

## 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 468 museums and galleries, including 254 accredited museums. There are also hundreds of historic places and heritage centres, managed by organisations like the National Trust for Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland.

The latest data states that as of September 2022, there were 3,200 library clerks and assistants in employment in Scotland.

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.

Equally there is a lot of competition for jobs in libraries. Many local authorities are reducing the number of libraries in their area, and the majority of libraries are run by the local authorities. The cuts councils are facing in funding are also having an impact on recruitment.

The Scottish Government's £1.25 million Public Library COVID Relief Fund has supported 23 projects around the country to reconnect communities with their libraries.

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%).

As organisations in these sectors are receiving some government funding, hopefully they can recover fully from the pandemic.

## Facts and figures

- The latest figures show that in 2022, there were 4,800 people working in UK commercial archaeology, 353 in curatorial and 1,550 for those classified as 'other'.
- It is estimated that in the Scottish museums and galleries sector, there is a total of 8,700 staff - 3,800 paid staff and 4,900 volunteers.
- Archaeological practice has contributed £268 million to the UK economy in 2021-22 and the largest market for archaeological services was Transport.
- Eight of Scotland's 20 most visited attractions are museums, including National Museums Scotland, which is the most visited attraction in the UK outside London with 2.2 million visits in 2019.

## 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.

[Creative and Cultural Skills](#) is the Sector Skills Council for cultural industries.

## Sources

- Labour Market Statistics – Employment by Occupation, [NOMIS](#) (July 2023)
- Lifeline for Libraries, Scottish Government [website](#) (21 November 2021)
- Museum Galleries Scotland [website](#) (July 2023)
- Scotland's Public Library Strategy 2021-2025 (2021), Scottish Libraries and Information Council (SLIC) [website](#)
- State of the Archaeological Market 2022, [Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers](#) (July 2023)

- Survey of Scotland's Museums and Galleries - Executive Summary, Museums Galleries Scotland, (November 2022)