



## **Chief Conservator**

Please put "Chief Conservator" in the subject line if you are submitting your application by email.

Position type: Full-time

Basic work week: 37.5 hours per week, Monday – Friday

### **OVERVIEW**

The Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields seeks a dynamic senior conservator to lead an award-winning conservation department comprised of specialties in paintings, textiles, paper, and objects conservation. The department's leader will collaborate with a team of conservators and scientists working in state-of-the-art studios and laboratories to assist in the study and preservation of the museum's encyclopedic collection. The Chief Conservator will redefine existing conservation processes and procedures and work with other departments to make collections management function more efficiently with an emphasis on using technology.

The Chief Conservator oversees the administration of the Conservation Department and supports its staff in its mission to conserve, preserve, and research the museum's collection and establish standards within the museum that meet or exceed national and international codes of ethics and care. Also performs all of the job functions of a senior conservator in their area of expertise.

### **Primary Responsibilities:**

*The following responsibilities describe the general nature of work for employees in this position, but this is not intended as an exclusive or all-inclusive inventory.*

- Manages day-to-day operation of the Conservation Department.
  - Directs and monitors conservation treatments on objects in the Museum's collection done by the museum's own staff and, whenever appropriate, by contract conservators to ensure that they are consistent with the Museum's responsibility to preserve the works of art in its care.
  - Ensures conservation treatments adhere to the latest professional knowledge regarding effectiveness, safety to the artwork and conservator, and sustainability.
  - Plans and monitors the preparation of documentation related to the examination and treatment of works of art in the collection.
  - Develops and monitors the adherence to protocols for the handling, movement, storage, and utilization of materials, chemicals, and equipment in a manner that will protect the health and ensure of the safety of the Conservation Department staff and other IMA employees.
  - Adheres to the professional standards and guidelines of practice and always acts in a manner that is consistent with the best interests of the Museum and will protect and enhance its reputation and standing within the community of museums.

- Effectively supervises conservation staff. Hires and retains staff. Recruits interns, fellows, and volunteers. Oversees contract conservators.
  - Performs job functions of a senior conservator in area of expertise (see Conservator position description).
  - Travels (nationally and internationally) as a Museum courier.
  - Works collaboratively with trustees, donors, volunteers, and staff.
- Oversees the care, safety and policies dealing with the preservation of the collection and works on loan, to meet or exceed recognized museum standards.
    - Develops and monitors the implementation of annual and multi-year work plans in accordance with the Museum's strategic plan.
    - Advocate for conservation concerns in interdepartmental initiatives. Coordinates the activities of the conservation department with the work of other departments within the division and with other divisions in the Museum. Works with area heads to develop and implement plans to increase the efficient operations of the museum.
    - Works closely with the museum staff to develop plans for special exhibitions-both those organized by the Museum and by other institutions-that will guarantee the safety and proper care of the collection and works of art on loan from other institutions and individuals.
    - Works closely and proactively on installations that will guarantee the safety and proper care of works of art displayed in the Museum's galleries or on loan to other institutions.
    - Develops and monitors the implementation of a plan for monitoring on an ongoing basis the condition of works of art in storage and on public display.
    - Works closely with museum staff to ensure that the Museum's physical plant is managed in a manner that provides for the safety and proper care of the collection.
    - Participates in emergency and disaster planning and leads the museum's efforts in response to an emergency or disaster.
- Directs and participates in research related to the collection
    - Plans and coordinates as needed with the Conservation Science Department the scientific analysis of works of art in the collection or on loan.
    - Working in consultation with the curatorial and scientific staffs, plans and directs research on individual works of art and larger technical art history projects.
    - Participates as needed in the analysis and review of works of art being considered for acquisition, including the technical examination of artworks.
- Develops and manages departmental operating, project, and program budgets
    - Defines appropriate budget items and maintains expenses within budgets allotted to the position.
    - Seeks funding opportunities to support conservation activities; writes and manages grants, interacts with Development Department to educate donors regarding conservation priorities and needs.
- Other duties may be assigned.

### **Supervisory Responsibilities**

Manages the Conservation Department and is responsible for its overall direction, coordination and evaluation. Directly supervises conservators in each specialty area, the shared

departmental coordinator, and conservation technicians. Recruits and oversees interns, fellows, and volunteers. Oversees contract conservators. Carries out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the organization's policies and applicable laws. Responsibilities include interviewing, hiring and training employees; planning, assigning and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints, building team comradery and representing staff concerns, and resolving problems.

