

## CASE STUDY

# Creative & Digital Media Foundation Apprenticeship: The Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum

The Scottish Creative Economy is booming with excellent opportunities for careers across creative industries. The Foundation Apprenticeship in Media gives pupils the opportunities to develop a range of practical and soft skills to prepare for work or further study within the sector. The team at Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum reflect on their time with foundation apprentices.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### Partners:

- Forth Valley College

#### Qualification:

- Creative & Digital Media Foundation Apprenticeship

### THE PROJECT:

In 2019, The Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum supported its first Foundation Apprenticeship, taking on three Creative & Digital Media Foundation Apprentices. The museum Director, Caroline Mathers, was delighted to work alongside young talent who helped revitalise and diversify the workplace. In partnership with Forth Valley College, the pupils worked for 6 hours every week and participated in creating social media posts and were encouraged to create their own digital projects.



**“I would say that my time at The Smith was beneficial for me as the variety of tasks taught me about the workings of the museum and gave me an insight into social media promotion i.e., what types of posts are most effective. Working there has deepened my appreciation for media and if I had the chance to do it again I would. It was a fantastic opportunity to learn and develop skills in this way.”**

Adam, Creative & Digital Media Foundation Apprentice

## CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES:

The Foundation Apprentice programme gave us the opportunity to incorporate fresh ideas into our social media strategy and enabled us to have a much more youthful approach, embracing media formats we had not explored before.

- Working with the apprentices helped us connect with younger audiences and better understand how they envision a small museum utilising social media.
- Our biggest challenge was not having the financial capacity to secure all apprentices with laptops or tablets. As this was an apprenticeship focussing on digital media, some tasks were more difficult to execute without having the right technology.

## THE IMPACT IT HAS MADE:

The experience has left a long-lasting impact within our museum.

- Having extra talent to help with tasks was useful and helped us develop good quality digital media in a cost-effective way.
- We are constantly seeking new opportunities to engage with young people in our community and the FA programme offered us a way to do this.
- The collaboration was highly beneficial for both parties and we hope to offer more opportunities to young people in the future.

## LESSONS LEARNED:

Initially, we were given a set of tasks that the apprentices must complete, however, soon we realised that there is a lot of room for flexibility. We were able to alter the tasks so it could benefit both their education process and our museum. For example, as they were given a task to produce a short documentary, we suggested that they investigate a topic which the museum could learn from. This led Adam and Emma to explore a challenge that The Stirling Smith has faced for a long time – young people disengagement. They invited their peers for

interviews and soon provided us with solid evidence for improvement.

## GUIDANCE:

- We would suggest designating one person from your staff to act as a point of contact for the apprentices. It can be an intimidating and stressful situation for the young people to be in, so having someone they know they can turn to is beneficial for all.
- Taking part in foundation apprenticeships is a great chance for you to network with other organisations who are participating in this project. Collaborate with them and their apprentices on joint projects. Wonderful opportunity for all to grow.
- Be pro-active and take your time to get to know your apprentices. This is a unique opportunity for you to learn about their interests and values. Great for market research and keeping your organisation up to date with the latest trends.

**“I really enjoyed my time at The Smith museum. I learnt a great amount about social media marketing such as identifying target audiences, collecting insights and what content is most effective, as well as learning about the museum.”**

Emma (17), Creative & Digital Media Foundation Apprentice

## USEFUL RESOURCES:

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