collection is unique in that we specialise in resources from south-eastern Australia.

An important role of our Collections is to show how Koorie culture continues to evolve. Traditional crafts, designs and stories are still being used across a wide range of contemporary media demonstrating how materials and crafts have adapted and changed over time. Our collection also reflects the diversity of objects and designs from South-Eastern Australia and how they are unique and distinct from other areas of Australia.

The role sits within our Exhibitions, Collections and Public Programming Team reporting to the Curatorial Manager.

1. Selection Criteria

1.1 ESSENTIAL

- An understanding and knowledge of the culture and heritage of the Aboriginal people of South East Australia, and experience in working with this community.
- An understanding of Indigenous arts and cultural practice nationally and internationally.
- Sound knowledge of, and experience in professional museum practice including collection management and/or conservation.
- Demonstrated ability to plan, manage and prioritise a heavy workload.
- Demonstrated ability to manage a calendar, timelines and ability to stick to deadlines.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including public speaking and presentation skills.
- Thorough understanding of basic computer skills such as word processing, digital calendars, excel and email.
1.2 DESIRABLE

- Experience in working within a small team.
- Tertiary qualifications in museum studies, curatorship, art history, arts management / administration, or a related discipline.
- Experience in collection management and/or conservation.
- Knowledge and understanding of curatorial practice/discourse.

2. Key Responsibilities

This role will be responsible for:

- Collection registration, documentation and information management including:
  - Registration of all new acquisitions to the collection - including accessioning, documentation and entering data into the Trust's collection management database.
  - As required, undertake any retrospective documentation and cataloguing of the collection.
  - Play a key role in managing and maintaining the Trust's collections database including:
    - data entry according to defined process and procedures as identified and amended from time to time including coordinating the capture, filing and management of collection images
    - maintaining records of the location and movement of collection objects internally and externally
    - coordinating regular upgrades and maintenance of the database system
    - making recommendations to improve processes and use of the database and its functionality
  - Coordinate, assign and supervise collection volunteers and collection-based volunteer projects.
  - Respond to a range of community and industry enquiries in a timely manner including particularly facilitating access to the collections, including community and research requests and ‘behind the scenes tours’.
  - Assist in providing reports on new acquisitions for the collection.

- Storage, movement and preservation of the collection.
  - Working closely with curators, coordinate all outgoing/incoming loans for exhibitions ensuring all relevant deadlines are met. This includes:
    - liaising with lenders/borrowers regarding display requirements
    - completing loan documentation and maintaining sound records
    - organising delivery of loans
    - completing condition reports
    - reporting any issues to the Curatorial Manager in a timely manner
  - Collect and monitor environmental conditions and report any issues of concern.
  - Maintain and ensure the general preservation and conservation of the collections including preventative conservation, environmental monitoring and utilising best practice storage methods for the general upkeep of the collections store.
  - Assist in the development and delivery of collection projects including oral history recordings, conservation activities, displays and research projects.
  - Assist curators with the retrieval of collection objects required for exhibitions and the preparation of those objects for display.
  - Assist in managing the reproduction of images of collection items for internal or external purposes, including attributions, copyright and commercial arrangements.
  - Working with the exhibitions team to deliver collection displays as well as assisting in the delivery of temporary exhibition displays.

- All other duties as directed by the Curatorial Manager and/or Trust’s CEO within the scope of the employee’s skill level and training.
3. **Key Challenges**

Creating a balanced and dynamic program that enhances the organisation’s public profile and meets the needs of its various audiences in the dynamic cultural precinct of Federation Square.

4. **Work Hours**

The position is required to work 38 Hours a week. The role requires nights and weekend work as needed.

5. **Special Conditions**

Indigenous applicants are strongly encouraged to apply. You will be required to work on your feet at times and some lifting may be required although only as it abides by Workplace OHS. You will also have an understanding of Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) as required (see Section 7 below).

6. **Other Information**

6.1 **THE Koorie Heritage Trust**

We are an Aboriginal owned and managed not-for-profit organisation. Our Vision is to live in a society where Aboriginal culture and history are a fundamental part of Victorian life. Our Purpose is to promote, support and celebrate the continuing journey of the Aboriginal people of South Eastern Australia. Our Values are Respect, Honesty, Reciprocity, Curiosity.

We provide a unique environment rich in culture, heritage and history which welcomes and encourages Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to come together in the spirit of learning and reconciliation in a safe environment. We are a place for everyone. We see ourselves as a knowledge bank and vital community resource to facilitate sharing, learning, collaborating and creating.

We will continually monitor and measure our success against our 4 strategic goals: To ENGAGE with Victorian Aboriginal Communities; GROW the Collections; REACH new audiences; ENRICH our visitors’ experience.

6.2 **EQUITY AND DIVERSITY**

We are committed to equal opportunity in employment and welfare for staff. Staff are selected and promoted on merit.

6.3 **GOVERNANCE**

We are a not-for-profit Incorporated Association operating under the Associations Incorporation Reformed Act 2012. We are managed by a Board of Management. The CEO is a non-voting member of the Board.

6.4 **GENERAL**

As we evolve to meet the changing needs of the Victorian Koorie and wider communities, so will the roles required of all our staff. As such, this document is not intended to represent the role which you will perform in perpetuity. This position description is intended to provide an overall view of the role as at the date of this statement. In addition to this document, the specifics of the role will be described in local area work and project plans, and in performance plans developed in consultation with you and as part of our performance management process.
Managers/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that our Risk Management Framework is adopted and incorporated into business planning and work activities, and that they identify and control risks within their line of control.

Hours of duty will be according to work unit requirements.

All our employees are required to undergo Human Resources and Risk, Safety, Security & Environment Inductions.

Conditions of employment are pursuant to the National Employment Standard.

Employees are required to ensure that they understand and adhere to our HR policies and procedures as varied from time to time.

All new appointments are subject to a probationary period, which may be subject to review.

7. **Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)**

All staff are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other personnel who may be affected by their conduct. These include general staff responsibilities and those additional responsibilities that apply for Managers and Supervisors and other Personnel.