



National  
Museums  
Scotland

• Candidate Pack

# Appointment of Strategic Lead – Scotland Galleries development

Saxton Bampfylde May 2026 Reference EBZLA







## National Museums Scotland Appointment of Strategic Lead – Scotland Galleries development

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**Dr Chris Breward**  
**Director, National**  
**Museums Scotland**

# Letter from the Director

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Strategic Lead in the development of the Scotland Galleries at the National Museum of Scotland. This is an exceptional opportunity to make a leading contribution in the creation of a compelling, visionary and public-benefit-focused project at one of the UK's leading national museums.

National Museums Scotland holds one of the most diverse and important collections in the world. Ranging from the extraordinary to the everyday, it reflects Scotland's natural and cultural heritage, creativity and innovation, and global connections. Comprised of over 12 million objects, it has the power to connect with wider conversations and create experiences that help us understand and address challenges prevalent in both the past and contemporary society.

The National Museum of Scotland, the most popular museum in the UK outside London, is visited by over 2.4 million people each year. Over the last three decades it has continued to evolve through successful capital projects which bring new interpretation, design excellence, and inclusivity to the fore. The development of a project to renew the Scotland Galleries represents the next major chapter in our journey and has the potential to be a catalyst – to take the real things in the Collection and reveal a broader and deeper range of stories so that more and different people will feel inspired, connected and represented.

Working directly with me and at a senior level across the organisation, as well as engaging external stakeholders, the Strategic Lead will drive a programme of work to shape and create this renewal project. I'm looking for someone who is much more than a project manager. We need someone with broad professional leadership experience, skilled in developing and delivering strategic projects, who is collaborative and consultative, and who understands both the importance of putting audiences at the heart of our work, and the potential that resides in the unique culture of museums.

I hope you will be inspired by our ambition and the prospect of playing a leading role in refreshing how Scotland's stories are told, connecting collections and communities in new ways, with creativity, authenticity, and impact.

Warmest regards,

Chris Breward  
Director, National Museum Scotland

# Who we are

**National Museums Scotland is a unique combination of world-class collections, programmes, places and people.**

Our multi-disciplinary collection is an important resource, historically, culturally and scientifically, which we seek to share as widely as possible through our mission to preserve, interpret and make accessible for all, the past and present of Scotland, other nations and cultures, and the natural world.

We care for internationally significant collections of natural sciences, decorative arts, craft, design and fashion from across the world, science and technology, and Scottish history and archaeology. These collections span thousands of years, and we use them and their stories to engage the public in exploring the world through our displays and exhibitions, our online presence, national and international engagement programmes, schools' programmes and resources.

**Millions of local and international visitors enjoy our four museums each year:**

- The National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh
- The National War Museum within Edinburgh Castle
- The National Museum of Flight in East Lothian
- The National Museum of Rural Life near East Kilbride.

The National Museums Collection Centre in Granton, north Edinburgh is our international hub for collections research, access and storage. It is the home of our conservation studios and a centre of expertise, providing a platform for cutting-edge research and innovation, interdisciplinary study, specialist training and advanced teaching. It provides vital support for our national and international activities.

We are nothing without our people: the audiences, supporters, partners, volunteers and colleagues who make our work come alive. Our team possesses a wide range of expertise, skill, and experience, focused towards understanding, caring for and sharing our collections and estate.

As one of the leading museum groups in Europe, the cultural, social, educational and economic impact of our work is wide-reaching. We are proud of our contribution to the creation and promotion of world-class culture in Scotland which makes it a more attractive place to live and work and brings pleasure to residents and visitors.

We are a Scottish Charity and a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) supported through Grant-in-Aid from the Scottish Government and governed by an independent Board of Trustees.

Our values define how we want to approach achieving our ambitions and guide how we interact with each other and externally.

## **We are Creative**

- We value innovation and thrive on good ideas

## **We are Inclusive**

- We are open, friendly and enabling

## **We are Collaborative**

- We are enquiring, receptive and well connected

## **We are Forward-thinking**

- We look for the big picture as well as the detail



# The role

## Purpose of post:

To serve as the **Strategic Lead** in the development of the renewal of the **Scotland Galleries at the National Museum of Scotland.**

The post holder will work with our Executive and Leadership teams to develop a compelling, public benefit focused vision, informed audience research and consultation, further design work, a fundraising campaign feasibility study and collections, community and commercial objectives.

The Strategic Lead will develop a vision which is both ambitious and fundable given the constraints on public sector spending and strong competition for supporters. They will coalesce the views and needs of multiple internal and external stakeholders to find resolutions in the best interests of the project.

