

Sheffield Museums Trust: Inclusivity and Representation in Schools Activities

Consultancy Brief

Context

During the summer, like many museums, we released a Black Lives Matter statement that outlined our commitment to anti-racist action. We acknowledged that many of Sheffield's historic collections are rooted in British colonial history and while we cannot undo the injustice inherent in our colonial past, we can speak honestly and openly about it. Our colonial past must be recognised and addressed. We have a responsibility to shine a light on the uncomfortable truths and unacceptable ideologies inherent in the city's collections, and to make every facet of our past visible. We need to look at our schools programme in this context and consider what to do differently and better, and how?

There are approximately 85, 000 children and young people aged between 5-17 years old living in Sheffield. 98% of those children and young people are in full-time education. Sheffield has an important resource in its museum collections of art, human history, natural science, engineering and industry, a resource with the potential to deepen learning, set imaginations soaring and raise aspirations. These collections are owned by the people of Sheffield and are important in bringing curriculums to life, they can help to tell stories of lived experience in Sheffield, illustrate scientific theories and inspire creativity and curiosity about the world we live in.

From April 1st 2021 Museums Sheffield and Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust will merge to form a new museums service for the city. Sheffield Museums Trust will operate Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet, Graves Gallery, Kelham Island Museum, Millennium Gallery, Shepherd Wheel and Weston Park Museum. As we launch Sheffield Museums Trust we also plan to launch a new and improved programme for schools. Both Museums Sheffield and Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust have run successful schools programmes for many years. Prior to the March 2020 lockdown Museums Sheffield were attracting over 17, 000 school visitors a year with over half of this number taking part in facilitated workshops and programmes, Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust were attracting 9,000 school pupils with over two-thirds taking part in facilitated sessions. Both Museums attract school visits from Sheffield as well as across the region and further afield.

We have funding from the Government's Cultural Recovery Fund to commission a specialist to stretch our thinking and support us to improve our approach to inclusivity and representation in the content of our schools programme. We plan to deliver our new schools offer from the start of the new academic year in September 2021. We would like the report to be complete by the end of April 2021 which will give us time to implement the changes. We want to ensure that the new offer has made the changes promised in our Black Lives Matter statement.

Our Ambition;

Sheffield's school age children and young people feel ownership of and connection to their museum collections through inclusive, inspiring and engaging learning activities and resources.

We will achieve this by listening, learning and adapting. Our four priority areas will be;

School offer

- Developing and delivering an outstanding curriculum-linked school offer that makes best use of the collections and improves attainment through creative engagement.

Project work

- Developing and delivering longer term projects with schools that deepen engagement and extend learning (primary, secondary and SEN schools) that build confidence and raise ambition in young people and their teachers.

Support for teachers

- Supporting teachers to help them understand the benefit of including the museum collections in their curriculum; improving place making and cultural capital, to aid whole-school planning.

Networks with the city

- Work with subject specialist networks to share good practice as well as hold regular feedback/consultation sessions for teachers.

Consultancy Brief

How can we contextualise and present Sheffield's varied and rich collections in a way that proactively demonstrates the contribution different communities have made to our global story? How can we help schools to make their place-based curriculum diverse and representational of all Sheffield's stories? How do we best use the collections to bring wider stories and experiences to life? What stories can we thread through our schools programme that resonate with school students and their teachers? How do racialised people and other minoritised groups want themselves, and the heritage of their communities, to be represented in their museum and the associated schools programme?

We are inviting applications from a consultant to advise us on the positive ways in which we can make change to recognise and discuss our colonial past with schools. Some schools will embrace this idea; others may shy away from it so how can we support them to develop their thinking? What do we do already do, what can we do better and what new activity should we be doing? How can we go deeper and shine a light on uncomfortable truths and unacceptable ideologies inherent in the city's collections for both school students and their teachers?

We wish to appoint an experienced education consultant to work with us to realise our ambition by reviewing our school programme, including the language we use and the ideas we explore in that programme, and then help us put it back together to ensure that it is truly inclusive and

representative. We would like support to create a framework that ensures any future work with schools is inclusive and representational so that this becomes the way that we always work.

We will also be working with another consultant at this time to stretch our thinking and support us to re-engage with schools in the post-Covid world including exploring blended learning and digital opportunities. You are welcome to apply for both briefs, see the New Programme of Schools Activities Brief.

The consultant will work directly to Laura Travis, Head of Learning at Museums Sheffield.

Skills and Experience

The Education Consultant will be expected to have:

- Previous experience researching and creating innovative education programmes that encompass inclusivity and representation.
- Proven track record of providing education advice to the cultural sector.
- An understanding of the diverse populations of Sheffield.
- Excellent communication skills and ability to work with a wide range of people.

Budget and Timeframe

The total budget for this work is £5,000. The work will be expected to take place between January and April 2021.

How to Apply

Applicants should submit a CV and proposal by noon on Monday 11 January 2021. The proposal, to be no more than 4 sides of A4, should include information on:

- Key issues and opportunities identified for the work
- Approach to the brief and outline methodology and timetable (including key milestones)
- Details of relevant experience including 2 references from recent work
- Fee proposal, including a day rate and number of days proposed

Completed proposals should be sent to laura.travis@museums-sheffield.org.uk

Virtual interviews will be held the week commencing 11 January 2021.

If you have any queries Laura Travis will be available on the 22 December 2020 and 6 January 2021. To arrange a conversation please email laura.travis@museums-sheffield.org.uk