



## **The Cultural Heritage Blueprint – a workforce development plan for cultural heritage sector in the UK**

**Museum and gallery update**

**March 2012**

## Introduction

In 2008 the Museums Association (MA) worked in partnership with Creative and Cultural Skills (CCSkills) to produce the *Cultural Heritage Blueprint: a workforce development plan for the cultural heritage sector*. This work was overseen by the Cultural Heritage Skills Advisory Panel, which was made up of senior professionals working across the cultural heritage sector. The aim of the Blueprint was to establish the key workforce development challenges facing the sector and set out a range of recommended actions to tackle them.

In the years since the Blueprint was first published the operating environment for museums and galleries has changed dramatically, which has had an impact on all areas of the sector's work, including workforce development. So it is timely to review the progress that has been made since the document was published, and to revisit and reshape the recommendations in light of the current needs of the sector.

The aims of work are to:

- update the Blueprint to reflect the current challenges facing the museum and gallery workforce in the UK
- ensure that it sets out a range of recommendations for museums and sector bodies to consider in order to address these challenges.

This is also a critical time for CCSkills as they have been invited by the Skills Funding Agency to submit a business plan to extend the National Skills Academy (NSA) for Creative & Cultural to cultural heritage. It is hoped that some of the recommendations in this update will help inform and shape the NSA's work in the area of cultural heritage.

The original document encompassed the whole cultural heritage sector as defined by CCSkills; this update is focused on the museums and galleries sector.

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### **The cultural heritage sector in general:**

The cultural heritage industry covers museums, built heritage, archaeology, conservation and membership organisations. According to figures collected by CCSkills in 2011 it contributes £6.8 million to the UK economy and employs a workforce of 53,790 across the UK in organisations that are mainly non-profit and play a key role in the tourism economy.

28% of the workforce is in London; 92% are white and 51% are aged over 40. Cultural heritage is the legacy of past generations preserved and shared with today's society and future generations. It helps us to understand how society has evolved and contributes to shaping the future. It is broad, encompassing historic buildings, landscapes and collections – from towns, cities and rural spaces in the UK, to collections from across the world. It stretches beyond the tangible to languages, customs and practices. Cultural heritage is owned and held in trust on behalf of the public. The public are central to defining what constitutes the UK's cultural heritage by the value that they place on it.

The sector's unique role has ensured its position as a key driver for regeneration. It supports the development of cohesive communities and contributes to shaping the cultural identity of specific places. The sector comprises all those who collect, preserve, study and communicate the past, present and future in order to develop and promote understanding and curiosity. It consists of a variety of organisations, institutions, sector bodies and individuals. They operate at a national level across the UK, for devolved nations or at a regional and grassroots level. A core part of the sector is publicly funded.<sup>1</sup>

### **Museums and galleries specifically**

There are an estimated 2,500 museums in the UK and approximately 1,800 of those are accredited to an industry standard. There are a number of different types of museums:

- **National museums** are established and funded by central government through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). There are currently 54 national museums in the UK.
- **Local authority museums** are owned and run by town, parish, borough, city, or county councils and other local authority bodies. They generally house collections that reflect local history and heritage.
- **University museums** are owned and managed by universities and their collections often relate to specific areas of academic interest.
- **Independent museums** are owned by registered charities and other independent bodies or trusts. They are not funded directly by the state but may receive support through government programmes such as Renaissance in the Regions.
- **Regimental museums and armouries** collate and preserve Britain's military heritage and are often managed by the armed services.<sup>2</sup>

Museums are funded in a range of different ways including: public funding through central or local government, charitable donations, funds from grant giving bodies and private trusts, income from

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<sup>1</sup> The Qualifications Blueprint for the Creative Industries, CCSkills (May 2011)

<sup>2</sup> Museums Association

entry fees and income from commercial operations such as shops and cafes. Museums are also looking into new funding streams such as commissioning of services for local authorities.

The key role of museums is to collect, care for and share knowledge about material that reflects the rich history of the UK and the wider world. Museums bring collections and the stories they hold to life to provide opportunities for enjoyment and learning. The sector has evolved over time from primarily preserving collections for current and future users to using and sharing collections and related stories to engage with current issues and social agendas, acting as an agent of social change.

### **The current museum and gallery workforce in the UK**

The sector's workforce is comprised of both paid and voluntary staff, full-time, part-time, seasonal staff and those on short term contracts. The workforce is predominantly white, with a small majority of female workers. The workforce is highly qualified, in many cases to degree or masters level. Career development and mobility in the sector are limited due to the small number of job vacancies available. This also makes entry into the sector difficult and low pay is an issue for many.

