

First steps in... Learning



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You can get more copies of this guidance by:

- downloading it from www.hlf.org.uk;
- emailing enquire@hlf.org.uk;
- phoning our helpline on 020 7591 6042;
- contacting us by textphone on 020 7591 6255; or
- using TextDirect 18001 020 7591 6042.

If you require a copy of this guidance in an alternative format (large print, braille, or audio version), or if your first language is not English, we can provide it in the appropriate format or language if you ask us. It is also available in Welsh.

1 Introduction

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund sustains and transforms a wide range of the UK's heritage for present and future generations to experience, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks, and historic places to archaeology, wildlife and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage and help more people take part and make decisions about its future.

We give grants to support a wide range of projects involving the local, regional and national heritage of the United Kingdom. We have three main aims.

To receive a grant your project must:

- help people to learn about their own and other people's heritage.

Your project must also do either or both of the following:

- conserve the UK's heritage for present and future generations to experience and enjoy;
- help more people, and a wider range of people, to take an active part in and make decisions about heritage.

If you are thinking about making an application to our **Your Heritage** programme (grants £3,000-£50,000) or **Young Roots** programme (grants £3,000-£25,000 for projects led by 13–25-year-olds) this short guidance explains how your project can meet our aim in the first bullet point above, which we refer to as our **learning** aim.

2 What do we mean by learning?

For us, learning is not just about schools, or children; it is about offering opportunities for everyone to develop their understanding of heritage in a way appropriate to their needs, interests and background. There are three main ways you can do this:

- Provide information about your heritage and **interpret** it for people;
- **Train** project staff and volunteers to provide them with new or increased skills;
- Organise **events or activities** and produce resources to help the general public or particular groups of people learn about your heritage.

Your project might do one of these things or a combination of them depending on its size and nature.

3 Interpreting your heritage

Interpretation is the way in which the interest, significance, value and meaning of heritage is communicated to people. It must:

- provoke their attention;
- be pleasurable;
- be interesting and meaningful;
- be well organised and easy to use and understand; and
- have a clear theme or idea to communicate.

What you might do

Interpretation comes in many forms or media and what you provide will depend on your heritage and the aims of your project. When choosing your media you should

consider the needs of your audience, your budget and whether you will be able to maintain the interpretation you produce.

Here are some examples of interpretation:

- printed material such as leaflets and guidebooks;
- interpretation panels, indoors and/or outdoors;
- audio-tours and listening posts;
- tactile plaques and maps for people with visual impairments;
- an interpreter talking directly to an audience during a tour or demonstration;
- activity packs, games and quizzes for children and families;
- simple interactives such as jigsaws, lift-flaps and 'revealer wheels' to disclose information;
- working models and objects that people can touch;
- audio-visual presentations with sub-titles and British Sign Language translation; and
- computer-based interactives.

Issues to consider

In deciding what is right for your project you should think about:

- the amount or level of interpretation that is appropriate to your heritage;
- the themes and messages you want to communicate;
- layering information – the casual visitor might require a brief overview while the special interest visitor might want more in-depth material;
- how easy it will be for people to understand, especially people with limited background knowledge, children and people with learning disabilities;
- the needs of disabled people, especially people with visual and hearing impairments;
- people's different learning styles – e.g. learning through visual information or written text, or learning through 'doing';
- the need to provide interpretation in community languages, Welsh or Gaelic, depending on where your project takes place;
- how much research and writing your staff or volunteers can do; what you might need a consultant to do;
- any training for staff and volunteers who will write text, operate and maintain interactives, offer live interpretation etc;
- your budget and the costs of the various interpretive media and their maintenance; and
- how you will measure the success of your interpretation.

4 Creating new training opportunities

We encourage you to build training (and a budget for it) into your project to ensure that your staff and volunteers have the skills necessary to deliver your project to a high standard and feel confident in the role that they play. We do not fund general training for paid staff.

