



De Morgan Foundation
Candidate Brief - Assistant Curator

Dear Applicant

We are delighted that you are considering the role of Assistant Curator, working for The De Morgan Foundation.

This is an opportunity to join our newly reshaped team at an exciting time, to bring your expertise to De Morgan to help us grow and achieve our ambitions.

This is a wide-ranging and rewarding opportunity which includes running the Foundation's museum, care and conservation of its collection, visitor engagement, learning, and outreach activities, and supporting its revenue-raising activities through grant and funding applications and commercial activities such as merchandising.

We are looking for someone who is energetic, resilient, flexible, and enthusiastic, and who can build relationships with stakeholders and engage visitors to help us to tell the story of our collection and the artist couple who made it.

If you have experience in the running of a museum, caring for an important collection, visitor engagement, learning, and outreach activities, grants and fundraising, we encourage you to apply for this role.

Excited? Read on for more.



ABOUT THE ROLES

Our current Museum Director who has been with us for six years is leaving at the end of the year for a new senior role elsewhere. The Board is taking this opportunity to reshape the team to provide greater flexibility and opportunities for growth.

The new team will comprise two part-time roles, a Museum Director and an Assistant Curator, working together to deliver the Foundation's vision, aims, objectives, and activities.

Both posts will require regular travel around the UK and occasionally abroad, with some weekend and evening work, for which time-off-in-lieu applies. There will be a variable workload combined with the need to meet specific deadlines and targets, which may lead to some irregular working hours.

Postholders will be required to schedule their hours/days worked to ensure the Foundation is staffed as is necessary, and to allow sufficient time working together to communicate and operate effectively, which will entail each postholder covering some duties of each post. As the De Morgan Museum is currently open Thursday to Sunday, the Assistant Curator will usually be present on site Thursdays and Fridays, subject to activity and cover.

It is likely that over time the emphasis of the jobs may change, without changing the general character of the jobs or the level of duties and responsibilities carried. Jobs will be periodically reviewed and updated in consultation with the postholders to reflect appropriate changes.

Application process:

Please send your CV with a covering letter, setting out your skills and experience and why you are suitable for this role to: Jean McMeakin, Chair, De Morgan Trustee Board, via:
recruitment@demorgan.org.uk

Closing date for applications is 5pm on **11th November 2024**

Interviews are expected to take place on **29th November 2024**

Informal discussions about the role can be held with Sarah Hardy, outgoing Museum Director, prior to application.

Terms of appointment:

Job title: Assistant Curator

Reporting to: Museum Director

Hours: 21 hours / 3 days per week, exclusive of lunch breaks (some evening, weekend, and public holiday work required, for which time-off-in-lieu applies)

Salary: £28,000pa (£16,800 pro rata)

Location: De Morgan Museum at Cannon Hall in Barnsley, with some hybrid working

Annual leave: 30 days per calendar year (including statutory holidays) pro rata

Contract: Continuing

Probationary period: 6 months

Notice period: One month during the probationary period and three months thereafter.

Pension: The De Morgan Foundation is part of the NEST pension scheme.

ABOUT DE MORGAN

The De Morgan Foundation

The De Morgan Foundation is registered as an independent charity with the Charity Commission (number 310004) under its Charitable Scheme. The Scheme sets out the Foundation's charitable objects (its purpose) and the powers of the Trustee. The Foundation owns the charity's assets, including the De Morgan Collection, and employs the staff.

The charitable objects of the De Morgan Foundation are:

- (a) the provision and maintenance of a collection accessible to the public of paintings, ceramics and other works of art and, in particular, of works of art made by William De Morgan and his associates, paintings by Evelyn De Morgan, and works belonging to the Foundation; and
- (b) the promotion of the appreciation of the arts and of education in the arts and allied subjects.

The Foundation has its own Arts Council England Accredited museum, The De Morgan Museum, at Cannon Hall in Barnsley, once the ancestral home of Evelyn De Morgan's family, the Spencer Stanhopes, where it provides public access to the collection and related educational and other activities and events..

