

# Glenbow

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## Chief Curator

**DATE:** APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2020

**LOCATION:** Calgary, AB

**JOB NUMBER:** OOS002

Please submit application to [careers@glenbow.org](mailto:careers@glenbow.org)

### Why you should join Glenbow:

**Be there.** We are present. We listen. We step up. We show up. We meet people where they are. We earn trust by being authentic and dependable. We are here for each other and we are here for our community.

**Spark big ideas.** We empower our visitors and ourselves by encouraging curiosity and welcoming great questions. We imagine more possibilities and we create space for inspiration. We believe that creativity makes our world better.

**Take pride.** Remarkable things happen here because we work hard and we are always learning. We take time to reflect and improve on what has come before. We respect the knowledge and experience of others. We approach every challenge with integrity and humility. Our personal passion fuels our high standards.

**Together is better.** We welcome all perspectives. What we do is better when more diverse voices are heard. We champion a collaborative environment where people feel respected, valued and connected. We have greater impact when we work as a team.

### Summary

Glenbow seeks a visionary leader to become its next Chief Curator. As one of Canada's leading museums with an extraordinary breadth of collections, including the largest visual arts collection in western Canada, one of the country's foremost Indigenous collections, core strengths in Africa, Asia, military history, folk art, Western settler culture, and a library and archival collection focused on the visual arts, Glenbow offers the promise of new stories, new dialogues, and new directions for a museum program in the twenty-first century.

Glenbow is on the cusp of renovating its 1975 building in the heart of downtown Calgary. This project will provide the museum's team the opportunity to reconsider the use of nearly 300,000 square feet of space, and to reimagine its entire public-facing operation, including all exhibitions and use of collections, and how they will activate communities and demonstrate relevance to a diverse city while further defining its mandate as an art museum.

The Chief Curator will lead many of these discussions, and must be a creative and flexible thinker with a proven track record of questioning museum conventions, and leading change in complex cultural institutions. They must be comfortable working across disciplines, and be able to enliven art and artifacts from a spectrum of cultural and collected histories. One of Glenbow's core strengths is the eclectic nature of its holdings, reflecting the avid interests of its founder, Eric Harvie, and his belief that art, objects and entities from diverse origins would, together, enrich the lives of Calgarians. Candidates for the position should be inspired by the opportunity to tease new relationships from among these collections, and to pursue targeted acquisitions that will affirm the museum's position as a leader in understanding of how the arts frame the human experience.

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Candidates must also demonstrate a sensitivity to the ethics and politics of working with Indigenous collections and partners. Glenbow remains a leader in Indigenous consultation and access among Canadian museums, a role in our national community we will continue to grow. The Chief Curator must interrogate what it means to design a nationally-significant museum program in an era of reconciliation, and, working with Indigenous curators, will participate in consultations with Indigenous communities and stakeholders on the development of our Indigenous programs within the renovated museum.

The Chief Curator will also have the opportunity to design and hire new curatorial positions to execute Glenbow's future program. The successful candidate will have a proven track record of developing an ongoing exhibition program that demonstrates relevance, audience engagement, and responds to artistic, intellectual and attendance criteria. Candidates for this position should ask of themselves: if I could build a curatorial program from scratch in Canada in 2020, what would it look like, and how will it contribute to Glenbow's relevance and sustainability in the long term?

## Job Description

Reporting to the COO & VP Engagement, the Chief Curator is a member of the museum's management team, actively participating in shaping the organization's program and furthering its vision and mission. This position leads efforts to assess, build and present the museum's collections and manages the curatorial department, working in a collaborative, team-centric organizational culture.

Over the next three years, the Chief Curator will play a pivotal role reimagining Glenbow's exhibition program and utilization of its collections, in tandem with a planned building-wide renovation. The Chief Curator will lead the curatorial team in conceptualizing and developing new exhibitions from the permanent collection that will increase audience engagement, supporting the museum's mission, to activate art, objects, and ideas so that everyone leaves Glenbow with something to share. The Chief Curator will also lead discussions on how the collections should evolve to meet Glenbow's role as a public art museum, including the development of collection plans, soliciting gifts, and proposing acquisitions as resources allow.

The Chief Curator must be at ease in a highly visible and public position. The incumbent must cultivate relationships with donors, collectors, and the broader community, building support for Glenbow's program.

