



Natural
History
Museum

Candidate pack

DiSSCo UK Digitiser



Full time, fixed-term

About Us

The Natural History Museum is a globally recognised centre for scientific research. We care for one of the world's largest and most unique natural history collections, with more than 80 million objects, representing billions of years of history. Our more than 350 scientists are responsible for looking after and growing this collection as well as unlocking its secrets.

We're at a pivotal moment in our history. We have huge aspirations to extend our global reputation for cutting-edge science with a new state-of-the-art research facility at Thames Valley Science Park. This, alongside an ambitious digitisation programme, will open up the collections like never before, revolutionising access to natural history data and facilitating exciting new research endeavours. We're looking for talented people who'll welcome the flexibility, autonomy and opportunities for collaboration we offer. Who'll be motivated to help us achieve our mission of creating advocates for the planet by finding science-based solutions for nature, from nature.

Diversity and inclusion matter to us

We welcome applications from everyone! Diversity, inclusion and the feeling of belonging matters to us. By attracting people from a broad range of backgrounds we can continue to look at the world with fresh eyes and find new ways of doing things. We offer a stimulating and professional working environment. All our staff work to embody our behaviours of being curious, ambitious, pioneering, teaming up, acting with pace and sharing the wonder.

We know we have more to do, but we're committed to making sure that everyone who works here feels valued, respected and that they can thrive.

Thriving at the Museum: the way we work

Our vision is a future where both people and planet thrive. To accomplish this, we're delivering an ambitious strategy by 2031 to create advocates for the planet. To achieve this shared goal requires each of us to behave in ways that help everyone to thrive. We are proud to work at the Museum and have identified the qualities we all need to embody to reach this shared ambition.



We're ambitious. To make a difference on a global scale we have to push the boundaries and be big and bold not only in our thinking but in the goals

we set. We act with integrity, but this doesn't mean we're rigid or inflexible. We drive ourselves and others to be excellent at what we do and identify opportunities to make a difference to the organisation wherever we can.

We're curious. We never stop learning. We ask questions to advance our understanding, skills and professional knowledge and look outwards beyond the organisation to learn from others. We seek out and actively listen to different perspectives and to take time to reflect. We're thoughtful and always receptive to new ideas and ways of working.

We share the wonder. We are captivated by the natural world, proud of our treasures and trusted guardians of our collections. We relish telling stories to inspire others. We're passionate about what we do, sharing our own knowledge and expertise. We're proud of where we work and never take this for granted.

We're pioneering. We're not afraid to try something new. We experiment, embrace complex problems and use good judgment and evidence to innovate and take risks. Always adaptable, we're ready to change our approach. We don't dwell on setbacks or get preoccupied with problems – we find solutions.

We team up. We respect the expertise of others and recognise that we produce the strongest outcomes when we put the best ideas together. We trust each other, keep things simple and make it easy for others to do the right thing. We empower and support each other, sharing information, skills and experience so that all of us are equipped to succeed. We never let difficult moments develop into bad working relationships.

We act with pace. We prioritise action, are efficient and always focus our efforts where we know we can make the biggest impact. We don't wait to be told what to do – we take the initiative and deliver on our responsibilities with momentum. We're decisive and once a plan is set, we all get behind it to make it a success.



Role Summary

About DiSSCo UK

UK natural science collections hold more than 140 million items. These are an unrivalled source of data about how the Earth and its natural systems formed over 4.56 billion years, with the potential to support research that addresses some of the critical issues facing the world, including biodiversity loss and climate change. They contain evidence of the changes in the natural world including the impact of human life on our planet over the past few thousand years. The scientific, commercial, and societal benefits of these collections are currently constrained by the limits of physical access, and by highly fragmented digitisation efforts with less than 10% digitally available.

The Distributed System of Scientific Collections UK (DiSSCo UK, <https://www.dissco-uk.org/>) is a consortium of UK natural science collections, led by the Natural History Museum in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), who are developing a national infrastructure to support the digitisation and use of the UK's natural science collections to support critical research and realise those wider benefits.

This will take the form of a 10-year programme focused on the digitisation of a critical mass of collections as FAIR data, made available through a well-supported backbone of technology infrastructure, with continued development and application of innovative approaches, such as greater use of artificial intelligence and robotics. Investment in the order of £155m over ten years starting in 2026-27 is expected to unlock at least a four-fold economic return on investment, as well as efficiency savings for UK and global researchers, and the potential for research innovation and studies that have not previously been possible – underpinning a future in which both people and planet thrive.

Job Summary

We are seeking multiple Digitisers to support the first funding round of DiSSCo UK digitisation at the Natural History Museum (NHM). The role will focus on digitising insect and botanical collections identified for the current round of DiSSCo UK activity. Applicants may be offered one of these roles following successful selection and may indicate a preference during the recruitment process.

These roles form the digitisation programme within the DiSSCo UK programme and sit within Digital, Data and Informatics in Science Group. You will be reporting to the DiSSCo UK Digitisation Unit Leads and work collaboratively with the NHM DiSSCo UK programme teams and Collections Teams.

You will follow established and developing workflows to barcode specimens, capture digital images and metadata, and create or enhance records within the Museum's collection management systems. Training will be provided to support collections handling requirements and to develop an understanding of collections management, care, and the principles of taxonomy.

You may also represent the Museum in tours or official events and contribute to presentations, blog posts, and digitisation-related social media content.