The number of volunteers working in the sector is increasing and will likely continue to in the future. The government emphasis on community engagement in service delivery is likely to bring more volunteers into museums. The number of paid staff is decreasing as result of the economic downturn and reductions in museum funding.

### **Recent progress towards workforce development**

In the last few years there has been significant progress around workforce development in the museum and gallery sector. This has been brought about by the substantial investment in the sector and the need to equip museums with a rapidly changing range of skills. There has also been a considerable amount of work to raise the profile of workforce development by sector bodies, in particular the MA and CCSkills. Work has been done across a range of workforce development issues, including: initiatives to address diversity, leadership and sector specific skills; creation of new entry routes through apprenticeships and traineeships; and extensive programmes of training and development of accompanying resources (see following chapters for examples).

As a result there is a far better understanding of workforce development needs. However the sector cannot afford to be complacent - there is still a long way to go. In many organisations workforce development still isn't seen as a core activity. It needs to be properly embedded in organisational development.

### **The UK museum and gallery operating climate**

The environment that museums are operating in has changed significantly and the next decade is going to be very different for the sector. In addition to public sector cuts, museums will also be affected by the general financial downturn which will have a knock-on effect on their ability to generate income.

The political climate that museums are operating in has also changed and museums are now working to different agendas. The Westminster government's emphasis on the Big Society and the drive for community involvement in the delivery of local services will have an impact on museums, both in the way they are run and the services they deliver. This is coupled with a growing emphasis on co-curation, community engagement and the need to develop partnerships to deliver work. Many museums have a good track record in working closely with their communities, so this should be an opportunity for them and not a challenge.

The support structures for museums have changed recently too. In England, responsibilities for museums have moved to the Arts Council England (ACE). In Scotland, a new development body for museums has been created through the evolution of Museums Galleries Scotland. There are also museum strategies or policies in place across the UK (see appendix 2 for details).

As already mentioned, the biggest change affecting museums in the next few years will be reduced funding. The impact of cuts is likely to affect the museum sector in many ways, including reduction in staffing, opening hours and services to the public. There will also be closures of sites. Reductions in funding will also be a driver for developing new funding models and a greater emphasis on philanthropy.

Reductions in staff and funding are likely to have a big impact on workforce development. Increased workloads will mean that people have less time to dedicate to developing their skills and knowledge, and squeezed budgets are likely to mean museums have less money to spend on developing their workforce. There will be fewer paid jobs available, so entering the workforce will be more difficult. The climate that museums will be operating in will also have an impact on the knowledge and skills that are needed. The loss of staff means the potential loss of skills and knowledge. As the number of paid staff is reduced, the number of volunteers working in the sector is likely to increase.

England has seen the dismantling of regional Renaissance structures, and significant changes in the funding available through the programme. There will no longer be regional Renaissance teams which in the past delivered the majority of initiatives that supported workforce development. A much smaller number of museums will receive major grant funding, and it is as yet unclear what form their leadership role will take in relation to workforce development. Other Renaissance funding streams could provide money for the development of targeted workforce development initiatives.

There will still be some funding for museums, Renaissance will continue in some form for at least the next few years and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) now has more money to distribute to the heritage sector, although this is primarily for capital investment. HLF is in the process of carrying out a review of its work and it will be announcing its new priorities in early 2013. Hopefully these will include a continued focus on workforce development.

The needs of museum visitors are changing, particularly the ways in which they access and interact with museums and collections. Museums must make sure they can meet these changing demands.

**Challenges for the museum sector workforce:**

When the first Cultural Heritage Blueprint was published in 2008 it identified the following as key challenges for the sector:

1. Remove restrictive entry barriers into the sector
2. Diversify the workforce
3. Commit to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff
4. Improve leadership and management
5. Develop business, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills
6. Develop sector-specific skills.

With a few minor amendments these remain the key workforce development challenges for museums. However whereas entry and diversity were perhaps prioritised when the document was first published, it is the need to strengthen leadership, management and skills associated with building up a business that now require the greatest focus in the current operating environment.

The key challenges now are:

1. Strengthen leadership and management
2. Develop business, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills
3. Open up entry to the sector and diversify the workforce
4. Commit to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff
5. Develop sector-specific skills

## 1. Strengthen leadership and management

Having strong leadership and good management is central to the success of any organisation, but in the challenging environment that museums are now operating in it is particularly vital. Strong leadership is needed not only to steer museums through the difficult times ahead, but to inspire the innovation and creativity needed to thrive.

