

# Case Studies

## Career Pathways in Museums

Vol.34 2025



# Introduction

**"You can't be what you can't see!"**

**If you don't know what jobs exist in museums, or you don't see people similar to yourself working in museums, how do you know that this could be a future career for you?**

The above quote was part of my initial research for Group for Education in Museums (GEM) on work experience, work placements and inclusive pathways for young people, which is Activity 9 of GEM's Investment Principles Support Organisation (IPSO) funding from Arts Council England, taking place over three years (2023 – 2026). In addition to this Case Studies publication, a [toolkit](#) has been created for sharing the learning so far, also featuring short case studies, resources and templates as requested by GEM members to enable them to initiate or develop further work-based opportunities for young people at their organisation.

Reflecting back, I can remember doing my work experience aged 15 at my old primary school, later training to become a primary teacher. I didn't know that I could work as an educator in a museum until much later on when I started to volunteer during my University holidays. So after teaching in a school for one year, I then returned to study a Masters in Museum Studies. Mine was a traditional route into working in museums and I am pleased that there are now alternative career pathways for individuals early career – or those changing career at a later stage – to become part of the museum workforce, including paid traineeships and apprenticeships, and not forgetting the importance of transferable skills.

When I was a young person, there was the opportunity to do a work placement in specific weeks in Years 10 and 12. Over 35 years later, this is still the case in many secondary schools and colleges. This is one of the challenges that GEM members have talked about, having too much

demand for specific weeks of the year and so having to turn students away. Other barriers mentioned include staff capacity, lack of budgets for paying students, safeguarding concerns, needing host support outside of learning and front of house teams, making the case to senior management, training to increase staff confidence, more staff working from home, lack of dedicated careers adviser roles in schools, negative parental perceptions of careers in museums, needing more inclusive recruitment, and being able to offer meaningful placements followed by progression routes.

In this Case Studies publication, focusing on Career Pathways in Museums, you can read 19 different case studies from across the UK that include sharing lessons learnt and any challenges experienced.

Some museums and heritage organisations have embraced the Year 10 or 12 one-week work placement model, like at **Nottingham Contemporary**, and others have come up with alternatives that work better





for their organisation, such as one-day placements at **York Archaeology** or days during the school holidays at **London Museum**.

The age range most organisations are working with is around 14-18 or 16-25, whereas **Kids in Museums and Chatsworth** worked with primary school pupils, and the apprenticeships at **Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES)** have no age cap.

WAES also acts as the learning provider for the Museum Technician Apprentices at **Kirklees Museums & Galleries**.

Some organisations target specific groups of young people, such as disabled and neurodivergent people working at the **National Paralympic Heritage Trust (NPHT)**, or partner with pupil referral units and youth justice teams like at **Fulham Palace**.

Most placements take place in person, but some offers are hybrid, such as at **Norfolk Museums Service**, and **Museums Galleries Scotland** have even developed a free online resource, *Marseum*.

What young people do on their placements varies, often focusing on gaining skills and confidence. At **Culture Perth and Kinross** their Youth Collective focus on exhibition development and youth-led programming, at **London Transport**

**Museum** they focus on the skills and networks to become Young Freelancers – with **Boston Manor House** then offering briefs to these Young Freelancers – and at the **RWA Gallery** individuals complete a Bronze Arts Award.

The Young Producers at **English Heritage** and the students at **Lancaster Arts** even move on to hold governance positions. Many of the organisations mention that they have benefitted from having a youth perspective, like with *Your Heritage*, *Your Future* at **YMCA**, and sometimes influence organisational change, like at **Leeds Museums & Galleries**.

Some organisations have also identified clear progression routes, such as at **Historic England**, or have noted that individuals have moved onto paid roles, either within their museum or elsewhere.

Alongside these case studies, Louise McAward-White has written an article from a **Fair Museum Jobs (FMJ)** perspective; bringing in aspects of the FMJ Manifesto and tasking all of us working in the sector – especially those with power over recruitment – to take on board their points for making fairer career pathways.

**Rachel Moss**  
Freelance consultant

“Our aim is that this Case Studies publication will inspire you to think about which offer, or elements of the different models, might enable your museum to provide work-based opportunities for young people.”



Barriers and challenges stated by GEM members to offering work-based opportunities



**What do we mean by work experience, work placements and inclusive pathways?**

- **Work experience** tends to be short-term, lasting between a few days and a few weeks;
- **Work placements** usually range from a few months to a year;
- **Inclusive pathways** break down the barriers to entering the Museums & Heritage sector.

In addition there is **work awareness** which is finding out what types of job roles are on offer in museums and heritage organisations.

# Making Fairer Career Pathways

**Since 2017, Fair Museum Jobs has been actively advocating for fairer, more transparent and more equitable work in museums and heritage. Career pathways are a fundamental part of that; the sector needs more voices, more difference and more openness if it wants to meet its audiences where they are and bring them to our sites.**

We have seen significant changes since the start of Fair Museum Jobs. We used to be constantly challenging bad practice in job adverts for low pay or completely missing salary information, constant streams of requirements for post-graduate qualifications for entry level roles, and a reliance on established, discriminatory practice. Now, in 2025, it is rare that we see a role with no salary advertised and job adverts have improved significantly. Other sector bodies like Museums Association, Institute of Conservation (ICON) and GEM have all made more robust procedures for their job boards and much more focus is now on inclusive practice applied in this area.

Yet, there are still many barriers to entering, and progressing, in a museum career. All of us working in the sector; and especially those of us with power over recruitment, have a responsibility to improve practices by questioning the ways things have always been. Luckily Fair Museum Jobs is here to help.

## The FMJ Manifesto

From the outset, Fair Museum Jobs has been clear about what good practice for recruitment can be. Using [our manifesto](#) we set out:

- **Musts** – what is there an absolute imperative to do;
- **Should** – where is there a strong case to do something;
- **Recommendations** – good practice suggestions.

Thinking specifically about applying this to inclusive pathways in the sector we specifically suggest:

- **University degree of any kind must not be a requirement**

You can open up so many roles by simply asking for the skills you actually want instead of a qualification – perhaps it's research skills, subject knowledge or writing ability – you can ask for these and accept wider ways to show the skill in an application.

- **Internships must be paid**

We make a clear delineation between work placements and internships. Work placements should be fixed length and connect to some form of study; internships should be fixed-length, paid opportunities with defined learning outcomes but may not be related to study.

- **Jobs ads must be clear and concise, avoiding jargon**

If we want to open up career pathways we must make our documents more accessible. It is common to read long packs of information with overly complex criteria, which repeat themselves and are filled with sector jargon. A simple review of the document before it's published can help with this.

Even better is to provide this information in different formats, e.g. video and audio, to allow people to get information in the most straightforward way for them.

- **You must focus on role requirements, not personality traits**

We should avoid using subjectively measured traits e.g. a "good sense of humour". These requirements disadvantage many applicants, especially early in their careers. To prevent this, read your requirements list and describe exactly how you could measure how someone meets that item; if you can't describe how they could meet it, remove it from the list.

**“We cannot expect young people to choose museums if we can't give certainty that they can afford that choice.**

## Empowering workers

Fair Museum Jobs also works to demystify the world of museum work. In 2021 we offered a [CV Basics workshop](#) which described how to create a museum CV from scratch. A key barrier for museum pathways is opportunity to 'play the game' of knowing how to apply for jobs and what hiring managers are looking for.

Every year we attend the GEM Conference, offering booked sessions for CV review and the same advice comes up all the time:

- Keep it simple and short
- Remove anything that doesn't add value e.g. 'references available on request', or very generic interests like 'visiting museums and reading books'
- Add some numbers – how many times did you do something, how many people attended your events, how often, how much budget?
- It's all about you! This is not the time for 'we'.

Finally, we must all reckon with pay in the sector; surveys repeatedly show that museum pay is lower than similar roles in other sectors and this is the most true in museum front of house and learning roles. We must ensure that all paid roles meet at least Real Living Wage, or ideally meet the [Museums Association Salary Guidance](#). This is crucial for inclusive pathways – we cannot expect young people to choose museums if we can't give certainty that they can afford that choice.

**Louise McAward-White**  
Fair Museum Jobs

## Find out more

For more information about Fair Museum Jobs, visit [fairmuseumjobs.org](https://fairmuseumjobs.org)



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Freelance consultant

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# Creative Pathways: Working with cultural partnerships



### Summary

In July 2024, we hosted our third annual Work Experience Week in partnership with arts organisations and venues across the city. This unique week of Work Experience was delivered alongside Nottingham City Museums and Galleries – Wollaton Hall, New Art Exchange and QueerNotts Zine, exploring different roles within teams and skills across organisations to learn about pathways into creative careers.

The young people selected to take part came from a variety of backgrounds across Nottingham city and beyond.

### Background

We share our offer with Nottingham-based schools with a focus on Year 10 and 12. The application process is also shared with students and organisations who have previously been in touch enquiring about work experience. We recruited from 14 different Schools and Settings. Our ambition for inclusive practice and accessibility considerations, whilst offering tailored support was part of the planning and development of the week.

### Challenge

Each year we receive requests for Work Experience placements from individual students and career leads. We wanted to find a way to accommodate as many students as we could whilst offering something valuable through working collectively with other cultural organisations in the city.

The week is run without allocated funding, with limited time and resources. It relies on the support of participants, with the hope to ensure contributors receive payment for their skills and time. Being part of the week is an extra commitment for partners and staff involved. Despite this, communication of aims and logistics needs to not be compromised so as to consider priorities of safeguarding and accessibility requirements alongside the creative and strategic outcomes of the week.

### Approach

We developed this current model in response to work experience requests, pulling on the network of our existing partnerships to build a dynamic and resourceful programme. The places given to SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), SEMH (Social, Emotional, and Mental Health) and Asylum Seekers & Refugees were from established relationships within those settings that had built the trust to encourage pupils to apply. Students' academic levels are varied and some aren't studying art but may be interested or curious about a range of areas in the creative industries.

### Intended outcomes

We hoped that the week could:

- Provide insight to various creative spaces and roles available in their city.
- Demystify pathways into the Creative Industries – considering accessibility of spaces, language and working with partners.

- Offer young people creative and collaborative approaches to learning.
- Offer time to consider their own experiences and aspirations – what aspects might they want to explore further?
- Provide a sense of place in the city – mapping people and organisations in order to make connection.

### Intended outputs

For our 2024 programme, we focused on mapping places and creative careers to help students build connections and gather a sense of belonging and place in Nottingham city so they could discover and get to know how some of these organisations run as workplaces but also the aims they have for their audiences in programmes and delivery.

### Obstacles and issues

The project intends to introduce young people to as many career pathways as possible and offer opportunities to meet a wide-ranging number of people at both Nottingham Contemporary and through our partners to address existing barriers around access to the arts for young people in the city. The aim was to deliver this through creative and practical activities. However, we aim to address some of the feedback from attendees to develop a specifically skills focused week that means they are clear on the exact purpose of the week and each session and how these interlink to the rest of the week in

“We really value the voices of our cohort and the feedback we get from each year helps us to develop the programme for future young people tailored by their experiences.”



relation to an enquiry question so that they can be accessed in a way that young people can draw on tangible practical knowledge and skills they have developed to be able to share with future employers.

### Actual outcomes

We hosted 17 participants from a range of settings in Nottingham City and beyond as well as community special schools and a specialist Refugee and Asylum seeker educational setting. We were based at Nottingham Contemporary as a host space and explored exhibitions, building tours and met with marketing, live programmers, visitor experience leads as well as our Schools and Youth Programmers. The students took part in a workshop with QueerZine Notts founder to learn about independent career pathways and map and annotate

ideas to develop understanding of creative roles and sense of place in their own zine-making as a tool for documentation and reflection for participations. They experienced a day of meeting curators and taking part in a taxidermy workshop at Wollaton Hall as well as visiting the New Art Exchange where they were hosted for the day to explore the surrounding community area of Hyson Green, meet the director and explore exhibitions as well as working on collaborative activities. A sharing event at the end of the week invited partners, schools and pupils' families to see and hear their experiences throughout the week – it was also a useful point of evaluation for the team to reflect on future planning.

