

CASE STUDY

Kickstart Scheme: Chapter House Museum and Dunkeld Community Archive

Thanks to funding from the UK Government's Kickstart scheme, museums and galleries across Scotland were able to offer a range of work placements to young jobseekers. Ruth Brown, manager of the Chapter House Museum Trust in Dunkeld, describes how four Kickstarters developed projects which boosted their skills and benefitted the organisation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Kickstart:

- Scheme funded by UK Government
- Held in 2021 and 2022
- Open to people aged 16-24 and on Universal Credit

Museum Galleries Scotland:

- Official Kickstart Gateway for the cultural sector in Scotland
- Topped up funding to guarantee real living wage for Kickstarters

THE PROJECT:

Our experience of Kickstart began with Museums Galleries Scotland, who guided us through the application process and helped ensure that the scheme was right for our team.

Once our application was approved, we were able to take on a total of four young people from the local area and offer them hands-on experience of work in the cultural sector. These placements were held in 2021 and 2022, and each lasted a total of six months.

Realising that all of our Kickstarters had unique skills which they hoped to build into careers, we encouraged them to set their own tasks, suggest new ideas and identify projects which played to their individual strengths.

This led to an exciting range of content which extended far beyond our usual areas of work. By giving our Kickstarters space to express their creativity, we were able to raise additional funds for the Chapter House Museum Trust, learn more about our collections, and share the story of Dunkeld with entirely new audiences.

“The Kickstart scheme has been amazing – not only for us, but for the Kickstarters too. We all got so much out of it.”

Ruth Brown, Manager,
Chapter House Museum Trust



Michael, our first Kickstarter, expressed an interest in acting. We connected him to a street theatre group and supported him in the creation of a [street theatre guided tour on the Dunkeld Bridge Toll Riots of 1868](#). This gave Michael valuable insights into production and performance, and prepared him for a successful application to an acting school.

Our second Kickstarter was Iman, an artist with plans to attend university. We encouraged Iman to build up a portfolio of work by designing murals for our Community Archive. She also painted a series of landscapes which we displayed in an exhibition before selling in a fundraising auction. Iman also adapted these paintings into cards and prints for our shop.

Steven, an animation graduate, was the third Kickstarter to join our team. He soon put his artistic talents to use by developing a cartoon on the Dunkeld Bridge Toll Riots. This cartoon was submitted to film festivals, adapted into a book, and included in learning materials at our Community Archive.

Our final Kickstarter was Ross. His knowledge of military history and interest in our regimental collection led him to focus on the curatorial aspects of our work. Ross conducted research on the Scottish Horse and attended a four-day course on curation in regimental museums.

The Kickstart scheme proved to be a big success – not just for us at the Chapter House Museum Trust, but also for the Kickstarters themselves. By taking the time to nurture the talents of these four young people, we were able to explore an innovative range of collections and engagement opportunities.

“It’s made me pretty confident in the fact that I have a job now- I have a job in the thing that I went to uni for. It’s something to be proud of really, and it feels nice to have my artwork in the archive.”

Steven Goodison, Kickstarter,
Chapter House Museum Trust

CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSSES:

- A lack of transport options proved to be a significant logistical challenge for our Kickstarters- particularly for Ross, who lived outside of Dunkeld and didn’t have a car.
- It was incredible to see our Kickstarts grow in confidence during their time with us. This confidence gave them the ability to suggest new ideas, engage with visitors and take on new tasks.

THE IMPACT IT HAS MADE:

- All of our Kickstarters were able to develop skills which improved their employability and prepared them for careers in their chosen fields of work. The scheme also led to exciting new projects: for example, Steven is now working in collaboration with the National Trust for Scotland to produce digital content and visuals for a local tree trail.
- Our Kickstarters developed animations, images and theatre which helped us share the history of Dunkeld with new audiences. This content also presented us with opportunities to raise revenue through the sale of personalised merchandise such as postcards and books.

LESSONS LEARNED:

- Working with young people was much easier than we anticipated! We were ready to provide a lot of additional support, but found that they all adapted quickly to their roles and responsibilities.
- By listening to young people’s ideas, we have gained access to perspectives and project ideas that we would never have considered ourselves.

GUIDANCE:

- A flexible approach has been key to the success of the Kickstart scheme at the Chapter House Museum Trust. As a small organisation, we were able to adapt quickly to the ideas and abilities of our Kickstarters.
- By treating our Kickstarters with respect, we were able to build productive working relationships.
- It’s important to consider what young people want to get out of their work, and to find ways for everyone to achieve their goals together.

USEFUL RESOURCES:

Contact the Chapter House Museum Trust: archives@historicdunkeld.org.uk

Chapter House Museum Trust Website: www.historicdunkeld.org.uk

Kickstarter event news article: www.historicdunkeld.org.uk/2022/03/15/kickstart-event-success/

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