



## Unicorn Preservation Society

### Job Description

**Job Title:** Heritage & Learning Manager

**Location:** Dundee City Centre

**Line Manager:** Chief Executive Officer

**Job Family:** Heritage & Learning

**Working Hours:** Part-time (0.8 hours FTE) including some evenings and weekends

**Annual Leave:** 34 Days inclusive of public holidays and closures (Christmas and New Year) pro rata

**Contract Length:** Until end May 2026. Contracts may be extended beyond this, subject to funding.

**Grade:** 4

**Salary:** £35,000.00 pro rata per annum plus £1,500 Duty Manager allowance

### Introduction

Launched in 1824, HMS Unicorn is the third oldest ship in the world still afloat and Scotland's only surviving wooden warship. Now an Accredited Museum in Dundee's City Quay, visitors can explore four decks that offer a unique glimpse into 19th century naval life.

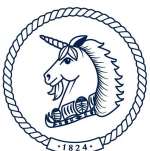
Our mission is to deliver a world-class museum experience while safeguarding HMS Unicorn's future and making our collections accessible to all. We aim to inspire visitors and staff alike, providing lifelong learning and engagement opportunities for our local communities and beyond.

The Unicorn Preservation Society has recently secured nearly £1 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to advance Project Safe Haven - our ambitious conservation initiative to relocate HMS Unicorn to Dundee's East Graving Dock. This critical move will ensure the long-term preservation of this irreplaceable maritime treasure while creating a purpose-built visitor centre that will transform Dundee's historic waterfront and enhance community engagement.

This role is made possible through National Lottery Heritage Fund support and represents an exciting opportunity to join our team at a pivotal moment in HMS Unicorn's 200-year history.

### Main Purpose of Role

The Heritage & Learning Manager is the senior manager responsible for all heritage, collections, learning and engagement activities at HMS Unicorn, serving as the authoritative voice on the historic vessel and its collections during this transformative period for the organisation, as well as the public face of the Unicorn Preservation Society's museum and educational programmes.



Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer and working closely with the Operations Manager, the postholder will have ultimate responsibility for HMS Unicorn's heritage and learning activities, ensuring the delivery of excellent visitor experiences through high-quality exhibitions, collections management, education programmes, and community engagement. As a key member of the senior management team, this role is vital to maintaining Museum Accreditation standards and driving the heritage aspects of the organisation's transition from a traditional museum to an innovative visitor experience through Project Safe Haven.

The post holder will be the primary authority on the historic vessel, providing expert guidance on what can and cannot be altered during the conservation process, documenting changes to the ship, interpreting decay and damage to communicate the urgency of the conservation programme, and ensuring the rich 200-year history of HMS Unicorn is preserved and effectively communicated throughout Project Safe Haven.

The postholder will have direct management of learning, engagement and museum staff, and indirect responsibility for volunteers, interns and apprentices. They will represent the CEO, the Unicorn Preservation Society and Trustees at key meetings and events, carrying the requisite responsibility and authority to act as the organisation's heritage ambassador.

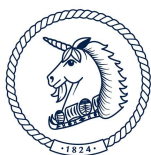
### **Key Duties and Responsibilities**

#### **Strategic Heritage Leadership**

- Lead and develop HMS Unicorn's heritage and collections functions, positioning the ship's historical significance at the core of the organisation's transition to a visitor experience
- Provide authoritative guidance on the historic vessel during Project Safe Haven, advising the UPS team, contractors and volunteers on what elements can and cannot be altered, moved or conserved
- Document and interpret the 200-year history of HMS Unicorn, including changes to the vessel over time, modern damage and decay, to justify conservation efforts and communicate the significance of Project Safe Haven
- Develop and deliver heritage interpretation strategies that will form the foundation of the new visitor experience
- Work with the CEO, Chief Finance & Administration Manager and the Operations Manager to ensure that heritage considerations are central to planning and budgeting decisions

#### **Collections Management and Heritage Conservation**

- Serve as the primary guardian of HMS Unicorn as a historic artefact, developing policies and procedures designed to safeguard the vessel, its collections, and its intangible and social histories



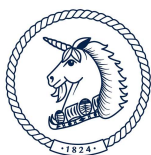
- Lead the acquisition of new items for the collection as Project Safe Haven develops, actively seeking out physical objects and intangible stories that enhance the historical narrative of HMS Unicorn
- Establish protocols for the movement and display of historic objects both within and outside the museum collection, ensuring compliance with insurance requirements and conservation best practices
- With the Museum Officer, document the archaeological and historical significance of HMS Unicorn, Victoria Dock, East Graving Dock, and the Project Safe Haven journey
- Ensure the museum maintains Museum Accreditation standards, implementing appropriate policies and procedures for collections management and documentation
- With the CEO and colleagues, contribute to the development and maintenance of emergency plans for the rescue and recovery of museum collections in the event of an incident such as fire, flood, and infestation