### Actual outputs

A signposting resource was created and shared with attendees to support future pathways including cultural organisations, contacts and useful youth collective information. We have two Work Experience Week attendees who have joined our 1525 collective and other similar collectives in the city.

*“Seeing that a career isn’t one set plan and that it can take changes made me feel more comfortable around the idea of creative failure.”*

Participant, Work Experience Week

*“Many of our students never get these experiences outside school. Our student was supported brilliantly. It plays a big part in building social skills and confidence.”*

Teacher, Ash Lea School

### Lessons learned

At the end of the week we shared, reflected and evaluated with students, their tutors, families and our partner organisations in a celebration event. We really value the voices of our cohort and the feedback we get from each year helps us to develop the programme for future young people tailored by their experiences.

Students are keen to learn and develop specific skills through the week. The week requires us to build on an enquiry question for the week but also clearly share the purpose and skill linked to different sessions across the week which will be developed further in 2025.

We aim to continue considering and implementing support tools for multilingual learners through translation prompts and scaffolds and neurodivergent attendees to consider different learning styles and for sessions to be even more accessible.

Continue to build on existing partner relationships in order to reach a target audience of Nottingham City postcodes, asylum seekers and refugees or people living with disability.

### Next steps

Based on reflections from pupils, parents, and schools, our 2025 planning includes varying the content of workshops and enhancing accessibility and language considerations. The week is being planned collaboratively between the learning team and existing cultural and school partnerships as well as identifying opportunities to create new workshops and partnerships so as to offer more in-depth opportunities to develop explicit skills experience across the week. For example; offering Gallery Assistant training and ‘short-shifts’ or working with organisations that support career pathways into the arts.

Sharing the model to support other arts organisations to work together to develop a programme and offer for a whole city approach.

### Find out more

We want to continue working together in partnership across the city and are keen to share this model to see how different organisations might adopt a model such as this or how we may learn from other existing practice.

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# Uncovering Career Opportunities in Archaeology



**Summary**

York Archaeology ran a school trip experience to our community excavation site and one of our York-based attractions focussed on highlighting careers in archaeology and heritage.

**Background**

York Archaeology is an educational charity committed to building better lives through heritage through our archaeological services and our museums in York. In recent years educators have expressed interest in their students’ learning about work, skills and careers alongside the historical knowledge from our sites and collections. In Spring 2024 our Learning team was approached by a sixth form college in West Yorkshire with a group of Year 12 students interested in exploring careers related to history.

**Challenge**

We have observed that young people often have limited knowledge of careers in archaeology and heritage and this career path is seen as limited and inaccessible. We sought to address this through working with this group. A practical challenge was that our museums do not have the extra space to host groups of young adults in addition to our regular pre-booked schools.

**Approach**

Our Learning and Community Engagement teams collaborated to utilise our available museum spaces and an actual excavation to devise a programme of hands-on activities to provide a taste of different types of work in archaeology and heritage. We also took a blended learning approach with a talk and workshop delivered via videoconferencing before their visit.

**Intended outcomes**

- The primary aim was for students to learn more about careers in archaeology and heritage both remotely and on-site. We wanted to provide them with a behind-the-scenes look at the process that goes into our museum displays, from excavation to exhibition design and interpretation.
- For ourselves this was a great opportunity to deliver a careers-themed experience for young people. Our Community Engagement department has been offering training dig experiences for a number of years, so this project was a valuable opportunity to pilot hosting a group of young people at the community excavation site and to consider practicalities and safety of the experience.

**Intended outputs**

We had no specific outputs as this experience was intended as a pilot.

**Obstacles and issues**

- Health and safety is paramount on an active excavation site, so we created small groups of students onsite, in rotation.
- Multiple members of staff were needed to supervise the various activities, which increased the running costs of the experience.
- As an outdoor experience, we were reliant on good weather conditions to host the group at our community dig site, and a contingency plan was prepared in case of bad weather.

**Actual outcomes**

Students came away with some introductory archaeological skills and some practice at thinking creatively about how history and archaeology can be presented to the public;

- As intended, our engagement with the students began with a video call with Rachel and Ian to introduce the work of York Archaeology, covering our commercial services, museums and engagement programmes.
- Activities delivered at our community excavation highlighted a range of archaeological skills, including excavation, identifying finds, interpreting assemblages and understanding the geography of a historic site, in addition to working as a team and adhering to site safety regulations.



“ The project provided us with a useful model for how we can offer future careers-themed activities across our museums and community archaeology sites. There is potential for running this experience for groups of young people again in the future.

- Students took part in a special tour of Barley Hall, our fifteenth-century townhouse. We were fortunate that on the day of their visit our exhibitions team were in the midst of installing a new exhibition so the students also took part in a short Q&A with the team.
- Feedback from the students and teachers was very positive, with students saying that they had learnt a lot of useful and inspiring information about careers in archaeology and heritage.

**Actual outputs**

The project provided us with a useful model for how we can offer future careers-themed activities across our museums and community archaeology sites. There is potential for running this experience for groups of young people again in the future.

**Lessons learned**

- The hybrid engagement approach worked well; the video call provided a space for longer discussions which are sometimes restricted by time and physical space during in-person activities.

- The activities on site took longer than intended, in part due to the students’ (and our staff’s!) enthusiasm. As a result we were tight on time in fitting in all activities planned and balancing this with giving the students rest breaks.
- Despite this, leaving time at the end of the day for evaluation was very worthwhile. Students wrote their reflections on postcards which we found to be a successful method of feedback.

**Next steps**

We are currently considering the costing and staff training implications of advertising this experience to other groups. We want to make experiences like this cost-effective, accessible and sustainable to deliver.

Find out more

Contact us at  
learning@yorkat.co.uk



# Piloting a Careers Insight Day at London Museum



**Summary**  
In May 2024, London Museum held its first Careers Insight Day, aimed at young people aged 14-18, showcasing the range of careers available within a museum. The event was very successful, attracting a diverse range of young people and receiving positive feedback from attendees and museum staff.

**Background**  
London Museum has developed a work experience vision to challenge perceptions of careers in the museum and build young Londoners' skills for future employability. We have committed to diversifying our workforce so we're more representative of the

diversity of Londoners. Early careers opportunities are a key part of this. The museum is currently undertaking a massive relocation project as we close one site and move to our new home in Smithfield, opening in 2026, impacting available spaces and staff capacity.

**Challenge**  
Finding an engaging way to offer insights into museum careers to those who may have few other opportunities to connect with the heritage industry, at a time when we were unable to offer more traditional onsite work experience placements due to capacity restraints.

**Approach**  
We planned a one-day event that would give participants some of the practical, hands-on opportunities they'd get in a longer placement, but be manageable in terms of staff time, operational impact and the time commitment from the young people. We ran this during half term and worked with partners to reach those young people who would benefit most from the opportunity.

**Intended outcomes**  
For Young Londoners from backgrounds which are underrepresented in our workforce to gain a better understanding of museum roles to enable them to make informed decisions about future work and study options.

**Intended outputs**  
A one-day onsite event providing interactive hands-on workshops, behind the scenes tours, and a networking event with staff.

**Obstacles and issues**

- Getting the eligibility criteria right and rethinking promotion to ensure we reached our target audience, e.g. working with partners rather than advertising on our website.
- Building relationships with work experience organisations took time, and recruitment was slow until we tapped into the right networks.

- Running the event in half term meant young people signed up individually rather than through school. Using our volunteer management system to register presented a barrier for some, and chasing 30+ permission forms from carers created extra workload.
- We offered access support to all but were not able to meet the needs of two older (18-25) SEN students with complex needs, due to the intense pace of the day. After discussion, we facilitated a separate insight morning for their college, tailored to their requirements.

**Actual outcomes**

- We engaged 25 young people from 14 London boroughs, with demographics mirroring those of the 2021 census in terms of ethnicity (52% from the Global Majority), disability (16%), socio-economic status (16% eligible for FSM).
- Feedback from the young people was positive: 96% agreed that their questions about working in a museum had been answered; 88% agreed that the day had been useful in helping their future careers choices:

*"Learning the large variety of jobs that are available that I otherwise wouldn't know anything about."*

*"I enjoyed being exposed to jobs I didn't know were a thing."*

- We got buy-in from nearly every team across the museum. Staff found the day rewarding, encouraging them to support future events:

*"Something we need to do if we are going to foster potential newcomers into the industry."*

*"It was really interesting to be able to talk about our work to the students."*

- Our engagement with London Careers Hubs and teams across councils, schools and colleges means we now have a solid network of contacts for future initiatives.

**Actual outputs**

- Onsite Careers Insight Day offering workshops, tours and networking, involving 19 different museum teams.
- A mini-SEN Careers Insight morning tailored to those who were unable to attend the main day.
- A Virtual Careers Insight Day in partnership with Speakers for Schools, translating the format online for Discover! Creative Careers week.

**Lessons learned**

- Utilising the experience and reach of partners helped us better connect with our target audience.
- Engaging staff through offering a choice of participation level – delivering a workshop or attending the networking event for an hour – meant that more teams felt able to contribute without it adversely impacting their workload.
- Creating and delivering the workshops was a good development opportunity for junior staff who enjoyed sharing their career journeys.



- Having an external youth facilitator in addition to museum staff helped create a safe and welcoming environment.
- Don't assume what young people will like – contrary to expectations, they loved networking!

**Next step**

- Deepening and extending the young people's journey with us, through creating longer work experience placements or volunteering opportunities.
- Finding ways to capture the creative insights of participants by including them in focus groups, or creating a youth panel.
- Developing staff confidence through offering workshops on youth engagement.

**“We planned a one-day event that would give participants some of the practical, hands-on opportunities they'd get in a longer placement, but be manageable in terms of staff time, operational impact and the time commitment from the young people.”**

**Find out more**  
**Jemma Perkins**, Volunteer and Early Careers Advisor  
earlycareers@londonmuseum.org.uk



# Kids in Museums Takeover Day: Chatsworth 2024



## Summary

Kids in Museums Takeover Day is a programme when children and young people go into museums and heritage sites and take on professional roles for the day.

## Background

Takeover Day aims to demystify museum jobs, showing children the full range of careers in the heritage sector. We want children to learn new skills, feel more confident and understand that they belong in museums.

In June 2024, Chatsworth House Trust ran a week of Takeover Days in partnership with Kids in Museums and Athelstan Primary School, Sheffield. Over 600 children aged 4 to 11 worked with teams across the organisation.

## Challenge

Chatsworth’s decision to participate in Takeover Day was part of a wider ambition to improve their relevance by increasing their understanding of and engagement with underserved audiences. It was a critical element of a year-long programme celebrating childhood.

## Approach

The Chatsworth project manager met regularly with the school to ensure the content was co-curated with the teachers and children. Some year groups visited Chatsworth before Takeover Day to familiarise themselves with the site and staff.

Chatsworth allocated a budget to cover the cost of coaches. It also covered the costs for extra staff required on the day.

## Intended outcomes

Chatsworth aimed to demonstrate their inclusive approach to working with children and take a step towards achieving their ambition to help more people feel like ‘Chatsworth is a place for someone like me’.

## Intended outputs

Chatsworth aimed to enable all children from Athelstan primary school to experience a job role from across the house and grounds on Takeover Day.

## Obstacles and issues

Because of the size of the event, Chatsworth’s biggest challenge was staffing. They had 120-150 children on site every day. Their aim was that each pupil was supported by two Chatsworth staff and two school staff, ensuring they could be safely escorted and supported at all times.