Main tasks and responsibilities

- Digitise museum collections to agreed standards and workflows including photography, databasing, transcription, and georeferencing.
- Prepare specimens and associated data for digitisation, including rehousing material and collaborating with curators on collection taxonomy, conservation condition, and storage locations.
- Handle collection material with care, following established handling guidelines and best practice for fragile, complex, or sensitive specimens.
- Create, enhance, and manage collections data, including conducting audits and condition surveys, and entering data into collection management systems (e.g. KE EMu, Alma, Dosis, Calm, or similar).
- Liaise with curators, conservators, registrars, researchers, and digitisation colleagues to support pre- and post-digitisation activities and maintain daily work logs.
- Trial, evaluate, and contribute to the development of new digitisation workflows, methods, and tools.
- Record digitisation activities to support programme monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement.
- Share digitisation best practice with team members and contribute to project reports, presentations, posters, and potentially research papers and datasets.
- Participate in relevant training and professional development to support ongoing learning and capability building.

What we're looking for

- Experience working with natural history or museum collections, including digitisation workflows and collection management best practices, or demonstrable transferable experience.
- Demonstrable interest and/or experience in natural sciences, natural history collections, or a closely related discipline, with ability to work across different collection types.
- Good working knowledge of collections metadata standards and collection management systems, with the ability to apply these in practice (or relevant transferable experience).
- Strong data handling capability, including the ability to check, validate, and manage data across multiple formats and sources (e.g. documents, spreadsheets, databases, and scientific literature).
- Excellent attention to detail, with the ability to carry out methodical tasks accurately while following complex instructions.
- Demonstrable manual dexterity and confidence handling fragile, complex, and occasionally large or heavy specimens (with appropriate training and equipment).

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to collaborate effectively in a team and build positive working relationships with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Flexible and adaptable, with a pragmatic approach to problem solving and responding and escalating issues in a timely manner
- Proactive with demonstrable understanding and/or experience working within target driven or operational environments, with ability to receive and act upon feedback
- Good working knowledge of cloud-based tools such as Office 365 or Google Workspace.

Key information

Salary: £32,459 per annum, grade 6

Hours: Full time, 36 hours per week

Contract: Fixed term until 31 March 2028

Due to the nature of this role, it will be based 100% onsite.

The Museum supports flexible working. We operate a hybrid working model that requires regular, weekly attendance for this role, with the precise pattern of days on site and worked from home to be agreed with your manager.

Please note that this role does not qualify for Museum sponsorship so the successful postholder will need to have a valid right to work in the UK at the point of offer.

All positions at the Natural History Museum are conditional subject to receipt of:

- Proof that you are legally entitled to work in the UK
- A Basic Disclosure Check from the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS)
- Satisfactory references covering the last 3 years of your employment or education
- Health clearance

Our benefits

In addition to competitive salaries, we offer a wide range of benefits to help you thrive both personally and professionally.



Wellbeing and work-life balance

- Generous annual leave allowance of 27.5 days holiday plus public holidays

- Enhanced sickness pay to support you through periods of illness
- Wellbeing provision including Mental Health First Aider support and regular learning sessions on wellbeing topics
- Flexible working and hybrid working arrangements where the role allows
- A 24/7 employee assistance programme including face to face counselling sessions
- Occupational health advice and support
- Eye care vouchers for display screen users
- Supportive policies to help you manage life events, for example becoming a carer, menopause, transitioning at work



Financial

- Generous defined contribution pension scheme with employer contribution up to 10% of salary
- Life insurance that will pay 4 times your salary to a beneficiary in the event of your death in service
- Season ticket and cycle loans to help you spread the cost of cycling to work
- Rental deposit loan scheme – to help you spread the cost of a deposit on a rental property
- 20% discount in our NHM shops both online and in store
- Discounts in our on site restaurants and coffee shops, and use of our staff canteen at South Kensington
- Discounts at local shops and restaurants within the South Kensington area



Cultural and lifestyle

- Free entry with your NHM staff pass to a wide range of museums and galleries across London and around the UK
- Every staff member is entitled to 10 complimentary tickets each year to give to friends and family
- Access to the Civil Service Sports and Social Club for a small monthly fee, offering a range of benefits such as discounted tickets to visitor attractions and gym membership discounts
- Access to the NHM Sports and Social Association for a small fee which provides access to our fitness centre at South Kensington and a range of activities and clubs including football and yoga



Family friendly

- Enhanced pay for maternity, paternity and adoption leave

- Flexible working and hybrid working arrangements where the role allows
- Supportive policies to help you manage fertility treatment
- Paid special leave to help you manage unexpected life events or to make caring arrangement.

How to apply

To apply, please complete an online application through our [recruitment portal](#).

The closing date for applications is 23:59 29 September.

First stage assessment for this role is likely to take place in week commencing 12 October.

How we hire

We want everyone to be able to perform at their best throughout our hiring process. We've put together some information about how we hire as well as tips for completing your application and taking part in our assessment process. You can find this information on our careers site [here](#).

Reasonable adjustments

We welcome applications from disabled candidates, and are committed to adapting our recruitment processes to make sure all candidates can perform at their best. If you require adjustments to our application process or require materials in a different format, contact us at hrteam@nhm.ac.uk.

If you need adjustments to the assessment stage of our hiring process, indicate this on your application form and we'll contact you before the assessment to put these in place.

We're part of the Disability Confident Scheme and guarantee an interview to all disabled candidates who meet the minimum shortlisting criteria for the role.