#### Transitional Interpretation and Exhibition Development

- Design, develop and deliver engaging heritage interpretation that will transition effectively from the current museum setting to the new visitor experience
- Lead on the documentation and interpretation of the conservation process itself, creating compelling narratives around the preservation journey
- Create opportunities for temporary exhibitions that enhance the visitor experience while highlighting the historical significance of HMS Unicorn
- Engage with difficult histories concerning HMS Unicorn, her creation and collections
- Supervise, in conjunction with the Operations Manager, any changes to Unicorn's physical displays and artefacts within UPS and its various locations
- Serve as the authority on how and where historic objects can and should be moved, ensuring relevant procedures are followed

#### Learning and Community Engagement

- Oversee and develop learning and engagement programmes that are firmly rooted in the rich heritage of HMS Unicorn
- Lead community engagement initiatives, including the award-nominated "WaveMakers" programme, ensuring heritage interpretation is accessible to diverse audiences
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships with heritage organisations, educational institutions, community groups and other stakeholders
- Create and implement audience development strategies to broaden engagement and increase visitor numbers
- Regularly evaluate the heritage offer and its visitor profile to inform future planning and audience development



## Project Safe Haven Advocacy

- Serve as a vocal advocate for the heritage aspects of Project Safe Haven, ensuring the historical significance of HMS Unicorn remains at the forefront of all development work
- Educate and inform visitors about the present and future works, including Project Safe Haven and Unicorn's future home at the East Graving Dock, placing these narratives at the heart of our engagement
- Contribute expertise to conversations on how Project Safe Haven works will affect HMS Unicorn and what new facilities will look like
- With the Museum Officer, proactively research and document the historical and archaeological connections between HMS Unicorn, Victoria Dock, East Graving Dock, and the conservation journey
- Contribute to funding applications, project management, budget monitoring and reporting for heritage projects

## External Representation and Communication

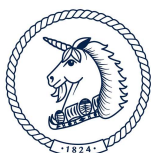
- Serve as a key public representative for HMS Unicorn's heritage, delivering talks, tours and presentations to visitors, stakeholders and the media
- Represent the CEO and Unicorn Preservation Society at key meetings and events within the museum and heritage sector in Dundee, Scotland and beyond
- With the Marketing & Communications Officer, develop heritage-focused marketing, press, publicity, and social media campaigns to promote HMS Unicorn and its visitor offer
- Participate in the Duty Manager system, with responsibilities including acting as key holder and responding to emergencies

## General Duties

- Adhere to HMS Unicorn's policies and procedures including health and safety, security, and fire regulations
- Represent HMS Unicorn professionally to visitors, stakeholders and partners
- Participate in team meetings and staff development activities as required
- Undertake training and development as required for the role and maintain professional knowledge and skills
- Any additional duties as directed by the CEO and commensurate with the grade

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

This section details the attributes, skills, knowledge, qualifications and competencies which are required in order to undertake the full remit of this post.



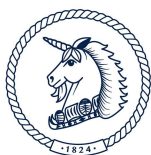
The Unicorn Preservation Society is a charity registered in Scotland, registration number SC002771 and is a company limited by guarantee, registration number SC046145.

## Essential Criteria

- Experience of managing and leading a team in a heritage, museum or cultural setting
- Significant experience in a museum, heritage or cultural setting, with a strong understanding of collections management and documentation processes
- Ability to work collaboratively within a small team while providing clear leadership
- Ability to make decisions regarding the operations and development of learning, engagement and volunteer programmes
- Ability to motivate and lead staff and volunteers
- Experience of developing and delivering successful exhibitions, interpretation and educational programmes
- Proven track record in engaging diverse audiences through innovative learning and outreach activities
- Experience of making collections accessible to a wide audience
- Experience in developing and running museum learning programmes based around collections
- Experience in developing and maintaining partnerships with a range of stakeholders
- Experience of working with community groups to co-produce exhibitions or activities
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to represent the organisation professionally
- Excellent project planning and management skills
- Understanding of audience development and visitor engagement techniques
- Self-starter and able to work independently
- Effective and efficient manager of own time and delegation
- Excellent time management skills and the ability to delegate tasks where appropriate
- Strong IT skills including knowledge of collections management databases, MS Office and till systems
- Able to relate well to all types of people
- Demonstrable experience in providing authoritative guidance on heritage conservation
- Experience in documenting historic assets and interpreting their significance to diverse audiences

## Desirable Criteria

- Knowledge of Museum Accreditation requirements and best practice in collections care
- Degree or postgraduate qualification in museum studies, heritage management, history, education or a related field
- Good understanding of fundraising, budget management and project evaluation
- Experience of working with maritime collections or in a maritime heritage context
- Experience of working in a small/independent museum environment
- Experience of working on capital development projects