Creating a rota of activities that met the teachers and Chatsworth staff teams’ needs was also challenging. Negotiating across all involved had to be carefully managed so that everyone was satisfied with the offer and had a part in creating it.

These challenges are common across many organisations involved in Kids in Museums Takeover Day. As part of planning the event, it is important to gain buy-in from staff across the organisation and build understanding of the value of giving children and young people these opportunities to actively experience museum and heritage careers.

## Actual outcomes

Every pupil from the school took part in a planned activity at Chatsworth during the Takeover Day week.

Chatsworth survey data shows that pupils felt more comfortable at Chatsworth after the event:

- 87% of pupils wanted to visit again.
- There was a 46% decline in those who felt anxious or worried about visiting Chatsworth.
- 87% of pupils left feeling happy or excited about their visit to Chatsworth.

This reflects national data from Kids in Museums which shows over three quarters of participants want to visit their local museum again because of being involved with Takeover Day.

## Actual outputs

Each year group was paired with a different Chatsworth department. Working with facilitators, some of the roles the children took on were:

- Welcoming visitors and scanning tickets.
- Searching for pests and cleaning historic documents.
- Surveying with visitors.
- Planting a new tropical garden.

This ensured they experienced a wide range of different heritage jobs.

## Lessons learned

Start planning early. Chatsworth had 10 months, which was a good amount of time.

Set your budget well in advance – apply for funding where possible. Try to cover transport costs.

Takeover Day is a great opportunity to discover what children value in heritage sites. Staff at Chatsworth developed a deeper understanding of what children find most engaging in an historic house and these insights will contribute to family engagement plans.

The visitor team at Chatsworth witnessed the benefits of deeper engagement strategies. They gave children more meaningful understanding of not only the objects, but different ways of appreciating them.



“Chatsworth will continue to embrace what they learned from Takeover Day – committing to make their site and programmes a more welcoming and child-friendly place.”

## Next steps

Takeover Day is on Friday 21 November 2025 with the same theme of careers. Last year, 70% of participants said they learned more about museum careers.

Chatsworth will continue to embrace what they learned from Takeover Day – committing to make their site and programmes a more welcoming and child-friendly place.

Chatsworth is designing a two-year programme for Takeover Days in 2025 and 2026 and will also undertake outreach work to involve pupils as consultants, to co-curate enhancements to the family programme.



## Find out more

Kids in Museums has a range of resources to support organisations to plan Takeover Day events

[kidsinmuseums.org.uk/resources/category/takeover-day](https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/resources/category/takeover-day)





# Cultural Learning Participation Apprenticeship: A New Route into Museum and Heritage Engagement



**Summary**  
As an Apprenticeship Training Provider, we deliver the Cultural Learning and Participation Officer Level 3 apprenticeship. We started delivering this 2 years ago and now have 7 apprentices on programme.

**Background**  
At WAES, we began delivering Cultural Heritage apprenticeships around 5 years ago, starting with the Libraries and Archives Level 3 apprenticeship. As we have grown our provision, we have added in some new apprenticeship standards to our offer such as Museums and Galleries Technician Level 3, Archivist and Records Manager Level 7 and the Cultural Learning and Participation Officer Level 3.

This apprenticeship was devised and created by a Trailblazer Group including the Royal Opera House, Birmingham Museums, Royal Museums Greenwich and Bristol Museums and Galleries. It is aimed at people either wanting to enter working in the sector or those who are already working within it and want to upskill or change direction in their roles. We currently have a fabulous cohort of apprentices on programme working at a diverse range of organisations including Historic Royal Palaces, Royal Albert Hall, Museum of Oxford, Camden Markets, University of the Arts London, University of Cambridge Museums and Westminster Abbey.

The apprenticeship is 18 months in total and is open to anyone from 16+. There are no academic requirements for entry on to the apprenticeship and candidates come from a wide range of backgrounds, experience and interests. The most important qualities are that apprentices are passionate about learning and engagement and committed to work-based learning and training on the job.

**Challenge**  
By offering the Cultural Learning and Participation Officer Level 3 apprenticeship as part of our programme we wanted to open up more inclusive and accessible routes for those wanting to work in Museum and Heritage Learning. One of the challenges in our sector is that although there are several amazing and well-established higher education courses available, there wasn't a vocational work-based learning option for those wanting to take up this route.

**Approach**  
Our Tutor on the apprenticeship is Melissa Maynard, who brings with her many years of expertise and passion for Museum and Heritage Learning. She is a wonderful Tutor and mentor to our apprentices, helping them in their fortnightly taught sessions connect, reflect on and record what they are doing at work and what they need to provide evidence for in their apprenticeship portfolio.

One of our current CLPO Level 3 apprentices, Macy Gaines who

is an apprentice at University of Cambridge Museums explains how the apprenticeship work-based learning approach works for her:

*"I applied for this course because it combines my love of museums with my goal to create accessible and inclusive spaces for all. I've always been passionate about making cultural institutions more open and welcoming, and this course offered the perfect opportunity to gain both practical skills and theoretical knowledge to achieve that."*

*Traditional university wasn't the right fit for me, and this course has been a breath of fresh air. It allows me to integrate what I'm learning directly into my day-to-day work. The apprenticeship model has given me the chance to build confidence and grow in a way that feels more meaningful than traditional classroom learning".*

- Intended outcomes**
- To diversify the way in which people can become Museum and Heritage Learning professionals and enter into the sector;
  - To work with Cultural Heritage organisations to fill a need to recruit a more diverse workforce in Museum and Heritage Learning;
  - To train a new generation of Museum and Heritage educators to bring new perspectives, ideas and passion into the sector.



- Intended outputs**
- To make sure that all our apprentices thrive, succeed and achieve in their apprenticeship
  - To support apprentices to go on to jobs in the sector after their apprenticeship

**Obstacles and issues**  
It's been a challenge getting the message out there that this apprenticeship is running and available to organisations. But also, we acknowledge that even if organisations do know about the apprenticeship there are many obstacles that can prevent them offering it. These can include a lack of capacity in their Learning and Engagement Team to support and mentor an apprentice, reduced budgets or lack of funds to recruit new staff or backfill existing staff's time to allow for study and already over stretched resources and work programmes.

Another one of the challenges of this apprenticeship is that apprentices are adult learners with lives, commitments, responsibilities and they've got to juggle work and study at the same time. Here, Macy reflects on how she has managed that juggle.

*"Balancing work, study, and personal life has sometimes been a challenge. To manage this, I've developed strong time-management skills, setting clear*

“Our apprentices have gone on to some amazing roles such as the youngest curator at the British Library, Assistant Research Librarian at IWM and Collections Care Assistant at the National Trust Waddesdon Manor.

*priorities and breaking tasks into manageable steps, which has helped me stay on top of everything without feeling overwhelmed. The support of my tutors, colleagues, and my partner, Noah, has been invaluable. Their belief in me and constant encouragement has kept me motivated during busy or stressful periods".*

**Actual outcomes**  
We are growing our cohort of apprentices in terms of numbers and have experienced more interest recently from organisations across the sector.

Our apprentices are all ages (from 20–63 years old) and come from a diverse range of backgrounds and with different life and career experiences.

**Actual outputs**  
We have a 92% overall achievement rate for our apprentices, which is 38% over the national average. Our apprentices have gone on to some amazing roles such as the youngest curator at the British Library, Assistant Research Librarian at IWM (Imperial War Museums) and Collections Care Assistant at the National Trust Waddesdon Manor. We are proud of how we have been able to mentor, support and nurture this new talent to make a difference to the sector workforce. Our first CLPO Level 3 apprentice, Holly who was at Westminster Abbey in the Engagement Team, graduated last

summer with a Distinction and is now the Adult Programme Coordinator at the National Portrait Gallery.

**Lessons learned**  
The lessons learned from running this apprenticeship for the last 2 years are that apprentices really benefit from the mix of work-based practical experience and the chance to learn in class from experienced Tutors and other apprentices at different organisations. The criteria covered in the apprenticeship are a good grounding for anyone wanting to work in the sector and apprentices go on to get good jobs after they graduate. We've learned that it takes time to build up the reputation of a new type of training course on offer in the sector and that many people (myself included before I worked in apprenticeships) don't know about how apprenticeships work, are funded and what's involved.

**Next steps**  
In terms of next steps, we'd like to grow our cohort of apprentices and get more Museums and Heritage organisations interested in taking on a CLPO Level 3 apprentice. We'd also be keen to talk to employers about maybe proposing and creating a higher-level Cultural Heritage Learning apprenticeship, maybe a Level 5 or 6 for Managers or Senior Producers wanting to develop in their careers or for those wanting to enter into the sector at a higher level.

**Find out more**

For more information about the Cultural Learning Participation Officer Level 3 please go to the IFATE website [Cultural learning and participation officer/Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education](#) where you can find information about us and other Training Providers who offer this apprenticeship.

Our apprenticeship offer at WAES can be found on our Apprenticeship pages here, where you can also read testimonials from our current and graduate apprentices. [Apprenticeships – Westminster Adult Education Service](#)



# Why Career Pathways for Cultural Apprentices Matter



**Summary**  
Kirklees Museums and Galleries, with the support of ACE NPO funding, have invested in employing three new Apprentices since September 2023; one new role of Content Creator and two Museum Technicians. This is in response to the skills required within the sector, specifically around the workforce development of digital and technical skills and the challenge of attracting young people to these opportunities within heritage.

**Background**  
Kirklees Museums and Galleries consists of three heritage sites – Bagshaw Museum, Tolson Museum and Oakwell Hall and Country Park – and an Art Gallery currently awaiting a new home in a large-scale capital project for Huddersfield called ‘Our Cultural Heart’.

As a commitment to ACE’s Outcomes and Investment Principles, the funding provided us with the necessary budget to support the apprenticeships initiative with an additional aim of diversifying our team.

**Challenge**  
Digital marketing and technical support were underserved in our workforce, with limited capacity and skills for digital audience development, and a small technical team of two – one of whom is a senior manager.

As a Local Authority Museum service, we have limited internal budgets to invest in creating and supporting new, entry-level roles, and the ACE funding allowed us the opportunity to explore the impact this would have on the service.

**Approach**  
With our ambitions to work with community partners on co-producing displays and engaging more online visitors with our collection, the apprentices would increase our capacity and support our teams to deliver these aims.

**Intended outcomes**  
The Level 3 Content Creator Apprentice role would create a centralised and consistent approach to digital marketing and make better use of engaging audiences online through platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to showcase Kirklees’ heritage sites and collection. We hoped it would demonstrate the need for these types of digital engagement roles as a core part of the service not currently in existence.

We have two existing Technicians; one close to retirement and the other a senior manager, so we needed to ensure that skills and knowledge would be shared. We expected they would also bring new energy and capacity into the team, sharing their own course learning internally to inspire new ways of working.

**Intended outputs**  
(The products to be delivered by the x2 Content Creators and x2 Technicians trained young people with the skills and knowledge necessary to enter the sector confidently and with the necessary expertise to contribute to the future of museums and galleries.

**Obstacles and issues**

- Staff capacity to support apprentices appropriately and ensure they are embedded within the team, especially whilst inducting other new staff into other roles.
- Additional travel costs and time commitments due to the only Learning Provider for Museum Technician Apprenticeships being in Westminster, London.



“With our ambitions to work with community partners on co-producing displays and engaging more online visitors with our collection, the apprentices would increase our capacity and support our teams to deliver these aims.

- Adequate training and health and safety support on machinery for Technical Apprentices that could not be provided in-house had to be bought in.
- Due to external pressures, the Technical Apprentices have not (yet) had the display and exhibition experiences that we intended, limiting some of their learning and skill development.