## Responsibilities

### Collection Development and Curatorial Department (50 percent)

- Management of curatorial department staff, policies, procedures, and budgets.
- Working in collaboration with the collections department, develop strategies that address the management of the collection, including accessioning and deaccessioning, storage, conservation and loans.
- Plan curatorial assessments of existing collections and oversee the development of prioritized, comprehensive, long-range collection plans.
- Working in collaboration with the advancement department, develops a long-term strategy to build the collections through gifts and financial support and enlist support for the collection plan.
- Works cross-departmentally to help develop and produce the museum's publications, online content and outreach programming associated with the collection and the exhibitions.
- Works closely with the education and programming departments to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the information disseminated about exhibitions and collections.
- Working in collaboration with the marketing and communications department to develop and ensure the accuracy of all exhibition and collection related information delivered to the public.
- Along with other curatorial staff, reviews and researches potential acquisitions and prepares acquisition proposals; advises on deaccessions when appropriate.
- Along with other curatorial staff, researches permanent collection objects, and disseminates information through exhibitions, gallery displays, public lectures and publications. Approves all research projects.

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- Develops collaborative relationships with artists and others in the arts community, locally, regionally and nationally.

## Exhibition Development and Planning (50 percent)

- Works with the COO & VP Engagement to set the direction and master calendar for exhibitions, including the presentation of the collection and touring exhibitions.
- Responsible for long-term plans for the presentation of the collection, for the permanent galleries, their vision and interpretation in the context of the Strategic Plan.
- Collaborates with the production and building operations department to ensure successful planning and installation of touring and rotating exhibition program.
- Researches and develops original concept and content for exhibitions; curates and supervises preparation of exhibition and related materials including publications.
- Overall supervision and guidance of Glenbow-originated exhibitions and displays curated internally.
- Develops and oversees exhibition budgets.
- Liaises with other institutions, museums, galleries, collectors, artists and experts to further the reputation and goals of the Museum; attends conferences and gives lectures or papers.
- Other duties and responsibilities as assigned.

## Skills & Requirements

- Experience 8-10 years of progressively responsible curatorial and museum management experience.
- An exemplary record of professional or academic achievement in direct support of museum work, including some combination of study or credentials in a related field, exhibitions, publications, collections development, thought leadership, and programming participation and collaborative success.
- A strong professional track record in museum management, collection development and building collaborative relationships, internally and externally, with demonstrable results.
- Previous experience working in consultation with Indigenous elders, advisors and artists that has led to successful and respectful partnerships.
- Previous experience developing a rotating exhibition program that incorporates exhibitions from the permanent collection and touring exhibitions, resulting in increased attendance and audience engagement and furthering the museum's programming goals.
- A demonstrated ability to develop exhibition and programming strategies that address multiple collections, stakeholders and audience needs.
- Previous experience developing collection plans that lead to growth in depth and breadth of collections and community engagement in building of same.
- Demonstrated expertise in at least one major area of the museum's collection.
- Demonstrated experience with management of a team, long-term planning, budgets and time management.
- Demonstrated experience curating exhibitions that have meaningfully engaged museum audiences, and impacted audience reach.
- Demonstrated interest in challenging museum conventions, and exploring practices and pedagogy that progress best practices.
- Demonstrated interest in achieving greater accessibility of content for non-traditional museum audiences.

## Interpersonal/People Management/Communication skills

- Ability to work with board members, donors, collectors, artists, gallery owners, curators and scholars, as well as publishers, designers, volunteers and staff members at every level.
- Demonstrated leadership skills, team player
- Highly developed research and writing skills
- Excellent communication and presentation skills



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- Ability to network and act as an ambassador for the institution
- Visionary, yet detail oriented

## Administrative and Technical Skills

- Excellent management, organizational and operational skills
- Ability to handle competing priorities
- Effective planning and decision-making abilities
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office programs
- Advanced knowledge of the following: museological standards, code of ethics, conservation policy, collections management policy, copyright policy, disaster preparedness plans, security policy and health and safety policies.
- Object handling
- Department budget development and oversight

## Special Conditions of Employment

- Travel within Canada and internationally when required
- Overtime, evening and weekend work when required

## Stay connected to us:

- For more ways to experience and share art outside Glenbow's walls, [click here](#)
- Visit our [Community Access At Glenbow](#) to see our commitment to expand the reach and impact of art and culture in our community

## Notice on hiring during the COVID-19 pandemic:

*Glenbow is committed to a safe and healthy hiring process for all positions during this period of uncertainty. Interviews will be conducted via videoconference to ensure social distancing as long as such measures are advisable by health officials. The timing for new employees to commence positions may be impacted, as the museum is currently closed pending developments in the pandemic. Glenbow will discuss options with all prospective employees.*

*We expect to hire this position in the fall of 2020, pending health restrictions.*