Other public display and access to the collection is managed via a small number of key partnerships with complementary institutions across the country, and via loans and temporary exhibitions, both nationally and internationally. The Foundation also makes its collection available online, through its own website, and on digital art platforms, ensuring the widest possible public audience can enjoy the artworks and to learn about them and the artists.

The Foundation is headquartered at Cannon Hall and it is the registered address of both the De Morgan Foundation and the De Morgan Trustee Company Limited.

The De Morgan Trustee Company Limited is registered at Companies House (number 6914254). It is the sole Trustee of the Foundation. The Board of Directors of the Trustee are registered as Directors with Companies House. The Board comprises nine independent, volunteer Non-Executive Directors, acting as the Trustee Board for the charity, overseeing the activities of the Foundation and its staff.

The De Morgan Collection

The De Morgan Foundation owns and cares for the De Morgan Collection, comprising paintings, drawings, ceramics, and other works of art by the Arts & Crafts ceramicist William De Morgan and his Pre-Raphaelite-style artist wife, Evelyn Pickering De Morgan.

The De Morgan Collection was formed by Evelyn De Morgan's youngest sister, Wilhelmina Stirling, who had been collecting De Morgan works for many years. After her death in 1965 aged 99, a charitable trust was established to care for the artworks in perpetuity. The De Morgan Foundation continues this work today.

The collection includes 58 oil paintings by Evelyn De Morgan and over 600 works on paper, and over 700 ceramics by William De Morgan, including 50 tile panels and 420 individual tiles, 260 plates, chargers, vases, bottles, and bowls, as well as rare oil paintings, early drawings from the antique, and designs for stained glass.

John Roddam Spencer Stanhope, Evelyn De Morgan's artist uncle, is also represented with an early oil on panel painting and a number of drawings and sketches.

A small archive of material is also held; a collection of letters, drawings, plays, personal effects, photographs, family documents, and ephemera relating to William and Evelyn De Morgan, as well as acquisition details for the collection. The Foundation also keeps a small library of art-related volumes, including some early copies of William De Morgan's books from his later career as a successful novelist.

De Morgan Values

Inspiring : We provide an engaging visitor experience for both adults and children, encouraging learning and discovery, and use the collection to inspire and enhance people's lives.

Inclusive : We are friendly and welcoming. We offer everyone the keys to unlock the collection to enjoy it for themselves. We work in collaboration with others to display the collection and remove barriers to access.

Expert : We build expertise and knowledge, actively researching the collection and engaging with others to ensure we continue to be the world's leading authority on the life and work of the De Morgans.

Custodians : We preserve and share the beautiful collection of jewellike paintings, lustrous ceramics, and delicate drawings, which is at the heart of everything we do.



ASSISTANT CURATOR- JOB DESCRIPTION

REMIT

A key public-facing role for the Foundation, the Assistant Curator will serve as an advocate for Foundation, its museum, and its collection. On a day-to-day basis the Assistant Curator is responsible for the successful operation of the De Morgan Museum at Cannon Hall, ensuring the values and aims of the Foundation are realised through the programming and management of museum activities, building awareness of its exhibitions and displays, online work, driving audience engagement and learning activity.

The Assistant Curator will ensure a strategic overview of the profile and character of the Foundation's collection, and be responsible for its care, management, and development, for collections management practices for the collection and archive, including documentation and conservation, in compliance with SPECTRUM standards, guided by the Museum Director and supported by a small team of volunteers.

Providing curatorial leadership with respect to research, exhibitions, and education, the Assistant Curator is responsible for the Foundation's exhibition programme and will champion understanding of the collection.

The Assistant Curator will support the Foundation's operational business plan, and ensure all operational policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and in line with best practice, and will support the Museum Director in implementing the fundraising strategy. Managerial, curatorial, operational, and administrative responsibilities form part of the remit associated with the post.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Management

- To ensure that all relevant legal and statutory requirements are met, and that insurance, security, and collection care measures are all in place and up to date
- To support the Museum Director in risk assessment and management and to ensure the Emergency Plan is up to date, liaising with partners on matters relevant to each site and co-ordinating plans accordingly.
- Liaising with the Museum Director, to manage and run the Foundation's office, dealing with enquiries and correspondence, ensuring appropriate contracts and services are in place commensurate with the Foundation's needs, and acting as primary contact/key-holder/responder.
- To be responsible for the day-to-day supervision, tasking, and training of the volunteer team, fostering effective team working, and to manage the recruitment and supervision of the volunteer team to support all aspects of the Foundation's activities, regularly reviewing the team, auditing and refreshing the skills base through recruitment and/or training, leading a successful and happy team of volunteers.
- To liaise with Foundation partners to provide relevant expertise as necessary, ensuring others' volunteer workforces are suitably informed and trained on De Morgan as necessary.

