

ROLE STATEMENT

ROLE TITLE	Head of Collections and Exhibitions	POSITION NO.	
CLASSIFICATION	PO4	REVIEWED DATE	June 2026
PORTFOLIO	Experience and Learning	ANZSCO CODE	
AGENCY	History Trust of South Australia		

ABOUT THE ROLE

The Head of Collections and Exhibitions is a newly created senior leadership role at the History Trust of South Australia, established to shape the future of the State History Collection and the way it is experienced by the public.

This role brings together collections, curatorial practice, exhibitions, interpretation, and research to ensure the Trust's collections are not only cared for, but actively used to create meaning, spark curiosity, and strengthen public understanding of South Australia's histories.

As custodian of the State History Collection and operator of the Migration Museum, South Australian Maritime Museum, National Motor Museum, Centre of Democracy, South Australia's History Festival and Bay to Birdwood, the History Trust has a distinctive role in civic and cultural life. The Head of Collections and Exhibitions will lead the work that connects the objects we hold with the stories, questions and communities they serve.

The role will provide strategic and practical leadership across collection development, exhibitions planning, interpretation, documentation, research, digital access and public engagement. It will lead a whole-of-Trust approach to how history is collected, preserved, interpreted and activated across our museums, programs and public platforms.

The role will be central to the Trust's ambition to put history to work: using collections and exhibitions to provoke curiosity, support learning, illuminate complexity and help South Australians better understand the past and its relevance to the future.

Reporting/Working Relationships

- Reports to Director of Experience and Learning
- Manages direct reports in Collections and Exhibitions units
- Works closely with HTSA Leadership Groups
- Works collaboratively with key staff leads across the organisation, with working relationships across cultural, history and education sectors, Artlab Australia, and industry stakeholders.

Why Join the History Trust of South Australia?

The History Trust connects people with the stories that shape our state. We put history to work, helping South Australians understand the past and make better decisions about the future. Through our collections, museums, events and education programs, we use history as a training ground for thinking about the impacts of the choices we make. Joining the History Trust means contributing to work that strengthens learning, civic life and community understanding across South Australia.

Benefits of Working with Us



Looking for a role that combines a deeper purpose with your skills? At the History Trust of South Australia, we do things a little differently. We leap at opportunities and create our own, and we practise what we preach by giving people the space to test ideas, learn, and keep improving. We welcome ambition and, most of all, gumption, the resourcefulness, creativity and tenacity needed to get things done. This is a role suited to someone who enjoys variety, initiative, and developing practical solutions. Alongside meaningful work, you will find a collaborative culture and flexible working arrangements where possible.

SECTION A: KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Lead the development, delivery and evaluation of a contemporary participatory vision and plan for HTSA's exhibitions and collections programs, ensuring they reflect the complexity, diversity and lived experience of South Australians.
- Lead custodianship of the State History Collection, ensuring it is not merely preserved but continuously enriched, refined, interpreted, and made accessible in ways that reflect the full diversity of the South Australian experience.
- Lead the development and implementation and review of a compelling Collection Development Plan that aligns with the History Trust's strategic objectives and strengthens the Collection's relevance, reach and long-term value.
- Initiate and lead a whole-of-Trust exhibitions and interpretation program that connects collections, stories, audiences and public purpose across the Trust's museums, programs and platforms.
- Lead the strategic development of the State History Network as a statewide platform for connection, capability-building and shared visibility, including providing authoritative advice and specialist services to elevate the work of community museums, collections and local history groups as part of South Australia's broader state story.
- Work closely with the Head of Commercial and Partnerships to cultivate and steward philanthropic opportunities, relationships, donors, sponsors and partners that strengthen the State History Collection, support exhibitions, and grow the Trust's financial capacity.
- Provide expert specialist consultancy to the Head of Tourism and Marketing to strengthen audience growth, deliver compelling visitor experiences and identify opportunities for earned revenue through exhibitions, collections and public programming.
- Develop, manage and oversee significant programs and major projects, including developing, monitoring and reviewing budgets, resources and financial strategies relating to collections, exhibitions and associated programs.
- Lead, supervise and develop the Collections and Exhibitions team, building professional capability, organisational agility, accountability and resilience.
- Establish and lead evaluation and continuous improvement strategies, priorities and processes across exhibitions, collections, interpretation and visitor experience, using evidence and audience insight to improve impact.
- Lead improvements in collection documentation, digital access and collections data, ensuring the State History Collection is increasingly discoverable, usable and connected to public, education and research outcomes.
- Provide authoritative advice to the CEO, Board and colleagues on all matters relating to South Australian history, material culture, collections, exhibitions and public interpretation, offering foresight, candour and strategic judgement.

QUALIFICATION

Essential:

- Qualification in Museum Studies, Collections Management or related field.
- Postgraduate qualifications in History or Museum Studies.

Desirable:

- Qualifications or formal training in leadership, supervision, or people management.
- Financial or business administration training, including budgeting, procurement, or contract management.