## Expected Outcomes:

- A credible, evidenced and fundable vision for the renewal of the Scotland Galleries;
- Fully costed business case with identified benefits realisation (social, collections and economic impact);
- Project progressed to RIBA stage 2, plus all other key information required for successful funding requests to Scottish and UK Governments, NLHF development phase application and for other lead funders;
- A project which takes cognisance of the needs of the Museum while responding to audience expectations and needs.



Ten chesspieces of walrus ivory found near the shore in Uig, Lewis, in 1831. In addition to the kings, queens, bishops, knight and warders displayed here, one bishop is on display in *The Medieval Church*, Case 6. The other pieces found belong to the British Museum.

MNS 19-23, MNS 20-9

# Key Responsibilities

- Lead on shaping and articulating a compelling project vision that reflects the organisation's mission to tell Scotland's stories through its National Collection, ensuring it remains audience-focused and widely supported;
- Design and implement a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process to embed meaningful consultation and community co-creation throughout the project's development;
- Establish and oversee the project framework to align key milestones across multiple workstreams, ensuring effective internal and external consultation for a coordinated and transparent approach;
- Develop a resource and skills strategy to develop and deliver the project successfully, making evidence-based recommendations on recruitment and investment to achieve value for money and high-quality outcomes;
- Maintain project momentum and accountability engaging the Executive and Leadership Teams, the Board of Trustees, and key project partners;
- Lead on procurement strategy and supplier management in line with public procurement regulations, securing the necessary technical and legal expertise for project delivery;
- Plan, manage, and monitor delegated budgets to ensure financial control, transparency, and value for money, including consideration of full life-cycle costs, driving sustainable change;
- To undertake any other reasonably required duties as instructed by line manager or someone acting on their behalf, in addition to the role specific responsibilities detailed above.



# Person Specification

Candidates should bring all or most of the following qualities:

## Knowledge

- Educated to degree level in a relevant discipline or equivalent experience.
- Knowledge of project management techniques.
- Knowledge and understanding around the writing of successful funding proposals.
- Knowledge and understanding of current developments and issues in the museum/cultural sector.
- Professionally qualified in a relevant discipline, with a broad range of professional leadership experience in strategically important specialist areas.

## Skills

- Ability to develop and deliver strategic projects, working in partnership across organisational boundaries.
- Strong presentation and report writing skills including standard project documents and options with the ability to translate complex information into context.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communications skills including the ability to influence, build partnerships, create and convey compelling arguments for support, and to provide strategic recommendations.
- Ability to make critical judgements, not necessarily based on precedents.
- Driving Licence.

## Experience

- Experience of supporting the development and implementation of strategies facilitating the gathering of information to anticipate current and future audience needs.
- Developing and managing a collaborative project including engaging with a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders.
- Designing, delivering and implementing successful business cases, aligning resource with organisational priorities.
- Experience of successful delivery of long-term strategic projects.
- Experience of developing, setting and monitoring budgets.
- Experience working on a capital or other major fundraising campaign.
- Experience of effectively using complex business analysis tools and techniques including cost benefit analysis, financial modelling and options appraisals.
- Experience of successfully managing change and continuous improvement within a project framework at a strategic level.

## Competency Framework

National Museums Scotland utilises a Competency Framework. Individuals for this post are expected to demonstrate competence across the relevant levels for the position. These will be assessed throughout the recruitment process, primarily at our Selection Events (see appendix A).



# Terms of Appointment

**Contract:** Three year fixed term

**Reports to:** Director, National Museums Scotland

**Salary:** The latest salary range for the Strategic Lead – Scotland Galleries Development is Pay Band C, equivalent of £76,093 – £86,275. Salary on appointment will be subject to qualifications and experience and will normally be within the bottom quarter of the pay range. Pay, including pay progression, is reviewed in negotiation with the recognised trade unions, with an annual settlement date of 1 April.

**Pension Arrangements:** Staff of National Museums Scotland are eligible to join the Civil Service Pension arrangements, which are a valuable part of the pay package. The pension is secure, being backed by government guarantee. The organisation pays up to 28.97% of your gross salary towards your pension. Members' contributions are comparatively low.

**Hours:** Normally a five-day week of 35 hours, excluding lunch breaks. Normal hours of attendance are Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00.

**Location:** This post is based at the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh with travel across Scotland and the UK as required. As part of our hybrid working arrangements, we offer the opportunity to work at home up to two days per week.

