



## CASE STUDY

# MARVELLOUS MUSEUMS

The ‘Marvellous Museums’ project gives learners, including those identified as being at risk of not achieving their potential, opportunities to raise their awareness of careers in the Museum and Arts industries and develop a range of skills to prepare for work or further study within the sector. Increasing accessibility to museums and art galleries and strengthening their connections with local communities makes opportunities for employment more visible and accessible to everyone. The team at Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum, Stirling’s Care Experienced Virtual Head Team (VHT) and the children involved reflect on the benefits of the ‘Marvellous Museums’ project.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### PARTNERS:

- Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum
- Stirling’s Care Experienced Virtual Head Team
- Cornton Primary School
- Developing Young Workforce
- Museums Galleries Scotland

#### PROJECT DELIVERY:

- 6 face-to-face and virtual workshops during 2021
- Exhibition displayed within The Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum

### THE PROJECT:

Staff from The Smith Art Gallery and Museum, Stirling VHT and Cornton Primary School primary school collaborated to create 6 workshops introducing children to the museum and the roles of the people who work there.

Everyone collaborated to overcome barriers caused by the global pandemic to create a virtual classroom with fun activities introducing the concept of meta skills involved in working in the industry as well as creative health and wellbeing activities.

Face- to- face and virtual sessions involving staff from the museum allowed children to explore the skills people need to work in museums and galleries, research and plan their own museums and create an exhibition to be displayed within the refurbished community area at The Smith Art Gallery and Museum.

**“It was such a pleasure working with the children. One thing that never ceased to amaze me was their out-of-the-box thinking in terms of what a museum could be or provide to its visitors. They’ve encouraged me to not think so linearly and be more playful in my creative outputs at work.”**

Heather Carroll, Exhibitions & Events Office



## CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES:

- Delivering a project during a global pandemic required consideration but wasn't as tricky as we had initially thought. It encouraged creative use of digital platforms that might not have been considered previously. The planning process was easier over virtual platforms and allowed us to get together more easily. Engaging with a virtual classroom also helped learners develop their digital skills.
- The class are very excited about seeing their work on display in The Smith Art Gallery and Museum. They have recognised the skills they had developed and how they can use these in the future. The class felt it made them stop and think about their skills in other areas of life and learning. The class felt they worked well in their groups and enjoyed seeing each other's different interests explored in the completed work.
- The class felt that initial challenges included developing an idea for their museum. They also reported that working in a group meant there was a lot of communication, compromise and negotiation needed. They found this difficult initially but felt the project developed to increase these skills.
- Collaboration between the museum and teaching staff was an unexpected success. Teaching staff found that after long periods of remote learning and a lack of visitors to the school during COVID-19 it was refreshing and invigorating to have an exciting project to be part of.
- Museum staff reported that it has been rewarding to nurture relationships in the community. They enjoyed using their expertise to enthuse young people but importantly, learned a lot by listening to the children about their views on museums. Working with younger generations has helped them to think differently about how they engage with the whole community.

## THE IMPACT IT HAS MADE:

- The Smith has created a purpose-built Schools Space in the museum to display the children's self-designed museums. This space will have a lasting legacy to house other local school and community artwork and projects, building further connections to the local school communities and building new audiences to the museum.
- As a result of this project, future exhibitions are planned that are focused on younger audiences and welcoming them and their families to the museum.
- 100% of the 23 children involved in the project have completed a Hi5 Award, a wider achievement award for leading their own project and developing skills for learning, life and work. A key aim for the Care Experienced Virtual Head Team to increase attainment of vulnerable learners earlier in their learner journey and raise their aspirations for the future.
- More than 2/3s of the children involved know more about the types of jobs involved in the museum and galleries sector and that they know more about employment skills.
- This project has encouraged the expansion of the Exhibitions & Events Officer's role into further education projects. She will be working with the newly-appointed Education Officer who is currently developing The Smith's new education programme to deliver select activities.

## GUIDANCE:

- One of the great strengths to come out of this project was creating the virtual classroom. This resource would arguably not have come about had we not persevered with this project despite the obstacles presented in the form of lockdown. Thus, our advice would be to face the challenges a project presents to you, as it could shape a better outcome.

## USEFUL RESOURCES:

If you would like more information about this project please contact Markus Offer, Skills Development Manager, Museums Galleries Scotland email: [markuso@museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk](mailto:markuso@museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk)

**T: 0131 550 4100 | W: [museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk](http://museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk) | Twitter: @MuseumsGalScot**

Museums Galleries Scotland is a company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland (No. 74264) and a charity registered in Scotland (No. SC015593).