

## Arts Exhibition Organiser

Arts exhibition organisers plan, develop and organise art, archaeological, scientific or other displays to exhibit in galleries, museums and other venues. They ensure that exhibitions run smoothly and attract big audiences.

### The Work

You could be:

- planning the exhibition months in advance
- negotiating for funding, government grants and private sponsorship
- researching and sourcing works to exhibit and liaising with artists, art galleries and museums
- dealing with packing, hanging and layout of displays
- writing catalogues and other related publications material
- giving talks to groups such as school parties and answering their queries
- organising insurance, transport and security for valuable or fragile items
- handling administration, dealing with staff and managing budgets
- arranging publicity and dealing with the media.

### Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for arts exhibition organisers can be anything from £14,000 up to £20,000 a year. With experience this can rise to around £35,000 and senior art exhibition organisers in national galleries may earn up to £50,000 a year or more.

### Conditions

- You should be aware that some works of art and ancient exhibits need controlled conditions, with the right temperatures and suitable lighting.
- Your base would usually be an art gallery or museum.
- You may have to travel within the UK or abroad, if the exhibition goes on tour.
- Hours are usually regular, but you will work evenings and weekends for exhibition launches, or longer hours if the exhibition is touring.
- You might have to lift heavy objects or climb up ladders if you are helping set up displays.

### Getting In

- There are no specific entry requirements for this job but most entrants have a degree in a relevant subject, such as history or history of art.

- There are also openings for those with a degree in subjects such as archaeology, geography, geology or other sciences. For entry to degree courses, you normally need 4-5 Highers in suitable subjects.
- Some entrants may have a postgraduate qualification in Museum and Gallery Studies from St Andrews University.
- Getting voluntary experience is important to help you get a job. Museums Galleries Scotland and Creative Scotland have information on opportunities for voluntary work and training.
- You often need relevant specialist knowledge.

Vacancies are few and entry competitive. There are over 400 museums and galleries in Scotland and many of them are entirely run and staffed by volunteers (Museums Galleries Scotland website 2015).

## What Does It Take

You need to be:

- creative with visual imagination to plan layout and design displays
- a good organiser of yourself and others
- very knowledgeable about art and any specialist area you want to work in
- able to work to deadlines and remain calm under pressure
- enthusiastic and able to enthuse others
- able to communicate well with others
- polite and helpful when dealing with the public and other professional staff.

## Training

- Training is on the job or through short courses.
- If you work in a museum the Museums Association offers continuing professional development (CPD).

## Getting On

- Much of your work may be on temporary projects so you might have to move around jobs to progress.
- Within the larger organisations, there is a structured promotion route, from assistant exhibition organiser to head of department and director.
- It is possible to move into other management areas such as curator, conservation or education work.
- If you have specialist knowledge and recognised qualifications, you may be able to move into academic posts.

## More Information

The Creative and Cultural Skills website has a careers section called [Creative Choices](#) which has information, jobs and opportunities in the heritage and culture sector.

## Contacts

### Creative Scotland

Email: [enquiries@creativescotland.com](mailto:enquiries@creativescotland.com)

Website: [www.creativescotland.com](http://www.creativescotland.com)

Website (2): [opportunities.creativescotland.com](http://opportunities.creativescotland.com)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland](http://www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland)

**Museums Association**

Tel: 020 7566 7800  
Email: [info@museumsassociation.org](mailto:info@museumsassociation.org)  
Website: [www.museumsassociation.org/home](http://www.museumsassociation.org/home)  
X: @MuseumsAssoc  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MuseumsAssoc](http://www.facebook.com/MuseumsAssoc)

**Museums Galleries Scotland**

Tel: 0131 550 4100  
Email: [admin@museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk](mailto:admin@museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk)  
Website: [www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk](http://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk)  
X: @MuseumsGalScot

## Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

### Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.