**Actual outcomes**

- Demonstrative business case to create a job role rather than take on a second Content Creator Apprentice.
- Supported three young people in entry-level roles within the heritage sector, providing them with experience and practical examples for their professional and career development.
- Knowledge and skills uplift in the teams with Apprentices in a two-way exchange of learning and expertise.

**Actual outputs**

- Increase in digital engagement across all platforms and a more diverse audience interacting with our organisation online.
- Business case for entry-level roles and the benefits they bring to both the organisation and the sector.
- Extra capacity to support collections care work and documentation skills for Technical Apprentices.

**Lessons learned**  
Ensure existing team is stable enough to invite in young apprentices and enough capacity and work – it takes a lot of time and preparation to adequately induct, train and support them.  
  
Create a work programme for the length of their apprenticeship upfront and ensure it meets the needs of the organisation and supports the modules being taught in the apprenticeship.

There is a need for a learning provider outside of London to support Technical skills in the heritage sector across the North; travel costs and time will be a barrier for many and will limit the ability of the sector to support this specialism if it cannot be addressed.

**Next steps**  
Hire a content creator within the team at a sector-level salary to provide experience and support for further digital development.

Working with Museum Development North to raise awareness of the gaps in suitable training opportunities for technical staff in the heritage sector, ideally resulting in establishing a learning provider deliverer outside of London to support the North.

**Find out more**  
**You can find out more about the work our Apprentices have been doing through our Kirklees Museums and Galleries Blog:**  
[www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/museums-and-galleries/blogs/apprentice-week.aspx](http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/museums-and-galleries/blogs/apprentice-week.aspx)  
Contact:  
**Cat Lumb, Museums Operational Manager, Kirklees Museums & Galleries**  
[Cat.lumb@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Cat.lumb@kirklees.gov.uk)



# Diversifying the Workforce at the National Paralympic Heritage Trust



### Summary

In 2023, the National Paralympic Heritage Trust (NPHT) launched a new five-year strategy. A key part is to diversify our workforce, with a particular focus on providing opportunities for disabled and neurodiverse people.

### Background

The National Paralympic Heritage Trust (NPHT) was established in 2015 to preserve, celebrate and share local and national Paralympic heritage. Our heritage centre is in Stoke Mandeville Stadium in Buckinghamshire, where the Paralympic Games started. We work locally in Bucks, and across England with cultural partners, schools and at sporting venues.



### Challenge

To provide opportunities for work experience and paid work for disabled and neurodiverse people at NPHT, to support inclusive pathways into work in the cultural sector.

### Approach

Our experience from previous projects, and the support of partners, gave us an understanding of need and of how to structure the programme. We applied for funding to deliver this work between 2023 and 2026. Our programme is supported by Arts Council England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Rothschild Foundation and Art Fund.

### Intended outcomes

To develop a programme of inclusive work experience and traineeships, resulting in improved skills development and employability for local disabled and neurodiverse people.

### Intended outputs

The main features of the programme:

- Four part-time paid, three-year traineeships;
- A work placement programme for disabled and neurodiverse young people;
- The employment of a work coach;
- Developing a local network of partners which support disabled and neurodiverse people;
- Changes to our ways of working to better manage and support our team;
- Increased representation of disabled and neurodiverse people amongst our team.

### Obstacles and issues

Partner charities and young people helped us to create an inclusive recruitment process. We promoted the traineeships, which started in July 2023, to local charities and through disability networks, as well as sharing with local people previously involved in our work. We were less prepared for how difficult it was in not being able to offer everyone a role. Some people were disappointed, and we worried about the impact this had.



We felt that a work coach was essential, however, we found it difficult to recruit for this role. In the interim staff had to take on additional responsibilities to support the team.

Our work placement programme has worked most effectively through referrals from local charities like Macintyre and Talkback. We are constantly learning about the challenges young people face starting work experience, including travel confidence and concerns about what's expected.

### Actual outcomes

We have adapted how we work to create a more inclusive environment for disabled and neurodiverse people. This has included: more accessible recruitment methods; easy access documents for tasks; and using symbol friendly resources like Widgit. We have received support for travel, equipment and our work coach through the Department of Work and Pensions' 'Access to Work' and 'Access to Work Plus' schemes.

We began this year with a survey for all staff, volunteers and trustees. This has helped us understand our feelings about the support we are giving and receiving, and will inform future training.

### Actual outputs

We are now just over halfway through our programme of funded work. Our trainees have developed skills for work and are now developing areas of sector specific specialisms, including digital scanning, research and curation.

We have supported nine people on work placements. Each person's experience is bespoke, depending on their needs, levels of experience and areas of interest.

### Lessons learned

Whilst having a job coach has been invaluable, we are a small staff (of 13) and this has been a whole team endeavour, backed up by advice from our partners. It is everyone's responsibility to create a supportive environment.

Listening to what people need is essential, as is taking the time to respond and create the right tools for success, including a suitable working environment and accessible guides to tasks.

To remember how much 'outside work' impacts on our ability to work. We've had discussions about our duty of care to each other, and how we can create a supportive workplace.

“ We have supported nine people on work placements. Each person's experience is bespoke, depending on their needs, levels of experience and areas of interest.

### Next steps

At the end of 2024, we commissioned an external evaluation of our progress on diversifying the workforce. We hope this will improve and refine our approach.

We are expanding our use of easy access guidance across wider aspects of our work, including collections-based tasks.

We are reflecting on our use of language and will create a style guide the whole team agrees with.

We will begin to look ahead to consider how to develop our traineeship and placement offer in the future. At the same time, we will begin to prepare our current trainees for the end of their role, doing our best to ensure that they are well-equipped to find a permanent role in the cultural sector.

Find out more

[Work Placements | National Paralympic Heritage Trust](#)

[National Paralympic Heritage Trust | LinkedIn](#)



# Get into Gardening at Fulham Palace: Building a Better Future Through Horticulture



## Summary

Get into Gardening is a Fulham Palace Trust initiative designed to engage young people facing a range of barriers to accessing the Palace gardens. It provides hands-on horticulture experience and creates connections with the natural world.

## Background

Fulham Palace's 13 acres of urban green space in central London offer a unique environment where young people can immerse themselves in nature, explore critical topics such as climate change and sustainability, and feel part of their local community. With a strong focus on organic gardening and sustainable practices, Fulham Palace serves as a vital local resource for environmental education.

## Challenge

The pandemic demonstrated the value of urban green spaces but revealed that many young people feel unwelcome in places like historic houses and gardens. To address this, Fulham Palace aimed to remove barriers and create inclusive opportunities.

## Approach

Through partnerships with local organisations – including a pupil referral unit, SEN schools and the Hammersmith and Fulham Youth Justice Team – the project developed tailored programmes to meet participants' needs.



## Intended outcomes

- Expand engagement with young people through horticulture.
- Use Fulham Palace gardens to offer unique, inclusive educational experiences.
- Support young people who would benefit from extra educational enrichment.

## Intended outputs

Between September 2021 and August 2024, the programme aimed to grow its reach and impact year on year. In Year 1 (2021–2022), the intended outputs included partnerships with 3 organisations, engagement of 19 unique young people, and delivery of 90 sessions. In Year 2 (2022–2023), the targets increased to 5 partner organisations, 30 young people engaged, and 185 sessions led. By Year 3 (2023–2024), the programme set out to work with 7 partner organisations,

engage 45 unique young people, and deliver 259 sessions.

## Obstacles and issues

The project faced several challenges, including navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, managing multiple partners and working with young people in complex situations. Flexibility and responsiveness to participant needs were key to addressing these challenges.

Engaging young people in horticulture proved challenging due to barriers such as the young people thinking Fulham Palace was not for them, travel costs and the need to earn a living for those who had left education. Developing paid trainee roles helped address these issues. Effective partnerships with Francis Barber Pupil Referral Unit and the Youth Justice Team also helped promote the roles effectively to the young people.

Attendance was a common issue for trainees, reflecting challenges typical of young people with difficult living situations. The programme adjusted by reducing hours of the trainee roles to 1–2 days per week. High levels of pastoral care, including support from social workers, became essential. The garden team often found themselves as key figures in trainees' lives, requiring careful navigation of work boundaries. Payroll and HR processes also became complex, with weekly advance payments introduced to manage trainee pay effectively.

Challenges included funding for uniforms and equipment, which partners like the Youth Justice Team and Francis Barber addressed internally. Transport difficulties within the borough also posed an issue for some participants.

## Actual outcomes

Participants benefited from the therapeutic effects of nature, gained environmental awareness, and felt supported by the team of staff and volunteers. Many expressed pride in their work, with some returning to the

gardens with their families to share their achievements.

*"I like that everyone here is a family where you can talk to everyone. It's like a community. I like how it's a nice environment as well."*  
Matin, Fulham Palace trainee

## Actual outputs

By 2024, the program had engaged 333 unique learners, collaborated with 14 partner organisations, and delivered 316 gardening sessions.

## Lessons learned

Flexibility was key to the project's success. Feedback from partners highlighted the need for paid roles. Introducing paid traineeships removed barriers and significantly enhanced the project's impact.

The shift underscored the project's ability to profoundly impact young lives. Prioritising quality experiences over reaching larger numbers emphasised the social value and long-term legacy of the initiative.

Supporting participants required extensive pastoral care, which also impacted staff. Addressing

challenges faced by young people was initially daunting, but guidance from our partners proved invaluable.

Partners noted the critical role of community in young people's lives. Creating a sense of belonging at Fulham Palace positively influenced participants' confidence and future opportunities.

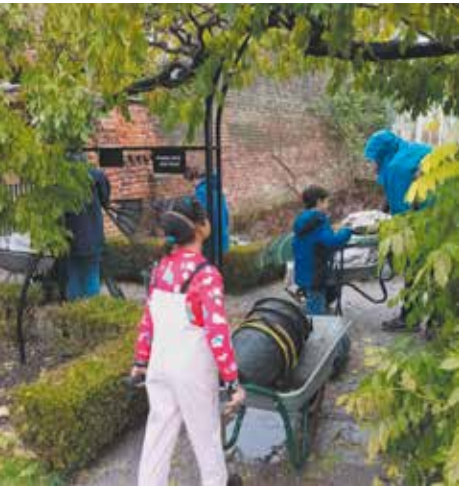
The project highlighted the value of nature, with traineeships providing practical experience, pastoral support and paid opportunities. Multi-generational working emerged as a surprising success, fostering inclusion and acceptance among participants.

*"... it has enhanced their trust and belief in the professionals that work with them...working alongside somebody for two hours, sharing stories...definitely deepens the trust into the people that you work with."*  
Tereza, Youth Justice Service

## Next steps

All partners remain engaged, with secured funding for phase two, focusing on traineeships and partnerships with pupil referral units.

**“The shift underscored the project's ability to profoundly impact young lives. Prioritising quality experiences over reaching larger numbers emphasised the social value and long-term legacy of the initiative.”**



## Find out more

Project film – [youtube.com/watch?v=XheeDI6eXVA](https://youtube.com/watch?v=XheeDI6eXVA)

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Project partners

Burlington House School, Fulham

Barber Francis Barber Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), Wandsworth

Granard Primary School, Wandsworth

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Youth Justice Service



# Norfolk Museums Service 'Creative Careers' Programme:

## Providing Young People with an Insight into Careers in the Museum and Heritage Sector



### Summary

The 'Creative Careers' Programme enables young people aged 16-25 to experience the workplace, working alongside museum professionals. Young people are supported to:

- gain an insight into how museums operate and the range of job roles available through a range of opportunities;
- develop transferable skills whilst supporting mental wellbeing;
- enable young people to progress into employment.

### Background

Norfolk Museums Service (NMS) ACE funded Kick the Dust (KTD) programme targets young people who do not see themselves engaging or working in museums, who face the most barriers to engagement.



### Challenge

- To diversify the workforce in relation to young people from less advantaged backgrounds, offering that first step into employment.
- To increase number of local work-related opportunities to ensure equal access for young people countywide.
- To demonstrate impact of specific programmes to funders.