Financial Management

- To ensure the Foundation's finances as fall within the remit of the role are managed appropriately, including the administration of purchasing and sales, banking, and other financial and business related tasks.
- To support the preparation of the Trustee's annual report and accounts, providing content as required.
- With the Museum Director, maintain and develop the De Morgan merchandising offer, including identifying brand and product development and licensing opportunities, managing the online shop and stock control, reporting and analysis of sales and budget management.
- To provide support for all fundraising campaigns and projects, enabling the Foundation to achieve against significant funding requirements.

Collection Care & Management

- To take curatorial responsibility for the collection, in particular maintaining expert knowledge of and research into the collection, in the life and work of the De Morgans, and wider knowledge in the fine and decorative arts of the period, in particular the Arts & Crafts and the Pre-Raphaelite movements, and to share such expertise with volunteers and others as appropriate.
- To manage the safekeeping, care, documentation, display, and interpretation of the Foundation's collection and archive, monitoring its physical safety and condition to Spectrum standards, recording all collection activity in the relevant collection management systems.
- To ensure the Foundation maintains its ACE Accreditation, including the preparation and maintenance of relevant policies and procedures.
- To manage the Foundation's approach to storage to ensure the security and safe storage of the collections, and to ensure that the Board is provided with an up to date, comprehensive overview of the collection and archive and its status and disposition on a regular basis.
- Undertake duties as Registrar for the collection, including the maintenance of the Foundation's accession register, and evaluating offers of sale and /or donation.
- To lead the development and implementation of a plan for the long-term conservation and development of the Foundation's collection in terms of acquisition and conservation strategies, proposing appropriate conservation work as required, ensuring agreed conservation work is planned, budgeted, and undertaken by proper persons to approved standards.
- To review the Foundation's collections development policies, and to identify suitable objects for acquisition, together with proposals for funding.
- To maintain and evolve the collections database, and to manage the project to catalogue the Foundation's archive.

Exhibitions, Tours, & Loans

- To propose and research content for exhibition display, to enhance knowledge about the collection and deliver high-quality interpretation in a range of media on site and online, upholding high standards of accuracy in the presentation of information.
- To successfully deliver a programme of tours and exhibitions as agreed by the Board and Museum Director, including research, exhibition design and content, preparation of project plans and budgets, and funding arrangements.
- To assess and manage requests for external loans from the collection, liaising with venues on practical arrangements for loans, including loan negotiation and agreements, condition checking, packing, transport, indemnity and insurance, couriers, and installation.

Visitor Engagement

- To act as an ambassador for the Foundation, managing the delivery of museum events, learning, talks, producing online and offline content, and responding to enquiries.
- To ensure that the Museum offers optimum standards of visitor service and presentation, including collection of visitor feedback.
- To develop a forward plan of a public programme of events, exhibitions, activities, and outreach work in conjunction with the Museum Director, and working closely with the Barnsley Museum team at Cannon Hall as relevant.
- Utilising the resources of the collection, to devise and run educational and learning activities as appropriate, delivering a learning programme through access to the handling collection and other objects.
- To devise and deliver an effective audience development plan, to create an audience-centred culture, focusing on growing a diverse audience and delivering an excellent visitor experience.

Marketing

- To support the implementation of a marketing/communications plan and to deliver activities, including the production of marketing collateral in line with the De Morgan style guide. To gather analytical data pertaining to marketing activity, and update the plan and approach based on results.
- To use all available channels to optimise the Foundation's profile, generating creative ideas, including researching and drafting articles and other content, compiling press releases/press pack material, and answering media queries.
- To maintain and develop the Foundation's website, ensuring it is fit for purpose, accurate, engaging, and user-friendly, and to manage and regularly update the Foundation's social media presence on the relevant platforms, alongside e-mail marketing, online listings and Google Grant advertising to ensure a seamless visitor journey online with consistent visual assets and tone of voice.