What you might do

The training you provide might be in specialist heritage skills or it might be about providing volunteers with general skills. Here are some examples of what we will fund:

- short-term courses to help people deliver project activity, such as sessions run by the Oral History Society on all aspects of recording and archiving memories or by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) on safely handling power tools;
- hands-on training in interpretation and learning skills to help people lead workshops or produce learning resources;
- customer care training, for example disability awareness, specialist communication skills such as British Sign Language, working with young people etc;
- courses in specialist heritage skills delivered with a college, small business or on-site, such as stone carving, using lime mortar, species identification, hedge laying, dry stone walling, bookbinding, etc;
- training on legislative requirements for volunteers where relevant to their role, for example data protection, health and safety, and child protection;
- maintenance skills such as cleaning gutters, clearing woodland, keeping a steam engine in working order or maintaining interactives;
- volunteer recruitment and management training;
- opportunities for school or college pupils, graduate interns or local contractors to develop specialist conservation skills through work placements linked to your project; and
- technical and creative skills such as web design, using digital cameras and film making.

Issues to consider

In deciding what is right for your project, you should think about:

- what skills do you have in your organisation already and what gaps need to be filled?
- how can you maximise the opportunity offered by your project to increase the skills and confidence of your staff and volunteers by building in training?
- how will you find out what training activities and resources are right for the people involved in your project?
- is it more appropriate to deliver an in-house training course, to pay for people to attend local courses delivered by other institutions or to buy in a trainer to work on your site (the most costly option)?
- do you have partnerships with community organisations that will bring in any training expertise you need?
- do you have a project timetable which identifies training activities, content and the roles people will play?
- how many people do you expect to benefit from your training activity?
- is it appropriate to provide accredited training (ie providing your staff and volunteers with a recognised qualification)?
- what costs need to be in your budget, including for the resources and equipment necessary to deliver training?
- how will you measure the success of your training activity?

5 Organising events and activities to help people learn

There are all kinds of events and activities you can organise to encourage people to learn in hands-on and interesting ways. When planning your project, you should think about putting the learner at its heart – what are their needs and how can you meet them with the activities and learning resources you provide?

What you might do

Here are just a few examples of the kinds of activities and resources we will fund to help children, young people and adults to learn more about heritage:

- a programme of talks or visits for an adult education group such as the Workers' Educational Association or the University of the Third Age;
- a programme of visits to a museum for local schools, including teacher's materials;
- the development of a pond-dipping area and activities at a wetlands site suitable for young people with disabilities, with materials in the right formats to meet their needs;
- a programme of activities at an archaeological site for members of a local youth group to get some hand-on digging experience;
- open days in archives or local studies libraries where people are given an introduction to using documents for family history research;
- a trail around a church and grave yard with interesting facts for children to find and activities such as brass rubbing and making paper 'stained glass' to do along the route;
- taster workshops for people to learn how to record species and habitats;
- workshops in an art gallery for adults in the Chinese community to create a community exhibition;
- family days at a canal or industrial site, with period food and costumes;
- a teacher secondment to a historic site or museum to develop learning programmes.

Issues to consider

In deciding what is right for your project, you should think about:

- who do you want to benefit from your learning activities? A broad cross-section of the public or particular age/interest groups? How many people?
- how will you find out what activities and resources are right for the people you want to reach?
- if you want to work with formal learners – school or college students or people on adult education courses – how will you involve the teachers in your planning and make sure the activities and resources you create link to the curriculum and will be useful?
- do you have a project timetable which identifies activities, content and the roles people will play?
- are the staff or volunteers who will deliver your learning experienced? Do they need training?
- do you have partnerships with community organisations that will bring in any learning expertise you need or will help you reach the audience you want to work with?
- what costs need to be in your budget?
- how will you measure the success of your learning activity?

6 What we fund

We will fund the types of activities and materials described in this guidance within a heritage project where one of the aims of your project is to help people learn about their own and others' heritage.

The costs can include:

- staff time to develop, manage and deliver the activities e.g. time of a Learning, Outreach or Interpretation Officer, Training Manager or a Project Manager;
- freelance staff and professional fees necessary to help people learn;
- equipment, materials and resources;
- training for project staff and volunteers to help them deliver or support the activities;
- publicity and promotional material; and
- evaluating your activities.

You should include the costs in your project budget. In the application form you should itemise any volunteer labour or non-cash contributions you are bringing to the project.

7. More guidance

For more detailed information on these topics see our guidance, *Thinking about interpretation*, *Thinking about training* and *Thinking about learning*. These are longer documents written mainly for applicants to our Heritage Grants programme (grants over £50,000). Your HLF development team will be able to advise you on whether they will be useful to you in planning your project.

If you would like advice on making an application, contact the HLF development team in your regional or country office or send in a pre-application enquiry form via our website.

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