### Approach

(A description of how the project sought to address the challenge)

We developed a suite of work experience opportunities:

- An 8-week online offer including 2 additional days in a museum;
- 'Curator Camp' intense 2-week work experience model focused on a museum challenge;

- Structured volunteering opportunities including Project Assistants or Youth Ambassadors;
- Creating roles in learning and visitor services to run alongside studies so more young people can apply;
- Development of a 10-week, 10 hour a week pre-traineeship providing a stepping stone where full-time employment isn't feasible e.g. for those with complex needs or struggling with mental health.

### Intended outcomes

- To develop a supportive, progressive programme for those furthest away from the workplace to build confidence, emotional wellbeing and skills to successfully apply for a job.

“Kick the Dust has played such a key part in my life and helped me secure employment when most doors were closed to me, giving me the skills and confidence to move forward. It is like being part of a family. I have now been offered a place on an access course to help me realise my dream of going to university next year.

Jazz, Youth Ambassador and former KTD trainee



### Intended outputs

- Increased numbers of young people seeing NMS as a future employer.
- Support young people in securing jobs in the sector and/or working for NMS.

### Obstacles and issues

- Identifying host museums for the pre-traineeship to fit around young people's availability and staff capacity to provide intense support.
- Reduced number of opportunities due to the winter closures of smaller museums. Offering this once in the spring/summer period, led to more meaningful traineeship experiences.
- Some young people could not easily access the face-to-face element which was limited to only one museum – an issue in a geographically large county.

### Actual outcomes

- Evaluation data demonstrates the benefit of prolonged contact time between project workers, participants and involvement of museum professionals on mental wellbeing. Scores at the start of the programme were -0.44 below national average rising to +1.38 at the end.

- Opportunities to apply for relief positions within NMS allowed working hours to be tailored around studies and other commitments. This proved invaluable with one young person stating *'this made me consider what routes I want to take in the future ... I've no idea where I would be today without KTD. The programme has been the greatest impact on my life.'* They now work full-time in the visitor services team.
- Feedback from recruiting staff showed the impact on how young people presented themselves and the quality of evidence they drew upon to support their applications from their KTD experience.

### Actual outputs

89% of our current cohort state their involvement had a positive impact on their mental wellbeing.

84 young people completed the online work experience programme with 73% progressing into further learning or employment. 89% recognised the skills they developed will be useful in the future.

We funded 5 pre-traineeships with 3 young people progressing into full-time employment.

We provided 68 long-term volunteering opportunities to young people; 90% stating they are now more likely to volunteer in a museum.

### Lessons learned

- Forward planning of the traineeship programme ensured mentors were trained and appropriate opportunities were in place which met the needs of the young people applying.
- Ensuring consistency in staff helped reduce anxiety for the young people.

### Next steps

We hope to secure additional funding to expand the pre-traineeship programme county-wide, enabling progression for young people ready to take their first step into paid work locally and to offer 10 monthly follow up paid sessions to support development in their chosen field to support future applications.

Working with colleagues in Norfolk Library and Information Service will increase the range of opportunities across both organisations to ensure placements can be offered all year.

We will expand the online work experience offer to provide additional days at other museum sites to ensure all young people are able to access provision and continue to fund travel. Young people say this is one of the key elements of the offer that allows them to gain a deeper understanding of different routes into what they state is a challenging sector to enter.

The evaluation strategy will continue to evolve to demonstrate to future funders which type of programmes have greatest impact on mental wellbeing, confidence and skills acquisition.

### Find out more

[www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/join-and-support/kick-the-dust](http://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/join-and-support/kick-the-dust)

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# Marseum: Out of This World Museum Career Learning



Summary

In early 2024, Museums Galleries Scotland launched a new, freely accessible learning resource called Marseum, in collaboration with Daydream Believers. Marseum has been designed to facilitate new ways for museums to work with young people in areas with high levels of socioeconomic deprivation.

In Marseum, pupils join the first human settlement on Mars in 2050, helping to design a new exhibition for the first museum on the Red Planet. Through piloting the learning resource, young people have been growing their confidence and developing employability skills, whilst learning more about museum careers. We have been supporting Scotland’s museums to use Marseum with their local schools, advocating for a wider range of voices to be represented in heritage.



- Demystifying heritage careers;
- Diversifying the workforce pipeline;
- Increased pre-subject choice employability skills;
- Engagement with DYW Scotland.

Intended outputs

- Free national learning resource (Marseum);
- 8 pilot project case studies;
- A new resource in each museum.

Obstacles and issues

Given ongoing capacity issues for teachers and museum workers, the flexibility of the resource was key to enable different schools and museums to effectively engage in the project. The lack of transport between schools and museums, and the cost of the transport when it did exist, is a significant barrier. Pilot museums were able to use their funding to support this cost.

As the Marseum resource exists as an interactive PDF and worksheets, digital poverty for pupils could have been a barrier. However, once a teacher has the PDF, all that pupils need to effectively engage is a pen and paper.

Actual outcomes

- Over 4000 pupils have now engaged with the Marseum learning resource;
- Participating pupils expressed new interest in pursuing heritage careers.



“ We have been supporting Scotland’s museums to use Marseum with their local schools, advocating for a wider range of voices to be represented in heritage.

- Pupils told us how exciting it was to be able to bring their own interests, and own ways of researching and working, into the classroom.
- Participating museums built new and strengthened existing relationships with local schools, with many planning legacy work.
- Some schools now plan to make the resource a core part of their curriculum going forward.
- Teachers and pupils fed back increased confidence in engaging with their local museum, with pupils and their families planning future trips.
- More and more schools have been reaching out to us, asking to be linked up to a local museum to support their delivery of the resource.
- Interpretation for an exhibition at Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds;
- Marseum exhibition and Podcast at The Wee Museum of Memory;
- Marseum exhibition and event at a school with Paisley Museum;
- Audio plinths at the Baird Institute with East Ayrshire Leisure;
- Audio trail with East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture;
- Museum display at a school with the Robert Burns Centre ;
- Marseum display at the Watt Institution with Inverclyde Council;
- Exhibition at Shetland Museum & Archives.

Actual outputs

- National learning resource: Marseum;
- Teacher’s Marseum toolkit;
- Video case study, written case studies;

Lessons learned

Flexibility is key when creating a learning resource – something that our partners Daydream Believers really understood. That flexibility needs to be there in how people can use the resource, how they deliver, and where they deliver, for example across a mix of in-reach and outreach. Whilst there are

already legacy projects running without financial support, the cost of transport still remains a barrier for many schools and museums to work together – particularly so in areas that experience multiple forms of exclusion and deprivation.

When discussing the possibility of accrediting the learning resource, this received a mixed response from teachers, with some feeling that the added value this brings would make them more likely to continue delivering the resource, and others seeing the additional workload that would come with an accredited learning resource as a barrier to participation.

Next steps

Marseum will continue to be free for anyone to access and use, and with the release of the teacher’s toolkit, we hope to empower even more schools to reach out to museums to run the project

In the future, we may seek resource to explore levelling and accrediting the experience, but that will be dependent on demand and resource.

Find out more

[www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/advice-article/marseum-school-learning-resource](http://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/advice-article/marseum-school-learning-resource)  
[daydreambelievers.co.uk/resources/marseum](http://daydreambelievers.co.uk/resources/marseum)  
[www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/project/workforce-for-the-future-peoples-postcode-lottery](http://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/project/workforce-for-the-future-peoples-postcode-lottery)  
If you require more information about the Workforce for The Future projects or want to talk to us about running a Marseum project, please get in touch with [Gabi Gillott](#), Workforce for the Future Project Officer, or [Markus Offer](#), Workforce and Partnerships Manager.



# The Youth Collective at Culture Perth and Kinross



### Summary

The Culture Perth and Kinross Youth Collective, established in 2023, is a comprehensive youth engagement initiative involving people aged 16-25 in diverse cultural heritage activities. Operating across multiple venues, including Perth Art Gallery, Perth Museum and local libraries, the Collective provides hands-on experience in exhibition development, cultural programming and community engagement. Their flagship project, 'The Fleapit Theatre' exhibition, celebrated 100 years of cinema history through interactive installations and events. Beyond exhibitions, members participate in workshops ranging from traditional photography techniques to critical space analysis, engage with professional curators and artists and contribute to institutional planning. The programme

demonstrates a successful model of youth engagement in cultural heritage, combining practical skills development with creative expression and professional mentorship.

### Background

The Youth Collective operates within Culture Perth and Kinross (CPK), engaging participants aged 16-25 across multiple venues including Perth Art Gallery, Perth Museum, local libraries and the archive. The project functions under the Gannochy Trust funded Youth Collective framework, with professional staff providing mentorship across various cultural heritage disciplines. The Gannochy Trust provides annual funding of around £5m to registered charities, primarily working in Perth and Kinross, but also to inspire and develop young people throughout Scotland.

### Challenge

The project primarily addressed the need to meaningfully engage young people in cultural heritage work while providing practical museum experience. Additional challenges included building participant confidence, creating accessible cultural experiences and overcoming initial engagement barriers among members.

### Approach

The project implemented hands-on self-led involvement in exhibition planning and delivery, supported by cross-departmental collaboration. Activities included practical workshops in photography and curation, public engagement events, and critical thinking exercises. The programme evolved to emphasise practical sessions, which proved more effective for engagement with 16-25 year olds.

### Intended outcomes

The project aimed to develop professional skills in museum work while building confidence in communication and creativity. Goals included providing real-world exhibition development experience, fostering cultural heritage understanding, and creating youth-led programming that would improve accessibility to cultural spaces.



“Participants developed stronger community connections and demonstrated improved understanding of museum operations, while also showing increased interest in cultural institutions.”

### Intended outputs

The primary intended output was The Fleapit Theatre exhibition, supported by public engagement events, workshops, and exhibition content creation. The project also focused on developing participants' curatorial skills and critical evaluation abilities.

### Obstacles and issues

Initial challenges included the Youth Collective's shyness, lack of confidence in expressing opinions and suggestions for future workshops. When installing Fleapit Theatre, the team faced time management pressures with tight deadlines and needed to coordinate across multiple departments which created technical challenges during the exhibition installation. The staff had to find new ways of working, so there has been collaborative learning between the Collective and the wider organisation, which has benefited both, and opened up wider conversations about the importance of working with young adults in a self-led environment.

One issue with the Collective has been how they perceived the wider staff, CPK Board and stakeholders

at the time of the opening of The Fleapit Theatre. This has now been addressed, and they will be building relationships across CPK as this year progresses, including meeting the Board in April to develop an ongoing relationship.

### Actual outcomes

The project achieved significant success in building participant confidence and professional skills. Public engagement flourished, with one event attracting 407 attendees. Participants developed stronger community connections and demonstrated improved understanding of museum operations, while also showing increased interest in cultural institutions.

### Actual outputs

Beyond The Fleapit Theatre exhibition, the project delivered the "Fleas, Pests and Nasty Creatures" family event, photography workshops, and various public engagement activities. Participants created collaborative art installations and contributed to exhibition design and implementation.

### Lessons learned

Experience showed that practical, hands-on sessions proved more effective than theoretical approaches. The project demonstrated the value of cross-departmental collaboration and the importance of creating safe spaces for creativity. Professional mentorship emerged as a crucial element in skills development, while flexibility in approach helped maintain consistent engagement.

### Next steps

Future plans for the Youth Collective include creating shadow theatres for the Macbeth exhibition and developing a youth-focused fashion show. The project will also participate in the Social Flock sustainability initiative. Ongoing development of youth-led initiatives and cross-institutional partnerships will continue.

### Find out more

JOliver@culturepk.org.uk



# Young Freelancers at London Transport Museum: 10 Years in



### Summary

London Transport Museum’s Young Freelancers is a 12-month career development programme funded by Arts Council England.