**Required Skills:**

- Exemplary leadership, conceptual, written and oral communication skills.
- Demonstrated ability to supervise as well as to work successfully with others--e.g. museum staff, volunteers, and diverse public constituencies in a large general art museum.
- Proven ability to handle a variety of tasks concurrently in a complex environment. Conversant in current trends and instrumentation in cultural heritage chemistry research.
- Ability to read, analyze and interpret common scientific and technical journals, construction documents, financial reports and legal documents.
- Ability to respond to common inquiries or complaints from customers, regulatory agencies, or members of the business community.
- Ability to write technical reports, speeches and articles for publication that conform to prescribed style and format.
- Ability to effectively present information to senior leadership, public groups, and stakeholders.
- Ability to calculate mathematical figures and apply concepts such as fractions, percentages, ratios and proportions as necessary.
- Knowledge of conservation chemical safety practices.
- Knowledge of collection-related practices, procedures, and ethics.
- Ability to utilize workshop tools.
- Organizational and computer skills. Ability to apply principles of logic or scientific thinking to a wide range of intellectual and practical problems.
- Ability to deal with a variety of abstract and concrete variables.

**Education and/or Experience:**

- Master's degree in art conservation from a recognized program.
- Minimum of ten years museum experience in a conservation laboratory.
- Strong record of scholarship and professional service.

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A competitive salary is offered for all positions and a generous benefits package for full-time positions. To perform the job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential function satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

To apply, please send your resume, cover letter and Newfields application to:

Mail: Newfields  
ATTN: Human Resources  
4000 Michigan Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

E-mail: [hr@discovernewfields.org](mailto:hr@discovernewfields.org)

Fax: 317-920-2655

No phone calls, please.

### **About Newfields**

Newfields offers dynamic experiences with art and nature for guests of all ages. The 152-acre cultural campus features art galleries, lush gardens, a historic home, performance spaces, a nature preserve and sculpture park. From inspiring exhibitions in the IMA Galleries, to concerts in The Toby, to a stroll through The Garden with a glass of something cold, guests are invited to interact with art and nature in exciting new ways. Newfields is home to the Indianapolis Museum of Art, among the ten largest and ten oldest general art museums in the nation; the Lilly House, a National Historic Landmark; The Garden, featuring 40 acres of contemporary and historic gardens, a working greenhouse and an orchard; and The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres, one of the largest art and nature parks in the country. The Newfields campus extends outside of Indianapolis with Miller House and Garden in Columbus, Ind.—one of the nation’s most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist architecture. For more information visit [discovernewfields.org](http://discovernewfields.org).

### **Diversity**

Newfields recognizes that museum audiences and their interests are changing, and as Newfields transforms our audience experience, we are creating expanded, innovative opportunities to actively engage and entertain our guests. Celebrating the diversity of our donors, guests, volunteers and staff is a key part of this Newfields vision. Diversity is understanding, respecting, and valuing differences, including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, protected veteran status, disability, or any other legally protected status.

Simply put, we believe our guests and donors are best served by a host team, comprised of both staff and volunteers, that reflects the diversity represented within our communities and that takes full advantage of the unique viewpoints, talents and experiences of each and every person who works here. We strive to attract and retain exceptional employees who feel comfortable in an inclusive culture that supports their ability to thrive and add their voice to the ongoing conversation.

### **Indianapolis**

Indianapolis is a city with a MSA of 2,000,000 people. More than 60% of the population is under 44 years of age and the city’s racial demographic [breakdown](#) is approximately 79% White, 16% Black, 3% Asian, and 2% other, with 7% of the overall citizenry identifying as Hispanic. In [2016 Forbes](#) named Indianapolis one of the top 10 cities to live in for young professionals citing its high standard and low cost of living, while [Vogue](#) told its readers not to call Indianapolis a “Flyover City”, but to go see how vibrant it is for themselves. With a host of new bars and restaurants, nationally recognized symphony, theater, cabaret, sports teams, and the [Herron School](#) of Art + Design, Newfield’s hometown is a perfect place to build a career and enjoy life.