SECTION B: SELECTION CRITERIA

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Essential:

- Comprehensive knowledge of contemporary museum practice, including exhibition development, experience design, collections management, and audience engagement and growth strategies.



- Comprehensive knowledge of South Australian history and the principles, practices and resources required for historical research, analysis and writing.
- Comprehensive knowledge of museum program and collection management to ensure its preservation, documentation, development and display.
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience utilising, contemporary collections management systems.
- Detailed knowledge of government policies, including procurement policies and procedures, and their application in relation to agency operations.

Desirable:

- Knowledge of community museums practice and management of distributed collections.
- Minimum of 5 years' experience with collections and exhibitions work in a museum preferred.

PERSONAL ABILITIES

- Highly developed strategic judgement and conceptual thinking, with the ability to determine professional objectives and connect organisational purpose, audience opportunity and public value into clear, actionable priorities within the framework of an organisation's goals.
- Exceptional communication, influence and relationship-building skills, with the capacity to shape compelling narratives, engage diverse stakeholders and represent the Trust with credibility and confidence.
- Strong collaborative leadership, initiative and delivery focus, with demonstrated ability to work under broad guidelines and with high levels of professional independence, across teams and portfolios, building momentum in a new and evolving role, and translating strategy into practical outcomes.
- Demonstrated ability to lead exhibitions, interpretation, digital access and collection-based experiences for broad audiences, with a record of delivering measurable outcomes in attendance, participation, audience engagement, accessibility, revenue and/or other public impact.
- Demonstrated ability to build and sustain trusted relationships with communities, cultural partners, government, donors, researchers, First Nations stakeholders, sector peers and community history organisations, including the diplomacy, tact and cultural sensitivity required to work with diverse local custodians, volunteers and community-led collections.
- Excellent written, verbal, public presentation and advisory skills, including the ability to provide clear strategic advice to senior leaders, boards and government, and to act as a credible public and media-facing representative on matters relating to South Australian history, material culture, exhibitions and the State History Collection.

EXPERIENCE

Essential:

- Significant experience leading collections, exhibitions, curatorial, interpretation or cultural heritage programs, in a museum, gallery, archive, library or cultural institution, for a target audience with sound scholarship and storytelling that deepens engagement.
- Extensive experience in the development, delivery and evaluation of a contemporary participatory collections strategy and policy, including collection development, documentation, preservation, access, deaccessioning, ethical collecting and the activation of collections for public, educational and civic benefit.
- Extensive experience initiating, formulating and managing complex programs and projects, including leading teams, managing budgets and resources, managing change and fostering a collaborative, accountable and high-performing culture.
- Significant experience developing plans, policies, budgets and business cases for complex projects and exhibitions, providing expert specialist consultancy to project teams and providing authoritative advice to executive and organisational decision-making.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

All employees commit to valuing and respecting the needs and contributions of First Nations employees and visitors, and to developing intercultural capability, including engagement with the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community.



Engagement in this role is subject to a satisfactory Department of Human Services Working with Children Check, with renewal required every five years.

The role may require out-of-hours work, as well as intrastate and interstate travel.

All History Trust of South Australia employees are required to work in accordance with the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector, as well as relevant policies, procedures, and legislative requirements, including but not limited to:

- Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
- Return to Work Act 2014 (SA)
- Equal Employment Opportunity (including prevention of bullying, harassment, and intimidation)
- Children's Protection Act 1993 (Cth) – Notification of Abuse or Neglect
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018
- Disability Discrimination legislation
- Information Privacy Principles
- Relevant Awards, Enterprise Agreements, Public Sector Act 2009, History Trust of SA Act 1981, and OCPSE Determinations and Guidelines
- Relevant Australian Standards
- Applying the principles of the South Australian Government's Risk Management Policy as appropriate
- Maintaining accurate and complete records of business activities in accordance with the State Records Act 1997

This role is based in the Adelaide CBD, however travel between our sites located in Birdwood and Port Adelaide is required regularly. Depending on operational needs, the incumbent may be required to transfer to other History Trust locations, either permanently or temporarily, to perform work appropriate to their classification, skills, and capabilities, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Public Sector Act 2009.

Work Health and Safety

This role requires the incumbent:

- Collaborate with the WHS Coordinator on workplace safety procedures and programs
- Proactively ensures all direct reports understand workplace health and safety requirements and responsibilities.
- Participates in health and safety discussions in the workplace.
- Identifies hazards, assesses risks, and implements procedures for controlling risks.
- Implements procedures for dealing with incidents and emergency events.
- Maintains appropriate workplace safety records.
- Implements procedures for managing injured workers.

ROLE ACCEPTANCE

I have read and understand the responsibilities and organisational context as outlined in this role statement and agree to adhere to the values of the SA Government and History Trust of SA as described within this document.

Occupant Name

Occupant Signature

Date