**Probation:** New employees are on probation for a period of six months from date of appointment.

**Our Approach to Equality and Diversity:** We are committed to promoting equal opportunities, and part of this commitment relates to our aim to appoint the best person for the job regardless of their gender, age, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

**Due diligence**  
Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.







# How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to National Museums Scotland on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [roles.saxbam.com](https://roles.saxbam.com) using code **EBZLA**

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026

\* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

**GDPR personal data notice**

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

- [Read our guide to writing cover letters](#)

# Appendix A – Competency Framework

Competency	Level	Detail
<b>Building Relationships</b> Works effectively and professionally as part of their team and co-operates with others across the organisation; collaborates and networks externally for specific outcomes and projects; forms partnerships, nationally and internationally for mutual benefit.	4	<b>Builds strategic external and internal collaborations and partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proactively engages across the organisation to see things from others perspective and ensures they understand how their work matters to the bigger picture</li><li>• Actively seeks opportunities to raise the profile and reputation of National Museums Scotland</li><li>• Partners with senior colleagues to model effective team working, collaborative and partnership behaviour</li><li>• Proactively manages complexities and tensions and adapts the relationships to ensure organizational interests continue to be met</li><li>• Monitors the sector and landscape to identify potential partners and creates opportunities for strategic collaborations, nationally and internationally.</li></ul>
<b>Communicating &amp; Engaging</b> Uses communication and interpersonal skills flexibly across all channels of communication, to engage, influence, persuade and negotiate ensuring a shared understanding and commitment to act.	4	<b>Inspires and communicates strategically</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inspires others and creates momentum through effective communication</li><li>• Cascades information effectively building trust, fostering integrity, and creating understanding</li><li>• Gains real commitment and 'buy-in' from others when undertaking new ventures</li><li>• Acts as a powerful advocate, comfortably communicating with and influencing senior external stakeholders across a broad range of issues</li><li>• Negotiates effectively on behalf of National Museums Scotland with senior stakeholders.</li></ul>
<b>Planning for Success</b> Ensures effective delivery and completion by realistically planning and prioritising tasks and managing workload; develops and manages plans, programmes and projects, in consultation with stakeholders and within existing priorities, people resources and budgets.	4	<b>Plans at a strategic level</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sets strategic plans within the context of existing and potential opportunities, threats and risks at a strategic level</li><li>• Manages the 'big picture' in relation to the trade-off between quality, cost, time, visitor numbers, academic contribution and reputation</li><li>• Makes timely decisions and commits to a defined course of action which will have a long-term impact on National Museums</li><li>• Balances the organisational priorities, people and task; and aligns with available resources for allocation and programming</li><li>• Ensures strategic priorities are clear and resources are in place to deliver.</li></ul>



# Appendix A – Competency Framework (continued)

Competency	Level	Detail
<b>Focussing on your Customers</b> Places the customer at the heart of what they do, engages, listens and responds to deliver exemplary service, creating an outstanding experience; supporting a culture of service excellence, both internally and externally.	4	<b>Strategically develops our customer profile and services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creates a culture where customer feedback is viewed as an essential source of data that influences decision making</li><li>• Focuses on customer development from a strategic perspective, identifying new markets and ways to reach these</li><li>• Sets the standard and demonstrates exemplary customer service, knowledge and behaviours adding value to services and delivery</li><li>• Understands the wider organisational and societal issues customers face and thinks about the consequences of any given decision</li><li>• Develops strategies and initiates projects that are consistent with customer priorities meeting the needs of our diverse customers.</li></ul>
<b>Improving &amp; Innovating</b> Builds personal, professional and organisational capability by keeping up-to-date, being creative, sharing ideas, taking risks, looking inside and out to continuously improve National Museums Scotland.	4	<b>Strategically develops our role within the sector</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Considers opportunities in the sector and beyond and makes steps to capitalise on them</li><li>• Understands the risks associated with innovation and supports learning from mistakes</li><li>• Develops a culture of organisational learning and continuous improvement</li><li>• Anticipates the impact of innovation and change on staff and stakeholders and takes steps to plan for them</li><li>• Proactively seeks feedback on own and department’s performance and acts on it to develop and excel.</li></ul>
<b>Leading and Managing</b> Sets direction and standards to drive individual, team and organisational performance by involving, supporting, developing and enabling staff and others to effectively contribute to the present and the future of National Museums Scotland.	4	<b>Leads and transforms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Builds ownership and accountability by involving others and delegates the details to experts</li><li>• Brings the Strategic Plan to life by providing clarity on how everyone can contribute</li><li>• Visibly leads; models and encourages success through words and actions</li><li>• Helps shape and articulate the future for National Museums Scotland creating an inspiring vision, values and priorities.</li><li>• Creates a culture where talent is acknowledged, recognised and developed.</li></ul>





# Appendix B – Organisational Chart



