

Final group of museums announced for Museum Futures, creating entry level routes into the sector

Press images: <https://bit.ly/3fbPxxY>

A British Museum initiative to invest in a diverse generation of museum professionals has announced the third and final cohort of partner museums for 2021 across the UK. **Museum Futures**, a three-year programme supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and managed by the British Museum, gives 18–24-year olds from a range of backgrounds the opportunity to receive year-long paid training. This training enables applicants without degrees or prior museum experience to pursue a career in the museum and heritage sector that might have otherwise been unattainable.

Focusing on digital skills, trainees receive on-the-job training at UK partner museums, and also work towards a Level 3 diploma in Cultural Heritage to boost their learning throughout the year. Trainees further benefit from support of a trained mentor working within the sector, monthly training sessions at the partner museums and experience working on digital skills-based projects related to museum collections.

Partner museums participating in Museum Futures 2021 are: Museum of East Anglian Life, South West Heritage Trust, Fitzwilliam Museum: University of Cambridge Museums, National Football Museum, The Atkinson, Museum of Cardiff, Culture Perth and Kinross and the British Museum.

Currently in its second year of a three-year programme, Museum Futures will benefit a total of 25 trainees by its end in 2021. Successful projects from 2019 ranged from 3D imaging and projections at York Museums Trust, editing the official podcast at the British Museum to launching a new software to help digitally preserve archives in Somerset. Current 2020 trainees have proven very resilient, continuing to work during museum closures throughout the country. Projects have been adapted during lockdown, ranging from developing an interactive timeline to display important events in Bristol's history using open source technology to creating an online tutorial allowing museum collections to be viewed in Augmented Reality on a smartphone, and collecting local COVID-19 mementos to document this time across the UK.

Taster days (in-person or virtual) will be held at each venue this autumn allowing prospective trainees a relaxed and informal insight into the traineeship and the varied job roles available in the museums. Applications for each partner museum will open on 15 September 2020 on the [Museum Futures website](#).

The British Museum will work with partners to establish target audiences for recruitment based on their staff diversity profile and their local communities. Candidates without formal qualifications, those that live in the local area to one of the host museums (rural or urban areas depending on the venue), lacking any previous museum experience and those who are underrepresented in the museum sector (for example, candidates who are Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME), from lower

socio-economic backgrounds and/or disabled candidates) are particularly encouraged to apply. Trainees will be recruited locally by their host museum, with each role description and project bespoke to that partner museum. Museum Futures Trainees for 2021 will begin placements in January.

Naomi Salinas-Burton, Museum Futures Programme Manager, said: “Museum Futures is more crucial for young people than ever with the continuing uncertainty in the job market at this time. The paid scheme not only provides transferable skills and a qualification to participants, but also gives full support, with many trainees going on to secure employment within the heritage sector. This also demonstrates the tangible benefits a trainee can bring to museums, from fresh perspectives to inherent digital knowledge and innovative ideas.”

Caroline Ingram, Trainee at Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum said: “The experience of being a trainee during COVID-19 has been rather surreal, and I look forward to seeing the ‘new normal’ that the museum re-opening brings. After closing to the public, the team immediately went into action, launching the Virtual Museum to offer online resources, exhibitions, and activities for all ages. I have produced lots of content for the Virtual Museum, including an online tutorial for Augmented Reality, showing how to use a smartphone to bring 3D models from the Museum’s collections into your own home. I am very grateful of the support received through National Programmes, Museum Futures Team and all the staff at The Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum.”

Alexis Milinkovich, Trainee at Birmingham Museums Trust said: “My main project is to digitise Birmingham Museums’ collection of Pre-Raphaelite artworks, including private sketchbooks of Edward Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and I feel incredibly privileged to share access to this collection. The website enables access to high-quality, out of copyright images, free of charge. Given that people can’t currently visit the museums, it is a great way to share and experience the collection. Working with volunteers from different backgrounds and ages is a joy and reminds me why museums are such important places.”

Rowan Law, Trainee at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery said: “Due to COVID-19, my role has changed massively from when I was working at the Museum. Currently work is split into content creation (either solo projects or assisting the curatorial team) and social media management. We’ve gotten very positive feedback about our online presence and it has been heart-warming to read and respond to the comments we’ve received from the local community. I’d like to shout out the Museum Futures network – a big thank you to the Programme Manager for motivating and supporting us through this weird and unforeseeable turn of events and also to my fellow trainees for being kind, relatable and generally awesome.”

Director Hartwig Fischer said: ‘Engaging with young people around the UK remains a cornerstone for the British Museum’s National Programme and an important way of encouraging diversity in the Museum sector. The Museum Futures training programme, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, also continues to support the current cohort of nine trainees based both at the British Museum and at museums around the country. These young people have shown amazing resilience in the face of the physical closure of their host venues.’

Stuart McLeod, Area Director London & South, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “Thanks to National Lottery players, this programme is giving young

people the skills and opportunity they otherwise may not have had to pursue careers in the heritage sector. As well as benefitting the trainees, the programme so far has also proved to be incredibly valuable for museums across the UK in gaining new ideas, fresh perspectives and a future workforce that better represents the diverse communities they serve.”

Notes to Editors:

For more information about Museum Futures placements visit

<https://www.museumfutures.co.uk/>

For more on what the trainees have been working on over lockdown visit

<https://blog.britishmuseum.org/museums-from-home-across-the-uk/>

#MuseumFutures

Museums participating in Museum Futures 2021 are:

The Atkinson

Culture Perth and Kinross

Museum of Cardiff

Museum of East Anglian Life

National Football Museum

South West Heritage Trust

The Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge Museums

The British Museum

Museums currently participating in Museum Futures 2020 are:

Birmingham Museums Trust

Bristol Culture/ South West Museum Development

Derby Museums

Hastings Museum & Art Gallery

Horniman Museum and Gardens

Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum

Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery

Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums

The British Museum

Museums that participated in Museum Futures 2019:

Garden Museum

Museum of East Anglian Life

National Museums Liverpool

Norfolk Museums Service

Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

South West Heritage Trust

York Museums Trust

The British Museum

The British Museum's National Programmes

The British Museum has a national presence, working with hundreds of partner organisations across the UK each year through its wide-ranging National Programmes activity. This includes single-object Spotlight Loan tours, touring exhibitions, Partnership Galleries, as well as both short-term and long-term loans, with the lead support of the Dorset Foundation in memory of Harry M Weinreb. In 2019/20, over 2,800 objects were loaned to 105 venues in the UK,

reaching 10 million people outside London. National Programmes also facilitates knowledge exchange programmes and trainee schemes to help young people to break into the museum profession. The Museum will continue to develop partnerships across the UK as part of its commitment to sharing the collection as widely as possible.

About The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **Inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK's heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future.

www.heritagefund.org.uk.

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Further information

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High resolution images and caption sheet available at <https://bit.ly/3fbPxvY>