- Experience of using digital media for interpretation and engagement
- Knowledge of the Scottish heritage and museum sector
- Knowledge of maritime history, particularly relating to wooden naval vessels
- Understanding of conservation issues relating to historic ships
- Understanding of the visitor attraction sector in Scotland
- Experience of documenting conservation processes for historic vessels or significant heritage assets

*Essential Criteria – requirements without which a candidate would not be able to undertake the full remit of the role. Applicants who do not clearly demonstrate in their application that they possess the essential requirements will normally be rejected at the shortlisting stage.*

*Desirable Criteria – requirements which would be useful for the candidate to hold. When shortlisting, these criteria will be considered when more than one applicant meets the essential requirements.*

## **Working Arrangements**

The role includes participation in the Duty Manager system, acting as the senior officer in charge of HMS Unicorn during scheduled duty periods, with the following responsibilities:

- Most senior person onboard in absence of CEO
- Makes senior level decisions in relation to onboard activities
- Operational oversight of HMS Unicorn
- Health and safety compliance
- Emergency response coordination (including potential callouts for emergencies)
- Security management
- Visitor experience oversight
- Conflict resolution
- Complaint handling
- Key holder responsibilities
- On duty/on call for a 24-hour period

The post holder will work regular office hours, but will occasionally be required to work on evenings and weekends.

## **Access Information**

HMS Unicorn is currently not fully physically accessible for all users, and there are therefore physical requirements that come with this role on board a wooden, historic ship.



- HMS Unicorn is accessed via an entry gangway which can rise up to a 50-degree angle at high tide and dip to a 50cm drop at low tide.
- The different decks on board HMS Unicorn are only accessible via ladderways.
- For a full description of access aboard HMS Unicorn, please refer to our access guide available on request.

## Career Development and Fair Work

At the Unicorn Preservation Society, we are committed to supporting the professional growth and development of our staff. While we recognise that as a small organisation advancement opportunities may be limited, we have a duty to support our team members to be their best and to prepare them for future career growth. We create clear progression pathways, support skills development, and empower staff to achieve their professional potential, whether within UPS or as they move on to broader opportunities in the heritage sector.

As a Fair Work employer, we adhere to key principles that ensure an equitable and supportive workplace:

- **Voice:** We ensure staff have opportunities to contribute to organisational decisions
- **Security:** We provide appropriate job security and consistency of hours where possible
- **Opportunity:** We support skills development and career progression
- **Respect:** We foster a workplace culture of dignity and respect
- **Fulfilment:** We create meaningful work environments

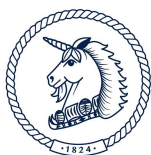
UPS is committed to ensuring all staff receive at minimum the Real Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation. Our salary structure reflects both Museums Association recommendations (adjusted for regional context) and competitive positioning within the Scottish independent museum sector. We believe fair pay is essential to maintain staff wellbeing, reduce turnover, enhance engagement, and uphold our reputation as a responsible employer.

Through our formal grading structure, we provide clear pathways for progression and professional development, with regular reviews to support your growth and career aspirations.

## Equal Opportunities

The Unicorn Preservation Society is a Disability Confident Committed employer and operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for people living with a disability who fulfil the essential criteria in the job specification. If you would like to be considered under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, please let us know as part of your application.

HMS Unicorn is committed to the principles of Fair Work and paying the real Living Wage to all our employees. We believe that fair work practices lead to better outcomes for individuals and



organisations, contributing to a more successful economy and inclusive society. As an employer, we are dedicated to providing appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, investing in workforce development, opposing inappropriate use of zero-hours contracts, and offering flexible working from day one of employment where possible.

Our commitment to fair work extends to addressing workplace inequalities, including pay and employment gaps. We strive to create a workplace where all staff are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their background or personal characteristics.

All staff and volunteers working with UPS must undergo Disclosure and PVG checks.

## How to Apply

We encourage applicants to apply by submitting:

- A CV and covering letter explaining how you meet the requirements of the role

Please submit informal enquiries and applications to: [recruitment@hmsunicorn.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@hmsunicorn.org.uk)

- Application deadline: **Wednesday 14 May 2025 at 10:00**
- Interview date: **Tuesday 27 May 2025 TBC** at Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce

Applicants will be asked to give a presentation (around 10 minutes/5 slides) on the topic, **“How would you maintain and enhance museum standards at HMS Unicorn as Scotland's oldest floating warship?”**

This could include:

- Your approach to implementing and maintaining Museum Accreditation standards
- Methods for collections care, documentation and management in a maritime context
- Strategies for preserving and interpreting the historical significance of HMS Unicorn
- Your understanding of best practices in conservation for historic vessels
- How you would balance conservation needs with visitor access
- How you would establish authority as the museum's heritage expert

The presentation will be followed by a competency-based interview.