***We will renew our commitment to leadership development, exploring what constitutes excellent, honest, courageous and adaptive leadership*** Arts Council England<sup>3</sup>

### Key issues

Compared to other sectors, museums have invested a lot in leadership development. But it remains a key area for ongoing investment. It is also essential that leadership development doesn't just happen at senior levels, but that the next generation is nurtured from an early stage. Development of the leadership skills of trustees and governing bodies also needs to take place.

Much of the focus of leadership development has been on the individual, but now this may need to shift to a focus on organisational leadership.

Even though the sector has been involved in a lot of leadership training, the opportunities available can often be costly or time consuming, putting them beyond the reach of many. This will likely be even more of an issue in the future. More flexible approaches to leadership development need to be created.

Good management skills are essential if museums are to thrive. However, many people find themselves in management positions without any formal training, so there is a definite skills need here. While a lot of people have trained in specific areas of management in response to particular needs, for example project management, they often do not address the whole range of skills needed. People and financial management skills are particularly lacking and this can have serious implications for staff and organisational development.

### Progress to date

In recent years this area has received significant investment, resulting in the delivery of a range of development opportunities for museums. These include:

- The Clore Leadership programme offering a year-long Fellowship programme and two-week courses.
- The Cultural Leadership programme, which ran from 2005-2010, provided a huge number of leadership development opportunities for the arts and creative industries. It also produced resources and publications to support leadership development.\*

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<sup>3</sup> Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: great museums and libraries for everyone, Arts Council England (2010)

- Independent leadership programmes for museums such as the University of East Anglia Museum Leaders Programme.\*
- A range of regional leadership and management programmes established through Renaissance funding. The Museums, Libraries and Archive Council (MLA) also established its own leadership programme.\*
- National and regional training programmes that included management-related topics.
- The MA's Associateship of the Museums Association (AMA), which was updated in 2009 to reflect the need for the development of good management skills.

*\*These programmes are no longer operating.*

## **Future challenges**

As organisations suffer increasingly uncertain futures, strong leadership will be vital, and with it a clear vision and purpose for an organisation. It will be particularly important for boards of trustees and governing bodies to have the necessary leadership skills to steer organisations through difficult business and operational decision-making.

Museums will need to work smarter. They will be developing new business models (see next chapter), delivering new services to their users and generally finding ways of doing more with less. In this environment it is essential that good management structures and skills are in place to deliver these.

The need for good staff management skills will be even more important. As staff are asked to take on new responsibilities and potentially heavier workloads they will need strong support and nurturing from managers. Skills in managing volunteers will also be very important as the volunteer workforce increases.

## **Recommendations**

- Strategic bodies and funders should prioritise activities and initiatives that support the development of leadership skills.
- The requirement of Arts Council England (ACE) major grants recipients to provide collective leadership of the sector and be role models is welcomed; it is essential that this produces tangible outcomes for other museums to develop management and leadership skills.
- Leadership programmes should be run in collaboration with the wider arts and creative industries so that museums can share and learn from other sectors; working with SMEs and the third sector would also bring in new skills and perspectives.
- Boards and governing bodies must to be supported to develop leadership skills.
- High quality online information and resources should be developed to support leadership development.

- Valuable resources created through existing or previous programmes, such as the Cultural Leadership programme, must be retained and made available in the future.
- The skills needed to manage volunteers should be prioritised and existing best practice around volunteer engagement should be shared widely.
- The need for management skills should be better reflected in existing sector qualifications, and there should be better signposting for generic management training.
  - Mentoring and peer support are key tools for developing leadership and management skills; organisations and individuals should be encouraged to work with the wider arts and third sector in this area.

## 2. Develop business, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills

More than any other area, museums need to focus on the development of sustainable and creative business models with diverse funding streams. Having a workforce equipped with the knowledge and skills to do this is essential.

### Key issues and challenges

The economic downturn is having a big impact on traditional museum business models. Museums that previously relied heavily on public funding are being significantly affected by the reform of local authority funding structures and resulting cuts. Those museums less reliant on local authority funding (independent, university and military museums) are also affected by the general downturn and reductions in endowments and private investment.

Over the last few years a significant number of museums in England have received funding through the Renaissance programme. This is now changing, instead of supporting nearly 50 core museums; only 16 museum partnerships will receive significant strategic funding. There will be opportunities for previous Hub museums to draw on Renaissance funding but it will be less than they received before.

