



## Cultural Ambition: Diversifying the heritage workforce through collaboration, opportunity and skills

### FAQs

#### Background

##### 1. What is Cultural Ambition?

Cultural Ambition is funded project, run by Creative & Cultural Skills, which aims to support young people through training placements in the cultural heritage sector. Linking strongly with the Fusion: Creating Opportunities through Culture programme and the Andrews report *Culture and Poverty*, trainees will primarily come from communities experiencing economic disadvantage.

##### 2. How did Creative & Cultural Skills become the Provider for Cultural Ambition?

Creative & Cultural Skills compiled and completed the application for the National Lottery Heritage Fund's *Skills for the Future* funding. The project is also match-funded by the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of Welsh Government

##### 3. What does Cultural Ambition hope to achieve?

The project will create 33 12-month training placements across Wales over a four-year period.

##### 4. How does Cultural Ambition help young people?

Cultural Ambition supports young people through helping them to access this new training opportunity which will lead to a qualification, as well as employability and progression support.

## **5. How long will the programme last?**

Cultural Ambition will run until June 2022, and there will be 4 cohorts of trainees in this time.

## **6. How will Cultural Ambition help the sector?**

Lead partners in the project noted particular areas of skills shortage where they feel that this project will be able to make a difference. Those included:

- Welsh language in the workplace
- Front of house skills
- Business support skills
- Digital skills and social media

The project would also address other issues identified by partners:-

- Lack of workforce diversity within organisations or particular venues
- Need to offer an entry-route into other training/employment opportunities such as apprenticeships
- Better stability in the workforce by ensuring qualification levels are relevant to jobs

## **7. What happens after 2022?**

Currently, there is no plan for the project to continue following 2022. However, if it appears necessary to find continuation funding for this work, then this will happen towards the end of 2021.

## **8. How is this sustainable over the long term?**

Off the back of this project, a new generation of young people will have the relevant skills and qualifications to apply for entry level jobs in the cultural heritage workforce. There will exist a network of local and national venues who have collaborated on a tried and tested qualification for the sector, and who have the potential to continue to deliver the qualification with local partners. Participating organisations will review their own recruitment processes and work placement opportunities in order to plan for a more diverse and representative workforce. The cultural heritage sites will have a strong link with the DWP and Communities for Work in order to support with other programmes and increase young people's

aspiration to work in the sector. The project will also establish models of local/national partnership across Wales with training providers to support future work placement programmes.

**9. You say the cultural heritage sector has a skills shortage. What evidence do you have that there is a skills shortage?**

There are numerous research papers available which state that there are areas of skills shortage in the sector. In addition, a specific piece of research work was carried out at the start of the application process which identified key areas of threat to the sector, such as: ageing workforce; limited/no funding; few entry-level opportunities for young people to gain work in the sector.

**2. Eligibility**

**1. Who is eligible to apply for a Cultural Ambition training placement?**

Potential trainees should be aged 18-24 and non-graduates who are not in education, employment or training.

**2. Is the hosting opportunity only for larger organisations?**

No – we have a variety of cultural heritage sites involved in the project, from sites that are part of a larger umbrella organisation to council run sites and smaller, independent sites. Each cultural heritage site offers up its own challenges and rewards, and we want to expose the trainees to as many different types of cultural heritage sites as possible.

**3. How will young people access Cultural Ambition? Do they have to be on Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)?**

Promotion is taking place across Wales through Careers Wales, Communities for Work, Fusion Coordinators and other community anchor organisations. Young people do not need to be in receipt of benefits.

**4. Why is Cultural Ambition just for young people aged 18-24?**

The project is targeted at 18-24 year olds as this links in with the Communities for Work remit which is to reduce the number of 16-24 year olds who are not in employment, education or training. We raised the minimum age to 18 so the

trainees can experience a broader range of tasks at the venues, and so there won't be any restrictions on what the trainees can do at the venues due to their age.