It supports untapped, trailblazing and creative Londoners aged 18-25 to get to grips with self-employment in the museums and heritage sector.

Designed by Young Consultants at the Museum in 2015, it has now been running for 10 years.

### Background

Young Freelancers work on freelance briefs designed for young people who may be trying something for the first time. They make significant contributions across the Museum working in roles which support their learning and development.

In 2018, the Khadija Saye Photography Fellowship was established in memory of Khadija who worked as a Young Freelancer at the time of her death in June 2017. Khadija was an inspiring activist, photographer, artist and educator at the beginning of her career. This role supports young people who share Khadija’s drive and ambition into careers in arts, culture and photography and is now in its 5th year.

### Challenge

Young people lack access to paid employment in the sector. Young Consultants identified self-employment as particularly difficult to access and understand. We seek

to support young people to try self-employment in a supportive environment while developing skills and networks which continue to be of value beyond the programme.

### Approach

Young Freelancers work on projects across the Museum paid at a day rate, with training in the ‘procedural knowledge’ needed for the brief included in their fees.

They participate in a five-day induction to freelance working, monthly one-to-one coaching and paid skills workshops around self-employment and reflective practice.

The Creative Careers team support colleagues across the Museum to work with Young Freelancers.

### Intended outcomes

Young people likely to experience structural barriers to employment are given opportunities to develop skills, experience and networks that support their careers.

The Museum benefits from their potential, motivation and talent to produce engaging and high-quality programming.

The wider cultural sector benefits from diverse young talent entering the workforce.

### Intended outputs

Six Young Freelancers and one Khadija Saye Photography Fellow undertake 1,500 hours of paid work, 500 hours

of CPD and 84 hours of one-to-one support per year.

The Museum supports partners to work with Young Freelancers through one-to-one meetings and a practice sharing network.

Young Freelancers and the Fellow each undertake a personal project with the Museum’s support.

### Obstacles and issues

The Creative Careers team identified a photography knowledge gap and so partnered with The Photographers Gallery to support the Khadija Saye Fellowship.

### Actual outcomes

Participants experience significant change in their confidence, skills, knowledge and networks which they use and maintain beyond the programme.

They are increasingly hired by teams beyond Learning & Participation, supporting Curatorial, Marketing and Volunteering.

The Museum has strengthened and developed its practice supporting young people over longer-term engagements. This has included staff undertaking Youth Mental Health First Aider Training and a developing Restorative Care offer.

### Actual outputs

Over 10 years the programme has grown from four to six Young Freelancers and the Khadija Saye



Photo courtesy of Dee McGowan, Khadijah Saye Photography Fellow 2024, London Transport Museum



Photo courtesy of Hannah Daisy, Khadijah Saye Photography Fellow 2021, London Transport Museum

“I have had a wonderful experience being one of the Young Freelancers. It has been a year dedicated towards building new skills and meeting new people. Finding out what it is like to work in a museum. Finding unexpected passions.

Amy Young Freelancer 2024

Fellowship. A total of 45 young people have participated over 10 years.

Last year, Young Freelancers undertook 507 days of paid work in 22 different teams, far exceeding anticipated targets.

15 partner organisations have hired Young Freelancers, many working with them beyond the end of the programme.

Quarterly network meetings for partners to share and develop practice have directly influenced ways of working

Young Freelancers contributed to a participatory research project, co-designing The Engine, a group of young people who evaluate youth programming at London Transport Museum.

Three ‘Next Step’ workshops run each year for unsuccessful applicants.

### Lessons learned

Training workshops are now monthly providing more consistent contact and time together as the community building aspect of the programme was identified as particularly impactful.

We increased the contact time each month for coaching.

Early evaluation found that participants felt less confident securing work in the wider sector than at London Transport Museum. We now partner with other museums who provide work opportunities, site visits and networking to open routes into the wider sector.

Through The Engine, Young Freelancers sought budget to pitch projects which has led to unexpected and exciting outcomes.

Seven roles does not meet the demand for routes into the sector,

so we aim to make the application process useful, providing feedback on applications, supporting candidates to build networks and sector awareness at group interviews and providing training workshops that can inform their future applications.

### Next steps

We are seeking to grow from six to eight Young Freelancers.

We looking to make our skills training and community building activities around self-employment open to more young Londoners.

We are hoping to develop a funded partnership offer for smaller arts organisations to work with Young Freelancers.

### Find out more

You can find out more about the programme online:  
[www.ltmuseum.co.uk/about/opportunities/young-people/young-freelancers-and-fellowships](http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/about/opportunities/young-people/young-freelancers-and-fellowships)  
[youngpeople@ltmuseum.co.uk](mailto:youngpeople@ltmuseum.co.uk)



# Boston Manor House: creating pathways into heritage



## Summary

In 2018, Boston Manor House launched the National Lottery Heritage Fund renovation project, Boston Manor: *Engaging the 21st Century*. This included a skills programme offering paid pathways into the heritage sector through university placements, internships and London Transport Museum Young Freelancer briefs. Over three years, we supported 16 young people (YP) in establishing themselves in the sector.

## Background

Boston Manor House, in Brentford, was built in 1623. It was subject to a major refurbishment from 2018-2023, which included provision for a skills programme aimed at YP aged 16-25, Global Majority audiences and people with lived experience of disability.

## Challenge

The programme sought to support people in developing a range of skills in running and managing a heritage site and address the lack of paid entry-level opportunities in the sector. The industry often relies on unpaid work placements and volunteering, which can further contribute to inequalities.

## Approach

The opportunities paid at least London Living Wage. We fostered career development opportunities through CPD, networking opportunities and mentoring, as well as a dedicated pastoral support staff member.

## Intended outcomes

- People will learn about and develop skills in heritage;
- More people and a wider range of people will engage with heritage;
- People will have an enjoyable experience.

## Intended outputs

Between 2018-2023 we would deliver:

- Minimum of two Young Freelancer briefs per London Transport Museum programme cohort;
- One apprenticeship in building restoration and heritage site management during the construction period, and two Business Administration/Customer Service apprenticeships;

- Three to four university student placements between 550-hours and 1200-hours;
- Three 10-week internships of 15-hours per week.

## Obstacles and issues

The capital project overran hence the House reopening was delayed, which meant we had to delay or adapt opportunities that required an open site. All internships happened together at the tail end of the project, stretching the Volunteer Manager's workload. The different opportunities could not be staggered to provide further development routes. We ultimately ran out of time to recruit the Business Administration/Customer Service apprenticeships due to further delays with internal funding approval.



“We are more actively seeking funding and different ways to further research and engage with the themes of colonialism and power dynamics, which became clearer during the programme.”

The Council recruitment process created barriers for prospective applicants, thus we changed the internship application to make it shorter and more inclusive. The internships were open to YP and we worked with Council colleagues to enable applicants from the following groups – YP with experience of Care; not in education, employment or training; with experience of Youth Offending services; who are disabled and/or neurodiverse; with learning disabilities/special educational needs. We could not offer the internships exclusively to these groups, and as we had 82 applicants the recruitment was very competitive. Only a very small number of the supported local YP applied, and none were appointed to the role.

## Actual outcomes

- People developed skills in heritage, from Public Programming to Digital Marketing, Exhibitions, Visitor Experience and Learning & Engagement.
- We provided 16 opportunities for Young People, including Global Majority audiences and neurodiverse people.
- People had an enjoyable experience.
- Seven YP gained employment in the sector. The five interns and last placement student and Young Freelancer are finishing in April 2025, so we do not have data for them yet.

## Actual outputs

- One apprenticeship in building restoration and heritage site management.
- Three Young Freelancer briefs in 2022/23 and three in 2024/25.
- Three university student placements of 550-hours between 2022-2023, and a shorter one of 288-hours.
- Three 10-week internships at 36-hours per week, one at 28.8-hours per week and one at 18-hours per week.

## Lessons learned

After some placements and Young Freelancers feedback that working without peers was challenging, we now ensure there are at least two YP working together. We also offer more frequent and structured 121s to balance creative freedom and developmental support.

We will allow longer lead in times for recruitment and be more strategic with timings.

We are more actively seeking funding and different ways to further research and engage with the themes of colonialism and power dynamics, which became clearer during the programme. The Volunteer Manager completed a Trauma Informed Practice course that we would like to roll out to the team.

We will work more closely with Council teams to better support specific groups of local YP to apply

before opportunities go live. We are looking at tailored roles and becoming a host for DFN Project SEARCH supported internships.

## Next steps

Post-project we are using evidence of demand for these opportunities and benefits they bring to make a strong case to the Council, as well as seek additional external funding, to continue this work.

Two YP developed our Youth Forum, which is aimed at people aged 16-25 and will be launched later in the year. Once governance at Boston Manor House changes, this work will lead to recruiting two Young Trustees.

## Find out more

**Anna Somner**  
Historic Houses Volunteer Manager  
anna.somner@hounslow.gov.uk

**John Collins**  
Historic Houses Senior Manager  
john.collins@hounslow.gov.uk



# Young Curators: Arts Award and Work Experience at RWA Gallery



### Summary

The RWA's Arts Award & Work Experience project is for young people with additional needs, working together to curate a public exhibition.

### Background

Previous individual placements at RWA gallery had no targeted outcomes or structure. Staff struggled to find appropriate tasks and the young people didn't find it satisfying or meaningful. It didn't address core issues of diversity and inclusion.

### Challenge

Students face inequalities in accessing work placements, within the wider challenge of the lack of diversity in the sector. Teaching staff at pupil referral units and special schools told us that their students don't get supportive placements for work experience elsewhere.

### Approach

Young people (who are disabled, neurodivergent, have SEN, are eligible for free school meals or have barriers to learning) are invited to apply to work at RWA as they would for a real job. The selected cohort, one student from each school, work together – with the RWA team – to create their own exhibition using paintings from the RWA Collection. Alongside this, they work towards Bronze Arts Award which includes skills sharing, reviewing another arts event and creating an Arts Award portfolio. The project is tailored to suit the learning needs



of the individual participants; one student this year did her exhibition labels by doing audio recordings.

### Intended outcomes

Young people learn to work together and with staff, increasing confidence, self-esteem and motivation. We aim to give them a level of autonomy whilst supporting their learning needs.

### Intended outputs

The group put on a public exhibition, run a participatory workshop for younger children and complete sketchbooks for Bronze Arts Award.

“The selected cohort, one student from each school, work together – with the RWA team – to create their own exhibition using paintings from the RWA Collection.”

### Obstacles and issues

After the success of the project with cohort A, we increased the 8 places available to 12 for cohort B. Having 12 young people, all with varying SEN, was too big a group. With cohort C the learning needs were greater, so we limited it to 6.

Behaviour is sometimes a real issue. We encountered two safeguarding issues that required substantial interventions (one student ran away, one made a disclosure).

To fit all the work into one week, there was a lot of additional work for the Head of Learning at RWA and the Arts Award Assessor. Holding a group with so many different requirements is intense, and those leading the programme need support from the wider staff team.

### Actual outcomes

We sometimes take a bit of a battering with behaviour, but we show the young people that we do not give up on them. They all worked in teams with people they didn't know (both staff and other students). They all grew in confidence, they all felt proud or happy with what they achieved. Teachers, parents and friends praised their work at the final celebration.

### Actual outputs

They learn to work with staff in Exhibitions, Marketing, Learning, Front of House and Finance as well as with a freelance artist. They choose their own theme, co-curate and hang their public exhibition, create their own interpretation and put on an opening event. They make the event page on the website and an Instagram post to share their exhibition with a wide audience. Every student who attended the RWA Arts Award and W-Ex programme has attained Bronze Arts Award.