Museums can no longer rely so heavily on investment of public funds; they need to strengthen existing business models or develop new models that draw on more diverse sources of funding. Museums need to be innovative in their approach; they must have a good understanding of their local communities so that their offer is relevant, engaging and meets each community's needs. Museums will increasingly need to work in broader partnerships, both with other museums and arts organisations but also with businesses and other third sector organisations. There are opportunities for museums to engage with local authority agendas and commissioning in a wide range of services such as learning, health and wellbeing and social care.

It is likely that a number of museums that are currently funded by local authorities may move to trust status. This will require training around business development and governance.

As reduced funding is likely to be a reality for some time, museums need to find ways of doing more with less: fewer staff and fewer resources.

In order for museums to develop into financially sustainable organisations running on viable business models, they need a workforce with the knowledge and skills to do this. This is one area where there hasn't been significant investment in recruitment, training and development, and so much of the workforce lacks the necessary business and financial skills. In most cases, the motivation for working in museums is to work with collections and audiences, and as such this has been the focus of training. This problem can be exacerbated as the sector often recruits from within, drawing on existing staff who often do not bring with them strong business skills. This can be a particular problem for smaller museums where low numbers of staff must take on very diverse roles.

Museums need skills around financial management, business development, income generation and marketing. To support income generation, museums need to develop knowledge and skills relating to philanthropy. As well as developing the necessary financial and entrepreneurial skills to ensure a sustainable business, museums also need to develop strong advocacy skills so they can make their case to funders, key stakeholders and local communities.

Together with training up existing staff in these skills, museums must bring in new talent and knowledge from outside the sector to provide much needed fresh ideas and perspectives.

### **Progress to date**

Museums and sector bodies have increasingly recognised the imperative to address this area of development. Actions have included:

- A number of regional networks have established programmes to support museums to improve and diversify their business models and develop their offer for the communities they serve. These have included the Survive and Thrive programme in the South East and Effective Museums in the East of England.
- The MA ran a pilot Smarter Museums programme with 10 museums to develop new and more inclusive working practices to help strengthen and make organisations more sustainable.\*
- In 2011 DCMS, HLF and ACE launched the Catalyst fund which aims to help organisations develop new funding approaches, particularly endowments. The fund aims to support museums to develop fundraising skills and gain practical experience in this area.

*\*These programmes are no longer operating.*

### **Key recommendations for future action**

- Museums must fully engage with schemes like Catalyst to gain the support and knowledge needed to fundraise effectively.
  - Ensure the learning from schemes like Catalyst is shared widely across the sector to support all museums.
- ACE major grant recipients and national museums should link with other museums to address these areas of skills and knowledge; independent museums have a strong track record in this area and mechanisms should be found for them to share their experiences.
- Ensure the learning from pilot projects that are currently addressing organisational development is shared across the sector.
- Sector qualifications should include some elements of business and financial management.
- Museums should develop mechanisms to learn from SMEs and third sector organisations; this could include developing specific partnerships to deliver services, short secondments or shadowing opportunities.

- It is essential to develop skills around community engagement, participation and co-production; the creation of tailored training in these skills would be beneficial.
- Guidance on new business models and approaches should be developed, particularly relating to moving to trust status and local authority commissioning; this should complement and not duplicate existing resources.<sup>4</sup>
- Mission Models Money has established a peer network in this area; this could be supported and potentially replicated or extended across the sector.
- This area should continue to be a key focus for museum development officers and Renaissance funded museum development in general.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> For example: The opportunity of devolution for museums, libraries and archives, MLA (2010); Local government improvement resources: Improving Strategic Commissioning in the Culture and Sport Sector, IDEA (2010)

### 3. Open up entry to the sector and diversify the workforce

In order for museums and galleries to successfully deliver the range and quality of services required by their users, and to ensure they are relevant, innovative and resilient, they must have the right workforce. The sector needs to continue bringing in fresh talent, skills and perspectives. To be truly open and inclusive, museums need a diverse workforce that reflects the communities they serve. Issues around opening up entry and creating a more diverse workforce are interlinked and difficult to separate.

***We will act as a steadfast champion of diversity across the arts, museums and libraries, focusing in particular on creating equal opportunities to enter these workforces. Arts Council England<sup>5</sup>***

#### Key issues

Gaining work in museums and galleries is not easy, there are few entry routes and many of those available do not support the development of a diverse workforce.