Relationship Management & Development

- To act as an ambassador for the Foundation, and to preserve and enhance the Foundation's reputational standing and profile in all activities, growing the Foundation's networks with other art collections and experts of the period to promote the collection, developing effective relations with regional, national, and international organisations.
- To work collaboratively with the Foundation's key partners to ensure maximum benefit from these partnerships, including promoting the collection, engaging users, providing learning opportunities, and to work with partners to capture and evaluate visitor information and feedback.
- To devise, develop and manage a range of initiatives to attract and engage supporters to create and grow advocacy and revenue opportunities. To run the Friends and Patrons schemes, drafting regular newsletters to maintain their engagement and support.
- To support the Museum Director in building and nurturing relationships with donors, grant-makers, funders, sponsors, and influential stakeholders, to identify appropriate funding opportunities, providing support for all grant applications, fundraising campaigns and projects.
- To identify community and charity partners to develop initiatives which cater to specific user requirements to enable enhanced visitor accessibility, diversity, and inclusion opportunities.

This job description outlines the principle responsibilities and duties of the postholder. It is not meant to be, nor is it, an exhaustive list of specific responsibilities, duties, and tasks. The postholder will be expected to undertake any other duties which could reasonably be expected as being within the remit of the role.

ASSISTANT CURATOR: PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications & Experience

- A degree in a relevant discipline or evidence of equivalent expertise.
- Knowledge of 19th Century British fine and decorative arts, and a demonstrable interest in 19th century culture, art, design, and decorative arts. A commitment to developing further expertise and to becoming expert in the art and history of the De Morgans.
- A minimum of three years' experience in a museum or gallery context, with a proven track record in researching, planning, designing, delivering, and evaluating exhibitions and displays. Experience of administering loans is highly desirable.
- Experience of managing collections, collections care, and collections management systems and software. Proven ability to handle objects and materials with care and sensitivity to their physical properties.
- Understanding of the needs of different audiences and experience of providing for these, through exhibitions, loans, tours, publications, lectures, gallery talks, and the creation of new displays and of material for the web. Able to write for a wide range of audiences.
- Able to travel around the UK, due to the nature and location of the post and of partner and tour and loan venues, and meet the requirement to handle artworks and other objects and materials, including performing official courier duties, both in the UK and internationally.
- A record of publication and/or research is desirable.
- A good knowledge of the Barnsley/Yorkshire area would be beneficial.

Strategy & Planning

- Able to think strategically and conceive and prepare achievable forward plans.
- Able to manage projects and to propose and implement innovative ideas, with experience of developing project plans, managing the budget and priorities, meeting deadlines and reporting on progress.
- An ability to work collaboratively as part of a flexible team, to achieve a variety of projects.
- Excellent organisational and planning skills, coupled with the flexibility and ability to work calmly under pressure and to tight deadlines.
- Proactive and self-motivated, with the ability to work on own initiative, and without daily supervision, and to organise and deliver effectively an exacting and diverse workload within broad objectives defined by the Museum Director.

Business Management & Development

- Excellent knowledge of and contacts within the arts and the wider cultural sector.
- The ability to identify and secure funding opportunities, with experience of writing successful grant applications, and the successful delivery of funded projects.
- Able to deal with day to day office administration, including keeping detailed and accurate records, including financial records, and the ability to manage information systematically and accurately, combined with excellent IT skills, website management and social media applications.

Relationship Management

- Excellent interpersonal communication skills and a diplomatic manner, and the ability to build relationships, negotiate and liaise with lenders, borrowers, funders, partners and other stakeholders.
- Experience of working collaboratively and successfully with senior personnel.
- Ability to represent the Foundation nationally and internationally, and able to promote the Foundation and its collection with flair and energy.
- Ability to train and supervise volunteers and foster loyalty and enthusiasm.