### Lessons learned

We learned that even when giving the young people responsibility and opportunity, some could not manage their behaviour. We learned that by sticking with the students, they would stick with us. One young person with ADHD who only attends her PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) in the mornings wanted to attend full



days at RWA which was hard for her and the group. We learned to involve the schools/PRUs as much as possible to get enough support for the students during the project. We learned to prepare staff and volunteers (even those not involved at all) for what might happen with difficult behaviour and language or going offsite without permission. This helped us worry less about the impact on the public in the gallery.

### Next steps

We show the young people what is possible for them following their work experience project, including how to submit entries to our Annual Open Exhibition, and how to become an RWA Volunteer (over 18s). Our Work Placements for over 18s run specifically for art students at SGS College. They join us for a 40-hour placement over 5 months. The students work to a live brief, so that what is produced by them can be used by the Learning Team with their regular groups. This year the art students created Sensory Stories to go with the sculptures in RWA Handling Collection.

### Find out more

Through this work, we are tackling the barriers students face in accessing work placements. One head teacher said this programme gave the students an opportunity to “experience real life situations in a safe and controlled way, a new environment and access to arts.”

- Work experience can support organisations to nurture their future talent pool and develop skills of the next generation of cultural leaders ([especially with the demise of arts and culture on curriculum](#))
- Working class creatives and the barriers they face are discussed in [Create London report](#)
- [Arts Award](#) can support Learning offers at galleries and museums. RWA is bringing Arts Award Discover into one of our other programmes.

[helen.jacobs@rwa.org.uk](mailto:helen.jacobs@rwa.org.uk)



# Young Producers: Opportunities for Young People within English Heritage



### Summary

English Heritage delivers a pathway of engagement for young people looking to get involved in heritage through two entry points; the Youth Associate scheme and Young Producers programme.

The Youth Associates scheme is a lighter-touch engagement point; we share opportunities, events and career insights with interested young people aged 16–25 on a monthly basis. Young people have consistently requested more careers-focused information, which we recognise as a priority.

The Young Producer programme supports 25 young people interested in heritage through an inclusive, hybrid and bespoke programme of activity, tailored to their interests and needs.



### Background

In 2016, the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) launched a £10m investment to make heritage relevant to the lives of young people aged 11–25. Shout Out Loud, English Heritage’s national youth engagement programme, was one of several projects created through the Kick the Dust funding from NLHF.

Central to English Heritage’s national youth engagement work, Young Producers (YPs) are volunteers aged 18–25 who steer Youth Engagement activities and participate in projects across the organisation, online and in-person. Young Producers support the embedding of youth voice in the charity by participating in core activities and holding governance positions including the Blue Plaques Panel, and the Acquisitions, Loans and Disposals Committee.

### Challenge

English Heritage’s aim as a charity is to encourage communities and the wider public to connect with their sites and the heritage around them.

Historically, the heritage sector has found the 18–25 year age range more challenging to connect with than younger audiences who might encounter sites as part of a school visit or trip with family/carers. English Heritage wanted to develop a programme which offered skills and confidence building opportunities, as well as a chance for young people to lead projects based on their own interests and needs.

Large heritage and arts institutions can sometimes seem inaccessible to young people, and the Young Producer programme aims to challenge this by enabling insights to be shared directly from the young people. The authenticity of their input acts as a powerful catalyst for organisational development, while the group members develop skills and a deeper understanding of the sector.

### Approach

The Young Producers programme recognises that many young people want to volunteer; however, work, study, caring responsibilities or access needs can make more ‘traditional’ in-person routes impractical. A hybrid model, with regular chances to get together in-person and on-site, supplements monthly online project meetings. This means Young



Producers benefit from a needs-based, low-pressure opportunity to gain skills and experiences while building their own network and having fun.

Subsequently, the programme appeals to a much wider demographic with project-based opportunities that can complement their needs and interests.

### Intended outcomes

The programme aims to remove barriers to participation, build skills and confidence and create opportunities for young people.

### Intended outputs

Our Young Producers have been involved in creative projects, developing interpretation, research, retail strategy, audience development, events, recruitment and much more.

### Obstacles and issues

An ongoing challenge is improving the recruitment of Young Producer, ensuring the opportunity reaches the young people who are traditionally underserved. We want the cohort to represent a broad range of experiences from across the country and focus on removing barriers to participation.



“Young Producers benefit from a needs-based, low-pressure opportunity to gain skills and experiences while building their own network and having fun.”

### Actual outcomes

Applications from young people that represent a wide variety of experiences from across the country are beginning to be received in greater numbers. This supports a greater diversity of voices and perspectives across English Heritage, with Young Producers taking part in consultation activities, holding governance roles, supporting organisational recruitment and developing creative projects.

### Actual outputs

Young Producers have also been involved in the creation of outward-facing, career related resources, including a YouTube series, A Job in History, which aimed to raise awareness of the wide variety of roles in heritage.

After two years, Young Producers progress from the programme into the Alumni group, reporting significant personal and professional development as a result of their engagement. Young Producers have gone on to secure jobs in organisations including local museums, the Tate, The National Trust, The National Archives, Historic England and English Heritage.

### Lessons learned

- How to bring together a diverse group of young people and cater to their varied needs and interests.
- Creating a friendly, safe and supportive network which promotes learning, skills development and career progression.
- Implementation of effective youth voice in governance positions and advocacy for further opportunities.
- How to meaningfully centre youth voice in a large institution.

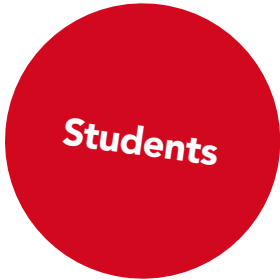
### Next steps

The Young Producers programme will continue to offer young people extraordinary opportunities, including on-site creative programming, research relating to their own personal interests and training in areas relating to project work.

**Find out more**  
[shoutoutloud.org.uk](https://shoutoutloud.org.uk)



# Supporting Career Pathways at a University-based Art Museum



### Summary

Lancaster Arts delivers a variety of initiatives designed to support students to develop understanding of career pathways as well as relevant skills and experience to get into creative careers, including in museums.

### Background

We work with contemporary practitioners across a range of art forms supported by Arts Council England (ACE). We are part of Lancaster University and engage audiences with the university art collection as well as contemporary exhibitions at the Peter Scott Gallery, an Accredited museum.



### Challenge

As a professional cultural organisation within a university, making a contribution to students' employability and understanding of career pathways is one of the distinctive contributions we can make. As an ACE National Portfolio Organisation, we have a commitment to giving more opportunities to people to start a professional career in the creative industries, and contributing to the cultural ecology of the North West.

### Approach

We have offered a menu of opportunities to meet the needs of students, including paid marketing

placements, bursary placements designed to offer bridges to professional practice for graduating students, collections-based residencies, live brief projects, volunteering and student involvement in governance.

### Intended outcomes

- Students and recent graduates develop understanding of the breadth of potential career pathways in cultural sector including museums and gain skills and relevant practical experience through engaging with a professional cultural organisation in a range of ways.
- Lancaster Arts benefit from a range of lived experience perspectives and insights, as well as increased capacity.
- Audiences are able to enjoy museum interpretation and online content incorporating a wider range of voices.

“Lancaster Arts benefit from a range of lived experience perspectives and insights, as well as increased capacity.”



### Intended outputs

- A variety of formal placements meeting different needs;
- Live brief projects/opportunities to engage with professional contexts;
- Opportunities to volunteer or become involved in governance.

### Obstacles and issues

Ensuring the opportunities were structured to work alongside participants' other commitments was challenging, particularly in terms of bursary placements aimed at students who had recently graduated and might be juggling the placement with other paid employment. For those graduating, a placement over the summer months often made most logistical sense, but from the organisational perspective this was often a quieter time in terms of public programme.

In some cases, Lancaster Arts' positioning within the university felt like an obstacle rather than a benefit as students were keen to gain experience outside the university.

### Actual outcomes

- Several placement participants have gone on to paid professional employment within the sector in the region and beyond.
- Live-brief projects and sessions led by Lancaster Arts staff have been incorporated into more courses/modules.



- Programme participants benefitted from opportunities to grow their networks in ways that benefitted future employability.
- Lancaster arts have benefited from a wider range of voices and insights in shaping our work.
- Students gained confidence in their abilities and took pride in what they achieved:

*'I've learnt that a mistake is not the end of the world. I've learned how to give my 101% and be proud of that, and I've learnt to see the positive side on everything and always strive for the best. My experience at LA will certainly give a boost to my CV, but it has, more importantly boosted my confidence as a person and as an art marketer.'*

*'I was immensely proud to see my ideas come to life and my curatorial texts to be printed on interpretation panels. [...] This experience definitely helped me gain more self-confidence and relevant experience. It became the step I needed from my academic experience to the actual work in the gallery.'*

### Actual outputs

- Interpretation created by placement participants/residency students has been incorporated into redisplay and exhibitions;
- Students have created new work and developed projects responding to the Peter Scott Gallery collection.



### Lessons learned

The diversity of approaches helped students understand the variety of ways in which museums might offer employment, for example through artist residencies and commissions as well as more traditional museum roles.

It felt important to recognise that students interested in cultural and heritage careers might come from a variety of subject pathways, so we extended the range of courses.

### Next steps

We continue to reshape our offer based on each year's evaluation, and in response to changing needs. The university we are part of is currently undergoing a process of curriculum transformation and this is offering opportunities for us to contribute our professional sector expertise in terms of shaping new curriculum content alongside academic colleagues.

### Find out more

[www.lancasterarts.org](http://www.lancasterarts.org)

### Blogs written by programme participants giving an insight into their experiences:

[lancasterarts.org/ideas/from-volunteering-to-marketing-assistant](http://lancasterarts.org/ideas/from-volunteering-to-marketing-assistant)

[lancasterarts.org/ideas/let-the-rivers-flow](http://lancasterarts.org/ideas/let-the-rivers-flow)  
[miranda@lancasterarts.org](mailto:miranda@lancasterarts.org)



# Your Heritage Your Future: Nuura's Heritage Journey



Your Heritage Your Future (YHYF) has been a life-changing experience for Nuura, enabling her to gain confidence, develop new skills and discover passions she never imagined. Through hands-on experience at her local museum, Nuura has uncovered personal strengths and opportunities that have set her on a path she once thought impossible.

**Discovering a New World**  
Before joining the YHYF Heritage Traineeship Programme, a partnership youth engagement project between YMCA Leicestershire and Norfolk Museum Service, Nuura had little knowledge or interest in museums, history, or heritage. Living at YMCA Leicestershire for 13 months she was initially unsure about the project but decided to give it a try, thinking, "What else was I going to do?" To her surprise, she thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Over the six-month paid traineeship, Nuura's daily activities varied greatly, from visiting different museums to assisting with

events and meeting new people. She found particular joy in working with the Museum Education Team, who organised school holiday clubs for children. "I love working with kids," Nuura shared, emphasising how interacting with others positively impacted her mental health.

**Support and Growth**  
Starting her traineeship and entering the unfamiliar environment of a museum was daunting for Nuura, she received tremendous support from both the Museum Manager and her YMCA keyworker. The YHYF



project, designed to support young people unfamiliar with museums and heritage work, provided a nurturing environment where Nuura felt welcomed and valued. "Staff were brilliant and made me feel like a part of the museum family," she said. "After just a few weeks, they became proper colleagues"

One of the project's highlights was planning a final event, which required Nuura to apply her newfound skills. She chose to research and deliver a presentation on Medieval food, collaborating with a Medieval chef, historian and re-enactment actor. This project involved significant effort, including conducting research, managing risk assessments, budgeting and event planning. The event attracted many members of the public, leaving Nuura feeling proud and accomplished. "It definitely grew my confidence and enabled me to move on and seek new opportunities," she reflected.