The workforce is highly qualified; half of those working in the sector are educated to degree level or higher. In many cases employers have moved away from providing training for those entering the sector, relying on higher education providers to do this. There is a potential surplus of graduates wanting to enter the sector. This has a number of implications for the workforce; relying too much on degrees as a means of shortlisting can often lead to people being overqualified for the jobs available and the focus on academic qualifications also means that transferable skills are not adequately recognised. The cost of this type of training can be a barrier, putting entry to the sector beyond the reach of many and exacerbating the lack of diversity. The introduction of tuition fees is likely to increase this problem.

Volunteering plays a critical role in the sector. In addition to academic qualifications many employers expect entrants to have some form of work experience, usually gained through volunteering and unpaid internships, which again contributes to the lack of diversity. The quality of internships and volunteering opportunities can vary as there is no nationally recognised sector standard or guidance in this area.

There needs to be more on-the-job training opportunities and vocational qualifications for new entrants, such as apprenticeships and traineeships.

Despite the lack of diversity in the museum workforce being a well-recognised issue, and some excellent initiatives to address this (see below), this is an area that still requires leadership, commitment and focused attention. Much of the work on diversity in recent years has centred on ethnicity; however this is changing to include all aspects of diversity. The need to address socio-economic diversity, which is very much linked to all other areas of diversity, is seen as particularly important.

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<sup>5</sup> Culture, Knowledge and Understanding: great museums and libraries for everyone, ACE (2011)

Creating new entry routes - especially those that are work-based - are essential to opening up and diversifying the sector. But to attract the widest pool of people the sector needs to do work to improve its image and communicate better the range of jobs that are on offer. It must ensure there is good career advice and provide engaging opportunities for young people when they are making career choices.

### **Progress to date**

There is still significant work to be done to open up entry and create a diverse workforce, but there has been progress in recent years. This includes:

1. New entry routes have been opened up through apprenticeships, traineeships and other vocational qualifications:

- Over 900 people have undertaken Creative Apprenticeships, with many in museums and galleries across the UK, and many of those funded by Renaissance.
- HLF has invested £10 million in 10 schemes in the heritage sector offering training bursaries.
- HLF has also invested £17 million in the Skills for the Future Programme providing places for over 800 traineeships across the heritage sector.
- Investment through Renaissance has supported the development of new qualifications including Foundation Degrees and NVQ's.
- Partnerships have been created between employers and higher education providers to create accredited work-based learning opportunities.
- Museums supported the Future Jobs Fund to provide work experience opportunities and bring new people into the workforce.\*
- 130 people have undertaken traineeships through the MA's Diversify Scheme.\*

2. Updating of the National Occupational Standards for Cultural Heritage

- The NOS for Cultural Heritage have been updated.

3. Schemes such as the MA's Diversify programme have begun to have an impact on the make-up of the sector:

- Between 1993 and 2008 the proportion of minority ethnic people working in UK museums has trebled.<sup>6</sup>

4. Providing opportunities for young people to engage in the sector, and access to careers advice for those seeking a job in the museum sector

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<sup>6</sup> The ethnic diversity of the museum workforce, Museums Association (2010)

- The Find Your Talent scheme was set up to provide high quality cultural experiences. It offered children and young people regular involvement with arts and culture and helped them develop new skills and get work experience in the creative industries.\*
- The Creative Choices website provides information on the range of jobs in the sector including case studies, entry routes and job descriptions.

*\*These programmes are no longer operating.*

## **Ongoing challenges**

As a result of the economic downturn and public sector cuts, the museum workforce is shrinking. There are growing numbers of redundancies and vacant posts are not being filled. There are fewer job opportunities and entering the sector will be even harder than before. New entrants will be competing with more experienced staff who have lost their jobs.

As paid posts decline the number of internships and voluntary work placements are increasing; a high proportion of job opportunities currently being advertised are unpaid internships. The era of Big Society and community engagement in service provision will also lead to more volunteers entering the sector. While increased numbers of volunteers may provide an opportunity to bring in a more diverse pool of people, there is a greater need to ensure opportunities provide meaningful training and are not exploitative. Good practice guidance around recruitment and training is essential. There is also potential for legal challenges to unpaid internships so there needs to be clarity and guidance on this.

The introduction of tuition fees could have a big impact on entry routes. People may be less inclined to undertake postgraduate training after the costs of a first degree. This may help to ease the surplus of graduates, and it may also increase the need for employers to provide their own in-house training for new entrants. If this is the case, employers will need to engage more with further and higher education providers for the support needed to offer accredited training in-house.