**5. Will young people have to prove they are unemployed? If they are not claiming benefits, how can they prove this?**

We are happy to take the word of the applicants that they are unemployed. However the trainees will need to be available for 30 hours a week in order to receive the bursary and complete the traineeship.

**3. Funding**

**1. How do young people receive their bursary?**

The bursary of £800 is paid on a monthly basis by Creative & Cultural Skills, who administer the project finances.

**2. Do the young people have to be employed by the host?**

The young people do not need to be employed by the host and will not be classed as employees of the venues in which they are placed. They will be registered as students with Cardiff and Vale College for the duration of the traineeship.

**3. Will hosts be encouraged or incentivised to keep the person employed after the programme comes to an end?**

There will be no financial incentive for the hosts to employ the young people, and we cannot guarantee a job at the end of the traineeship. However, we would ask that hosts encourage and support their trainees to think about what they can do following their placement (e.g, further study, apprenticeships, employment).

**4. Can a host organisation be involved in more than one training placement?**

Yes, a host can be involved in all four cohorts, and can have more than one trainee per cohort. The Project Coordinator will support will the planning of this.

## **4. Opportunities**

### **1. How will Cultural Ambition work during the Covid-19 pandemic?**

The Cultural Ambition project has been completely revised to work using virtual placements instead of physical placements. The qualification can largely be achieved in this way. Trainees will still join a cultural heritage organisation and be mentored by staff from that site. Trainees will still be involved in the work that the sites produce. Most of this content is now online, with events and activities taking place in a virtual space rather than a physical one. Trainees can still be involved in planning and delivering activities, as well as being included in the day-to-day running of the sites. This will all be done virtually, from home, which is how everyone is working at the moment. Once sites start to re-open there is scope for the trainees to attend the sites in person and complete any aspects of the qualification that need to be done in this way. The college assessor will hold weekly Teams sessions with trainees, and all qualification work is uploaded onto OneFile and can be reviewed by the assessor there.

### **2. When will the opportunities for young people start?**

The fourth cohort of trainees will start in June 2021 and finish in April 2022.

### **3. What is the qualification?**

Trainees will be working towards an NVQ Level 2 in Cultural Heritage. The units that the trainees will complete as part of the qualification will cover areas such as health and safety, customer service, marketing, learning activities and identity and cultural diversity.

### **4. How will Creative & Cultural Skills ensure that digital poverty does not become a barrier to someone applying for or undertaking the project?**

All interviews will be done through video-call software such as Zoom, Skype or Teams. If any applicants do not have access to a computer or a reliable internet connection, then we will make sure that the applicant can get access to a computer at their local job centre or library. All successful applicants who are invited to join the project will be given a laptop in order to undertake their virtual placements and

complete their qualification work. If anyone struggles with accessing the internet, Creative & Cultural Skills can also help with this.

#### **5. How will Creative & Cultural Skills ensure that the host sites will not unfairly exploit young people?**

Staff from the host organisations that will be spending the most time with the learners have been given training in what is involved in mentoring a trainee in their place of work, and how best to support a young person on a work-based learning qualification such as ours. The host organisations fully understand that the trainees will be students and not employees, and as such should not be given the level of responsibility that would be given to a full time member of staff. The trainees will not be covering for full time members of staff who are absent for any reason. Cardiff and Vale College and the Project Coordinator will be in constant contact with the venues and the trainees to make sure that both are happy and that the placement is working well.

#### **6. What if someone leaves their placement early?**

If a young person leaves their placement early then their bursary payments will stop, they are unlikely to complete the qualification and therefore will not receive their completion payment.

#### **7. Can a host organisation specify in the advert that they are looking for someone with a certain set of skills and experience?**

The main criteria for young people is that they are 18-24, non-graduates and NEET. Other than that, we ask that they demonstrate why they want this placement. Hosts have the option to specify whether or not the young person should be a Welsh speaker.