

Information, Culture and Heritage

Do you love to learn about how people lived in the past and what it would have been like to live then? Or you might be curious about the reasons why the world is the way it is today, or have a wish to bring the past to life. Alternatively, you might love the idea of looking after precious old objects or manuscripts, or being surrounded by valuable works of art. If so, then working in information, culture and heritage is the ideal career area for you!

Scotland is rich in heritage and culture and it's an essential asset for our tourism industry. The organisation Museums and Galleries Scotland supports 455 museums and galleries, including 257 accredited museums.² The organisation Historic Environment Scotland maintains over 300 buildings and landmarks in Scotland.⁷ Likewise National Trust for Scotland maintains over 100 properties and over 300,000 artefacts.⁸

Since 2021, a five year public library strategy has been in place, which aims to develop how public libraries can use their physical and digital services to ensure a strong future for the library sector.

What areas can I work in?

The main areas for this career area are: libraries and information science, archives, libraries and genealogy, culture and heritage, archaeology, heritage work and museums and galleries.

The biggest employers are local authorities and national conservation trusts, but there are many areas within these services that you can work in; these can include education, leisure, marketing, planning, exhibition organisation and tourism.

To see the routes to getting into each of these sectors, take a look at our [Career Pathway](#).

What kind of companies can I work for?

There are a wide range of organisations you can work for including:

- local authorities
- museums and art galleries
- conservation and heritage trusts
- private historic houses
- libraries and special collections
- voluntary and charity trusts
- schools, colleges and universities.

What's the job market like?

Due to the popularity of working within culture and heritage, there is stiff competition for jobs, some of which require high qualifications. So, you will need to be determined, persistent and highly motivated to find the job you want.

Getting voluntary work experience for both archaeology and museum work before applying for a job is very

useful. It's also a good way to make contacts.

The latest NOMIS figures for Scotland in May 2025 showed there was 3,200 librarians and related professionals working in Scotland. ¹

There is a lot of competition for jobs in libraries. Public libraries across Scotland have 40 million visits a year across their 560 local venues and 49 mobile units. They also offer a digital online service 24/7. ³

According to the Survey of Scotland's Museums and Galleries, the most common qualification for staff to have is a degree level qualification (39%), followed by a postgraduate qualification (20%) and then those with qualifications at SCQF Level 5 (14%). ⁵

Facts and figures

- The latest figures show that in 2023, there were 4,851 people in the UK working in development-led archaeology. 85% of those were British nationals. ⁴
- It is estimated that around 8,700 people work in the Scottish museums and galleries sector - 3,800 paid staff and 4,900 volunteers. ⁵
- The archaeology sector was valued at £309 million in 2023. Residential development was the largest market sector for archaeological services. ⁴
- Six of Scotland's 20 top tourist attractions and places to visit are museums or galleries, including the National Museum of Scotland, which is one of the UK's top 10 visitor attractions. ⁶

Want to find out more?

[Creative Scotland](#) is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland. Their website has an excellent [opportunities section](#) where you will find learning, training and job opportunities for all disciplines in culture across Scotland.

Sources

¹ Annual Population Survey - Occupation by sex, employment status and full/part-time - Scotland, [NOMIS](#) (May 2025)

² [Museum Galleries Scotland](#) (May 2025)

³ [Scotland's Public Library Strategy 2021-2025](#), Scottish Libraries and Information Council (SLIC) (May 2025)

⁴ [State of the Archaeological Market 2023](#), Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (2024)

⁵ [Survey of Scotland's Museums and Galleries, Museums Galleries Scotland](#) (October 2024)

⁶ [Visit Scotland website](#) (May 2025)

⁷ [Historic Environment Scotland website](#) (May 2025)

⁸ [The National Trust for Scotland website](#) (May 2025)