However if the need for academic qualifications isn't reduced in the face of increased fees then the implications for the diversity of the sector will be very significant.

Apprenticeships are proving to be a success, but they do not cover a wide enough range of jobs available in the sector.

There is much work to be done on workforce diversity. Fundamentally the principles have not yet been sufficiently embedded in museums thinking and management.

## **Recommendations for future action:**

**Key action:** The NSA has real potential to support new opportunities for people to enter and train for work in the sector. Sector bodies and museums and galleries must actively engage with the NSA

to ensure the needs of the sector are reflected in their work and maximise the opportunities available.

Other recommendations:

- Create more employer-led work-based entry training opportunities such as apprenticeships and internships.
  - Continue to use Creative Apprenticeships to bring in new entrants.
  - Using the updated National Occupational Standards (NOS) to develop Creative Apprenticeships for a wider range of jobs in the museum and gallery sector such as collections management, education and outreach.
  - Develop best practice guidance for internships and volunteering to ensure that they provide valuable training opportunities and are not exploitative.
- Museums should be forming partnerships with further and higher education providers to accredit work-based training; CCSkills should provide guidance on how to do this.
- Ensure there is good career advice for those wanting to enter the sector.
  - Continue to develop online resources such as Creative Choices and develop the 'Get into museums' section.
  - Investigate running events to stimulate interest from a wide range of people in working in museums and galleries.
- Continue to champion the need for a diverse workforce; ensure that it is understood by those in senior positions and reflected in organisational development plans.
- Reform and improve recruitment practices in order to recruit a more diverse workforce.
- The emphasis on workforce diversity in the criteria for ACE major grant recipients is welcome; ACE must see this through and ensure it is a priority for all those it funds.

## **4. Commit to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff**

Having a highly skilled, motivated workforce is essential for running a successful organisation. Continuous development of the workforce is required to ensure museums have the skills needed to deliver ongoing and future services.

### **Key issues**

Despite the fact that the development of staff is essential for the sector, it is often undervalued and underinvested in. Training is often done in an ad hoc or reactive manner and not part of a planned personal or organisational programme of development. There is a lack of long-term career planning and short term development to complete specific projects tends to be prioritised. This problem is exacerbated by a lack of clear structured career pathways to help guide people in their CPD.

Development is often seen in terms of formal training opportunities or qualifications. Development through more informal approaches, such as mentoring, coaching or networking isn't always valued as highly. As a result it can be difficult for people to justify engaging in these types of development activities even though they are often the most beneficial.

Underinvestment in staff development can mean that while it is easy to recruit to entry level posts, there are problems recruiting to mid-level and management jobs, as staff do not have the required skills and experience.

### **Progress to date**

There has been much work in the museum and gallery sector in the last few years to support the development of the skills and knowledge of the workforce. These have included:

#### **1. Increased provision of training**

- The single biggest impact of recent funding in the sector has been the roll out across the UK of a substantial amount of training on a wide range of topics from generic skills and knowledge to those that are museum and gallery specific. In England a significant proportion of Renaissance funding for workforce development was channelled into regional training provision. The MA, sector bodies from the devolved nations, and regional federations also provided training opportunities. Much of the training has been offered free of charge or at low cost.

#### **2. Development of skills sharing schemes**

- A number of skills sharing schemes have been established in recent years, providing a mechanism for encouraging mutual support between organisations. Those offering some kind of formal staffed co-ordination have been most successful to date, but online schemes are emerging.

#### **3. Development of existing CPD schemes for the sector**

- The AMA, the MA's CPD scheme was reviewed and redeveloped in 2009 to better reflect the key areas of knowledge and skills required to work in the sector.

#### 4. The development and support of networks

- A number of networks have been created or further developed to support colleagues to share and develop their knowledge and skills. These range from the Subject Specialist Networks for collections related issues, to leadership networks set up through initiatives like the Cultural Leadership Programme. A large number of regional networks have also been established.

#### **Ongoing challenges**

There is an increasing need to continuously develop staff as they are being asked to take on much wider roles and responsibilities, and often ones they have no previous experience of doing. This may either be due to colleagues being made redundant or as a result of museums and galleries extending the range of services they offer to their communities. But this increased need comes at a time of shrinking budgets and less to spend on travel and training. When staff are pressed for time CPD may be seen as a luxury and not a necessity.

With fewer job opportunities, more people may get stuck in their current job, especially those in mid-career. So there is a strong need for secondments and job exchanges. Energetic and enthusiastic staff are vital to ensuring the public gets the best possible service from museums.