**Beyond the Museum**  
The confidence Nuura gained during her traineeship motivated her to join the "Get on Board: How to Be a Young Trustee" scheme, an opportunity for YMCA residents across the UK to train to become Youth Trustees. Her museum work and YHYF experience equipped her with skills that proved invaluable in addressing residents' daily lives.

Nuura also appreciated the projects' emphasis on understanding trauma in the workplace. Museum staff received

“Nuura’s journey with YHYF exemplifies the transformative power of inclusive programs that provide opportunities to marginalised young people. From building confidence and gaining skills to fostering a sense of belonging, YHYF opened doors to a brighter future for Nuura and showcased the potential for museums to engage and empower diverse communities.”

Trauma Informed Environment training to better support vulnerable individuals, which Nuura described as "a no-brainer, if you are going to employ vulnerable people." This understanding created a safe and inclusive environment, allowing her to thrive and feel respected.

**A Lasting Impact**  
A particularly enriching aspect of YHYF was the Youth Heritage Forum, young people from across the East of England and East Midlands connected through YHYF. The forum broadened Nuura's horizons and provided a sense of community. She expressed great disappointment when The Heritage Lottery Fund unexpectedly discontinued its funding and support for the project. "There are so many young people in supported accommodation who have never been to a museum and won't get the opportunity," she lamented. "Because they might not stay in education, they won't get the chance to have a career in a museum."

Reflecting on her journey, Nuura feels fortunate to have been part of YHYF. It not only introduced her to a new world of museums but also showed her that museums can be inclusive spaces where people like her can contribute and even instigate change. "I loved my Traineeship," she said. "I made friends at the museum and saw how it is possible for people like me to be part of the culture of museums, maybe even change them!"

**Conclusion**  
Your Heritage, Your Future sought to promote youth voice and generate organisational change within the heritage sector. Through paid placements, skills development and progression opportunities for young people, including those with complex needs, the project aimed to diversify the museum workforce and transform how museums engage with everyone.

Nuura's journey with YHYF exemplifies the transformative power of inclusive programs that provide opportunities to marginalised young people. From building confidence and gaining skills to fostering a sense of belonging, YHYF opened doors to a brighter future for Nuura and showcased the potential for museums to engage and empower diverse communities.

**Find out more**  
Additional resources:  
<https://youtu.be/9Trzmc4MiXE?list=PLH367sHHu4NcuMriuNQC5C-u2sK0Dv0p>



# Careers for All



### Summary

Careers for All is a programme run by Leeds Museums and Galleries, designed to help bridge the gap between learning in school to earning in the workplace.

The project was originally funded for two years through the Eranda Rothschild foundation. It is presently funded by UKSPF funding (shared prosperity funding). This funding will change in 2025 to be part Arts Council England, part The Mildred Fund.

Careers for All has one dedicated, 4 day a week post, however many staff from a wide range of departments partake in and support the programme.

### Background

The primary target audience for Careers for All is teenagers and young adults with SEND. This audience is reached through specialist provision schools, colleges and charity organisations.

### Challenge

In 2018, the government identified that the number of young people with a learning disability who are in sustained employment is at 6% yet there is the potential for 70% to be in employment (those who wish to be in employment).

### Approach

Careers for All was built from the ground up in 2019 through recruitment of a Learning and



Access Officer who consulted with local college and school teachers to build a programme that suited their learners. It also used SEND Gatsby Benchmarks as prompts to connect the programme to what schools and colleges were aiming to achieve.

### Intended outcomes

Provide a range of careers experiences and help potential future talent grow their confidence and skills in the workplace.

### Intended outputs

- Work experience
- Careers fairs
- Outreach workshops
- Career taster days

### Obstacles and issues

Not all the work experiences were successful, in particular earlier ones. Two students early in the programme needed a lot of preparation to feel safe and comfortable. How we approached this was developed over time. The second barrier we had was inconsistency to work experience due to necessary medical needs for the student and how we could support this. Finally, on occasion, parents of the student could become anxious around their child's ability to work, and some did not want their children to as they would lose benefits.



### Actual outcomes

Since the programme started in 2019 to the end of the academic year 2024, we have supported 60 young adults over long term programmes, and 15 of whom have made positive progressions into education, further training, or employment with arts and culture or beyond. A further 9 are now LMG staff or volunteers. We have facilitated over 820 hours of work experience and engaged 3560 young adults through day-long engagements.

### Actual outputs

An additional unexpected outcome was the changes Careers for All brought to our organisations Developmental Work Plan, training and recruitment methods. Our access into employment, including how we interview, has changed as a direct response to anecdotes from Careers for All students and the inaccessible processes they go through. This practice was also more widely noticed by Leeds City Council who have included practice we have learnt in training documents to all council managers.

The programme adapted in 2020 and 2021 during Covid lockdowns. This included the introduction of digital work experience, which remains part of our programme to this day due to the accessibility it has for some individuals over meeting on site.



“ Since the programme started in 2019 to the end of the academic year 2024, we have supported 60 young adults over long term programmes, and 15 of whom have made positive progressions into education, further training, or employment with arts and culture or beyond.

### Lessons learned

- A greater understanding of a range of needs in the workplace and adjustments required.
- We need to continuously look at how we advertise job roles and recruit staff, to ensure an unbiased and fair process.
- When organising work experience for people with SEND be sure to have a long lead in time with familiarisation days and visual guides to lower anxiety.

### Next steps

Careers for All will be a test bed for the new sensory GLO (Generic Learning Outcome) which are being developed by Sam Bowen and GEM.

We are delivering a 3-year programme at Leeds Art Gallery exploring the feelings of 'belonging' within art settings.

Leeds Museums and Galleries hosted the first annual Access in Museums Conference involving partners from across the industry who are experts in access and inclusion.

### Find out more

#### Local authority information on Learning Disability in Employment

[gov.uk/government/publications/people-with-learning-disabilities-in-england/chapter-2-employment#:~:text=in%202017%20to%202018%2C%206,%25\)%20than%20women%20\(5.2%25\)](https://gov.uk/government/publications/people-with-learning-disabilities-in-england/chapter-2-employment#:~:text=in%202017%20to%202018%2C%206,%25)%20than%20women%20(5.2%25))

#### SEND Gatsby Benchmark toolkit

[https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/2020-08/1051\\_send\\_gatsby\\_toolkit\\_refresh\\_digital.pdf](https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/2020-08/1051_send_gatsby_toolkit_refresh_digital.pdf)

#### Careers for All Toolkit and contact for Careers for All

[museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk/pQYjvIG/learn/careers-for-all](https://museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk/pQYjvIG/learn/careers-for-all)

#### Garden work Experience (YouTube film)

[youtube.com/watch?v=YKevyB8RN-Y0&list=PLm0WvS2XqHfGi99cwapQpXYEhVmM2GSDC](https://youtube.com/watch?v=YKevyB8RN-Y0&list=PLm0WvS2XqHfGi99cwapQpXYEhVmM2GSDC)



# Emerging Talent Placements



### Summary

Historic England’s Emerging Talent Placements Programme provides qualitative short-term 8-12-week work experience placements to young people aged 16-30 from underrepresented groups.

### Background

This is an important factor in opening up careers in the heritage sector to audiences that are currently underrepresented in the workforce. This programme is in line with the actions of our commitment to Inclusion, Diversity and Equality and our model for skills and employability in the sector.

### Challenge

Younger people, people from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds, people with disabilities and people who are disadvantaged by their social and/or economic background or circumstances are currently underrepresented in the workforce.

### Approach

Our placements provide young adults aged 16-30 from known underrepresented backgrounds – those from areas of high deprivation, disabled people and people from ethnic minority communities – with practical, work-based training opportunities within Historic England and other heritage organisations. These placements offer a critical pathway into heritage careers, helping to build a larger workforce that also better reflects and serves our diverse communities.

### Intended outcomes

- To provide safe and qualitative work experience to young people;
- To provide supportive training and skills development for young people enabling them to develop workplace skills;
- To maintain Historic England’s core missions and values;
- To aid in the future resilience, interest and encouragement for young people to the sector.

### Intended outputs

8-12 week Emerging Talent Placements.

Step Up Placements – A Step Up Placement is a six-month, paid work-based placement, targeted at those people who have been on one of our

Emerging Talent summer placements and provides them with a “step up” into a career in the heritage sector.

### Obstacles and issues

We worked with partners including the Social Mobility Foundation, Scope, Blueprint for All, Babbasa and Leonard Cheshire to offer trainee placements to young people who are receiving their support and who are registered on their various employability programmes. Our partners do not cover all the areas we work in, so we have spent a lot of time working to find local partners to work with. Many of the local partnerships are small organisations with a handful of staff and volunteers so this takes time, but it enables us to reach young people at a local level.



“This placement has given me a hands-on experience of what it is to be in this line of work and for that it has made me realise what it is I want to do further along my path in life. It has taught me many skills from leadership to event planning and the importance of heritage and the preservation of it that I know will be a key point along my journey.”

### Actual outcomes

- Of those who took part in 2024, 91% are interested in a career in heritage and 83% are more interested in a career in heritage than they were before the trainee placement.
- Of those who took part, 100% would recommend Historic England’s Emerging Talent Placement Programme to other people.

We asked the young people what impact the placement had on them in terms of their development.

*“This placement has given me a hands-on experience of what it is to be in this line of work and for that it has made me realise what it is I want to do further along my path in life. It has*

*taught me many skills from leadership to event planning and the importance of heritage and the preservation of it that I know will be a key point along my journey.”*

### Actual outputs

- In the last 3 years, we have provided 46 Emerging Talent Trainee Placements.
- 4 people have gone on to six-month Step Up placements.
- 4 trainee placements successfully applied for roles with Historic England.
- 2 trainee placements have become Young Advisers for Historic England.

### Lessons learned

Every year we ask our Emerging Talent Placements and their managers to complete a survey to understand how beneficial they have found the placement, and if they think any improvements could be made. We use this feedback to make improvements to the following years programme. A few of the improvements we have made include:

- Providing clearer placement descriptions so the placement better understands the role they will be doing.
- Providing more opportunities for the placements to engage with one another so they can share their experience, and it makes it less daunting for them.
- Creating a shorter induction specifically for the placements so their time is not taken up completing the long induction for new starters.

### Next steps

We hope to continue to increase the number of Step Up opportunities for those who have been on our Emerging Talent Programme. Our Step Up placements are paid training roles, based with a Historic England team for 6 months – they are specifically targeted for people who have undertaken one of our Emerging Talent Placements over the summer, either this year, or in a previous year. In 2024 We had 2 Step Up placement opportunities. In 2025, we plan to host five Step Up Placements, providing participants with vital, hands-on experience in the heritage sector.

### Find out more

[historicengland.org.uk/about/what-we-do/the-rules-we-follow/inclusion-diversity-equality](https://historicengland.org.uk/about/what-we-do/the-rules-we-follow/inclusion-diversity-equality)  
[historicengland.org.uk/education/training-skills/work-based-training/emerging-talent-placements](https://historicengland.org.uk/education/training-skills/work-based-training/emerging-talent-placements)



# About GEM

**GEM, the Group for Education in Museums, has been helping anyone who delivers learning in museums to connect and learn together for over 75 years. GEM is an Arts Council Investment Principles Support Organisation. We support sector colleagues in a variety of ways, including training courses, mentoring, publications like the GEM Case Studies, and other professional development opportunities.**

GEM's **VISION** is of a connected and equipped community of people enabling learning across museum, heritage and cultural settings, creating inspiring experiences, relevant for everyone; that promote equality – transform and enrich lives.

Our **MISSION** is to support and empower our community of colleagues to connect and develop their knowledge and skills to deliver learning.

GEM membership is available for individuals and institutions, with discounts available for students, volunteers, job-seekers and small sector organisations.

You can find out more about the benefits of joining GEM here:

**[www.gem.org.uk/join](http://www.gem.org.uk/join)**



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**A large print version is available on request. Please contact the GEM office.**

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