

Think
new things
Make
new connections

Conservation Assistant P/T vacancy at Ditchley Park

A Conservation Assistant is sought to become part of the House Team at Ditchley Park. This is an exciting opportunity to work in a historic house, delivering conservation and caring for a historic collection in a country house that is still in use.

ABOUT US

Ditchley Park is one of the United Kingdom's finest houses, having a rich history as an idyllic retreat for royalty and power since the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Sir Winston Churchill famously used Ditchley as a secret base during the early years of World War II, meeting presidential envoy Harry Hopkins here in his efforts to win American support.

Ditchley Park is owned and managed by The Ditchley Foundation who work with people from across the world to help sustain peace, freedom and order. Ditchley's approach aims to build new common ground, we believe that change is driven, and managed, by personal relationships, not reports or declarations.

In this inspiring place, we enable spirited but respectful discussion across divisions of expertise, geography, generations and political opinion. We work constantly to get better at this, harnessing the power of tradition and innovation in equal measure. No one leaves Ditchley without thinking new things.

Applications close 5pm, Sunday 16th March 2025

Email CV and covering letter to georgia.kinsella@ditchley.com

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Registered office: Ditchley Park, Enstone, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire OX7 4ER

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DITCHLEY

JOB TITLE: CONSERVATION ASSISTANT
HOURS: Part time (24 hours)
SALARY: £16,361 pa

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Reporting to the House and Collections Care Manager, you will deliver conservation cleaning in the historic spaces of Ditchley Park and support the delivery of the Collections Management Plan. The Conservation Assistant sits within the House Team of the Operations Task Force.

The house is maintained to a high standard and, unusually for a house of its stature, is made available as a country house home for both events that support the causes of the Foundation, and some selective additional private functions. Event guests are invited to stay in bedrooms recently redesigned in an elegant country house style.

You will undertake the conservation care and cleaning of the house and its historic collection, keeping an eye on everything from environmental conditions to signs of wear and tear. The Conservation Assistant will also support House and Collections Care Manager with the creation of a digital collections database. When the house is in use for events, you will assist the Housekeeping Staff in ensuring that the bedrooms and conference spaces are ready and refreshed. You will also support research into the house and the collection, sharing the history with public tours, and occasionally with guests of the Foundation.

The hours will be spread across 3 full days. Saturday and/or Sunday working may sometimes be required by the schedule of events, for which overtime or time off in lieu will be given.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Conservation Care

- Undertake preventive conservation cleaning within the house, ensuring that presentation standards are maintained to the Foundation's expectations.
- Responsible for managing the routine clean programme, and assisting the House and Collections Care Manager with managing the deep clean programme.
- Record environmental control and pest management data, mitigating deterioration within the house.
- Support the House and Collections Care Manager with the delivery of the Collections Management Plan and contribute to the development of a collections database.
- Collect and accurately record information about the house and its collections, in order to inform best care, conservation, and presentation practices.
- Keep accurate records of conservation cleaning materials, ensuring all materials are stored correctly and equipment is maintained to a high standard.
- Delegated responsibility for the budget supervision and procurement of equipment.
- Assist the House and Collections Care Manager to train other members of staff in proper object handling and cleaning practices.
- Support research into the house and collection, developing our knowledge of our heritage.

- Occasionally supporting the delivery of public tours.
- Follow Safe Working Practices as laid out by the Foundation.
- Support the Foundation's drive towards sustainability, ensuring resources are utilised effectively.

Additional Duties

- May be required to assist Housekeeping staff with the preparation and refresh of guest bedrooms for events, and general housekeeping after events as necessary.
- Support the House and Collections Care Manager to ensure that the house is ready and presentable for events.

PERSONAL SPECIFICATIONS

- Good understanding of preventive conservation in a museum or historic house environment.
- Knowledge of collections management, and care of historic property.
- Awareness of Spectrum Collections Management Standards.
- Interest in history, research and collections engagement.
- Computer literate.
- Able to work from towers, ladders and scaffolds.
- Reliable; able to manage own workload and time effectively and efficiently.
- To be professional and polite to all.
- To work as part of a team, supporting each other where necessary.
- Attention to detail, with an understanding and respect of antiques.
- Physically able to undertake reasonable manual labour.
- Knowledge of Health and Safety and Emergency Procedures.

DESIRABLE

- Operational experience working or volunteering within a museum or historic house environment.

THE PACKAGE

- Substantial pension scheme of up to 10% basic salary.
- Optional Wellbeing benefits package.
- 20 days holiday (pro rata) plus bank holidays and privilege leave of up to 2 weeks during Christmas closure.
- Lunch provided whilst on site.