There are issues around the potential lack of development opportunities. In England the regional Renaissance structures that provided extensive free or low cost training has been dismantled and it is not yet known how the new structures for Renaissance might deliver training opportunities. Training providers such as the MA have also largely ceased to offer training. The extent and the quality of training opportunities may differ depending on the region or nation.

Low cost, locally run training is likely to become commonplace, perhaps in some form of social enterprise or skills sharing approach. Some regional museum federations already provide training opportunities. However there is no central place to go to for information about training opportunities, so some staff may be missing out on what is available. If museums are unable to fund travel for development activities, then online provision and opportunities need to be developed to address this.

As the number of freelancers grow, it is important to ensure there are some tailored opportunities or support available for them.

#### **Recommended actions:**

- The provision of online training and development resources and opportunities should be improved.

- A large number of resources have been developed in the last few years; they must be retained and shared across the sector.
- A central point or digital platform should be created to signpost these developmental resources.
- The use of online networking and social media as a way of developing and sharing skills and knowledge needs to be improved.
- Museums should form partnerships with FE and HE providers to develop accredited work-based training; CCSkills should provide guidance on how to do this.
- A museum training database listing courses and training should be developed and available online.
- Consideration should be given to the creation of a scheme to support the development of mid-career individuals who have potential and leadership qualities but might not have the opportunity to progress.
- Organisations and individuals should support schemes that encourage the sharing of skills and knowledge; museums should offer support for the development and provision of local training opportunities, through offering rooms free of charge for this purpose, allowing staff to contribute to training sessions etc.
- Funders should be encouraged to include a demonstrable commitment to staff development as a requirement for successful applicants.
- The updated Museum Accreditation scheme reflects the need for organisational commitment to staff development; museums must be supported (through Museum Mentors) to implement this and demonstrate they are fulfilling this requirement.

## 5. Develop sector-specific skills

Rich and diverse collections make museums what they are. Knowledge and skills are essential to allow us to uncover the stories of these objects and bring them to life so they can be engaging, inspiring and entertaining for audiences. The sector needs skills and knowledge to empower communities to engage more actively in museums and to create more meaningful opportunities for participation and co-creation.

### Key issues

While there has been significant investment in the development of sector specific skills and knowledge, this remains an area at risk. There are a number of reasons why this is the case. Entry level training has become much more focused on 'generalist' museum skills at the expense of specific subject areas. Once in employment the demands on people's time can leave little opportunity to concentrate on developing and enhancing sector specific skills and knowledge.

The focus in recent years on increasing visitor numbers, particularly school visits, has potentially meant that education and learning skills have been prioritised more than traditional curatorial skills. In addition to this, museums aren't always sure where they can go to find the specialist skills and knowledge they need to develop. This type of knowledge and skills are often developed in an informal and ad hoc way.

Retention of knowledge is a key issue for museums. Good succession planning is essential if museums are to be able to retain the knowledge and skills of staff when they leave.

Thanks to the recent investment in museums a large number of resources have been developed to support the development and sharing of museum specific skills and knowledge. However they are spread across numerous locations and can be hard to find. There is no central point of reference to guide people to these resources.

Sector specific skills are not just about caring for and understanding collections; as museums have evolved so have the skills they need. Museums increasingly need skills related to co-production and participation, using and engaging with collections, reviewing and developing collections, and creating more sustainable museums. They need to keep pace with new ways of communicating, particularly online and through social media.

### Progress to date

There has been significant investment in recent years in initiatives that support the development of museum specific skills and knowledge, including:

- Renaissance invested nearly £600,000 in Subject Specialist Networks to develop those already in existence and support the creation of new networks. There are now 40 active networks.

- Collections and other museum specific topics have featured strongly in the recent extensive provision of training workshops across the UK.
- HLF's training bursaries and Skills for the Future programmes are all designed to support the development of sector specific skills and knowledge.
- Through their partnership programmes national museums have been sharing specialist knowledge and skills with colleagues in other museums.
- The MA has run the successful Monument Fellowship programme aimed at addressing issues around succession planning. The scheme has supported collections staff to capture and share their knowledge once they have retired.
- The MA's AMA scheme has been amended to reflect the need to develop specialist skills.

### **Ongoing challenges**

Collections-related skills and knowledge are particularly vulnerable at a time when cuts are being made. It can result in the deletion of some collections-specialist posts, with post holders leaving museums earlier than expected through redundancy or early retirement and not being replaced by a successor.

It is these specialist roles in particular where the loss of knowledge and skills is hard to replace. The knowledge is not always easy to retain when so much is tied up with the subject knowledge and passion of the individual. Succession planning and retention of collections-related knowledge and skills will continue to be a major issue for museums.

An additional factor is that in recent years many staff have been appointed on short-term contracts, which means they have not had time to build up extensive knowledge and skills about a particular collection before leaving. This trend in short-term project working is likely to continue.

Specialist knowledge and skills relating to certain collections, particularly industrial heritage collections, is held by volunteers who have previously been employed in these industries. Many of these volunteers are leaving due to age and they cannot always be replaced because there are simply no potential new volunteers with experience of the industries or technologies represented in these collections. These changes, which are not all related to cuts, mean that museums are likely to have less in-house knowledge in future.

Many of the skills needs now relate to using collections better and enabling others to use them in more meaningful ways: co-production, participation, community engagement.

### **Recommendations for future actions**

- Strategic bodies should be encouraged to continue to invest in the development of sector specific skills and knowledge.
- Subject Specialists Networks need to have a more strategic role in developing and sharing specialist skills and knowledge.
- Basic training in specialist collections must continue.

- The Heritage Lottery Fund should continue to fund programmes that focus on the development of sector specific skills.
- Lessons from existing succession planning initiatives should be shared widely across the sector to inform and encourage others
- Museums should communicate better the collections-related support they can offer to others, such as through dedicated web pages; national museums have a key role to play in this area.
- Research should be undertaken to identify the specialist skills that are in short supply or at risk, and a set of recommendations should be developed.
- The sector should work with higher and further education providers to look at the development of new qualifications that reflect the skills needs around co-production, participation, community engagement; this could be an area for the NSA to address.

## Appendix 1

### Potential priority areas for skills development for the museum and gallery workforce<sup>7</sup>

- Business and financial planning
- Leadership
- Organisational and strategic development
- Management
- Fundraising
- Advocacy skills
- Marketing
- Use of technology, digital skills and social media
- Volunteer development – recruitment, training and management
- Developing partnerships
- Co-creation and participation
- Community engagement
- Basic collection and curatorial skills
- Collection reviews

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<sup>7</sup> This is not comprehensive or definitive, but it has been developed by drawing on the findings of number of recent pieces of research and consultation. The list has been developed using the following:

- Review of the AMA, Museums Association (2009)
- South East Museums Survey (2010)
- The findings of the Building Connections Workforce development conference ( July 2011)
- Renaissance Workforce Development Forum round table discussion (November 2011)
- Key Findings of Workforce Development: Developing New Talent workshop held by Renaissance South West (February 2012)
- Responses to the MA's limited consultation on the Cultural Heritage Blueprint update (February 2012)

## Appendix 2: – Current strategic priorities of museum and gallery bodies in the UK

### CyMAL: Museums Strategy for Wales

- **Museums for Everyone** - museums will contribute to living communities, promote the values of a fair and just society and provide lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- **A Collection for the Nation** - museums will hold, care for and continue to develop collections for the nation which represent our rich and diverse culture.
- **Working Effectively** - museums will manage their sites, operations, collections and people more effectively to continue providing services for citizens that are relevant, robust and sustainable.

### Arts Council England:

#### **Culture, knowledge and understanding: great museums and libraries for everyone**

At the heart of the framework are five 10-year goals, the substance of which have been adapted to reflect the needs and priorities for museums and libraries and sit alongside our existing goals for the arts. Long-term goals:

- Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in museums and libraries
- Goal 2: More people experience and are inspired by museums and libraries
- Goal 3: Museums and libraries are sustainable, resilient and innovative
- Goal 4: The leadership and workforce in museums and libraries are diverse and highly skilled.
- Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of museums and libraries.

**Northern Ireland Museums Policy:** The vision for Northern Ireland's museums is:

#### **A coordinated and sustainable museum sector that**

- develops, preserves and interprets its collections to the highest possible standards
- delivers quality services that inspire, educate and engage local, national and international visitors and users
- harnesses its strengths and diversity to support economic, social and cultural development in Northern Ireland and a shared and better future

Informing this vision and all corresponding strategic priorities are underlying principles and themes which will guide and enhance planning and delivery. They are:

- Quality, Professionalism, Creativity and Innovation
- A Shared and Better Future
- Partnership
- Sustainability

A strategy for museums in Scotland will be published by Museums Galleries Scotland on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012.