Interim Evaluation of Skills for the Future, Cohort 1: Project manager and trainer surveys

Heritage Lottery Fund, 2013

Contents

1   Introduction

ICF GHK was commissioned by the Heritage Lottery Fund to undertake an interim evaluation of the Skills for the Future grant programme. This was guided by the evaluation framework for the programme established in 2011/12 to assess progress towards the expected outputs and outcomes of the projects. Specifically, the brief was to collect interim data from the grantees to establish whether progress can be evidenced against the programme aims and delivery criteria set out below.

The aims of Skills for the Future are to:

■   fund high quality work based training opportunities to equip people with the skills to pursue a career in heritage;
■   enhance the capacity of the heritage sector to deliver sustainable training and share good practice; and
■   demonstrate the value of heritage skills to modern life.

To receive a grant grantees are expected to deliver against all of the following criteria:

■   increase the range and quality of work-based training to develop skills in the heritage sector;
■   meet identified skills gaps or shortages in the heritage sector;
■   increase the capacity of the sector to deliver training and share good practice; and
■   increase the diversity of the heritage workforce.

HLF launched Skills for the Future for the first time in 2009. Trustees invested £17 million in 54 projects in 2010 and awarded some of these projects a further grant to extend their work in 2013. The grantees are offering trainee placements across the UK in a wide range of heritage skills including environmental conservation, building craft skills such as stonemasonry and carpentry, oral history and volunteer management.

This interim report forms one element of on-going Skills for the Future evaluation work and should be read alongside other interim reports on the impact of the programme, including trainee case studies, as well as the project evaluations produced by the grantees themselves as their projects complete.

1.1   Summary of key findings: project manager survey

Based on 47 responses from Skills for the Future project managers, to date:

■   the projects have created a total of 640 training placements across all heritage sectors from local steam railways to national museums.
■   all but one have had all trainees complete their placements; there have been a total of 396 completions to date.
■   348 of the 396 completed trainees (88%) have received formal accreditation.

Responses suggest that more than three quarters of the completed placements have already found employment:

■   a total of 95 trainees have moved into employment within the host organisation or a partner organisation; and
■   a further 208 trainees have moved into employment within the wider heritage sector.

It is clear that the projects are contributing to a range of positive outcomes for the grantee organisations. Most grantees developed an entirely new training approach for the project:

■   83% developed a new training programme for the project;
■   87% developed a new model of training delivery for the project; and
■   83% developed significant new partnerships to create the training opportunities.

These changes have benefited organisations to a great extent. Grantees report that they have now developed an infrastructure and established an organisational culture conducive to supporting trainees. Project managers also strongly agreed that they are more able to offer work-based training opportunities to entry-level applicants as a result of the projects.

Grantees agreed that the projects have had a range of additional benefits for organisations:

- 78% developed new operational partnerships for the project;
- 72% reported that trainees contributed other business benefits, such as extra capacity, new ideas and a more diverse workforce.

Views were more mixed on the projects' impacts on organisation's recruitment and monitoring practices:

- 59% made significant changes to recruitment processes as part of the project; and
- 48% changed monitoring practices as part of the project.

Where there was no change, this was most often because adequate systems were stated to be already in place. Those who had made changes have seen benefits to some extent, for example, in making new links with community partners.

Some grantees feel they are more able to attract and recruit a more diverse workforce as a result of the project. For some, new methods and channels of recruitment are believed to be having an impact, or are contributing to a gradual improvement in culture and processes. Grantees noted the difficulty of making progress in attracting a more diverse workforce where they believe there is a small pool of available applicants and, in some cases, limited latitude to adjust established recruitment procedures.

Despite clear support for the projects and their early outcomes for trainees, the grantee organisations and the wider sector, there is little evidence to suggest at this stage that grantee organisations will continue to offer entry-level work-based training opportunities in the near future beyond the Skills for the Future projects.

1.2   Summary of key findings: trainer survey

Staff directly supporting the trainees with work-based training across the projects typically had more than a decades' experience in the sector, but only about a third (36%) had 'a lot' of experience in supervising trainees; 19% had only a little experience or none at all. The survey has shown that, as a result of the Skills for the Future projects, trainers:

- have increased knowledge in their area of work;
- have developed new skills for training or supervising trainees;
- have improved skills relevant to their job;
- are better able to support trainees to complete their training; and
- are more interested in supporting work-based learning to develop new entrants to the sector.

Comments made clearly show that they generally appreciate the value of the projects to their own development. A few respondents indicated that the project placed some strain on organisational capacity or had concerns about the trainees targeted and the length of the training offered.

1.3   Methodology and achieved sample

ICF GHK used two self-evaluation questionnaires developed in 2012 to gather data, one focussed on the grantees organisation and one designed to get feedback from a range of people involved in a direct training or mentoring role. The research tasks were to:

- engage with project managers in all 54 Skills for the Future projects and follow up with telephone enquiries to achieve as high a response to an organisational survey as possible; and
- ask a sample of on-the-ground training delivery staff across the projects to complete the trainer survey. The goal was to receive at least two trainer questionnaires per project, except for single-site projects with a grant under £200,000, where one staff survey was considered sufficient. Overall, at least 100 trainer survey responses were to be received and analysed.

For the organisational survey:

- we made several contacts as required with all 54 grantee project managers; and
- we received 47 responses, representing 87% of the population.

We used the project manager leads to generate contact details for training staff and mentors at each project which we then used to invite a sample of staff at each organisation to complete the trainer survey.

For the staff survey:

- 47 of the projects passed on staff details to us;
- we sent the survey to a sample of 199 staff; an average of four per project;
- we received 125 valid responses by the survey deadline; an average of two per project; and
- we reached or exceeded the target number of responses per organisation for 33 of the grantees; however we were unable to assign 21 of the total responses to individual projects because these did not identify which project they were attached to.

For both surveys, the response rate was representative and provided evidence for the evaluation from a very high proportion of the participating organisations so the results are statistically robust.

1.4 Structure of this report

This report continues as follows:

- Section 2 sets out an analysis of responses to the organisational survey;
- Section 3 sets out an analysis of responses to the trainer survey; and
- Section 4 presents our conclusions and recommendations from the study.

2 Analysis of organisational survey responses

This section presents an analysis of the responses to the organisational survey. This covers:

■ trainee outputs;
■ organisational short-term outcomes;
■ organisational medium-term outcomes;
■ how grantees have shared learning from their projects;
■ grantees' future plans to provide entry-level work-based training beyond the project; and
■ grantees' comments on organisational impacts.

2.1 Trainee outputs

Table 2.1 presents the responses to survey questions on trainee outputs. For each question, it sets out:

- the number of valid responses received;
- the lowest and highest responses given;
- the mean average; and
- further comments to expand upon or clarify the analysis.

Table 2.1   Trainee outputs

Question	Valid responses	Range	Average	Comments
Number of trainees taking up placements	46	3 – 40	14	Across the grantees who responded, a total of 640 trainees have taken up placements to date.
Number of trainees completing placements	47	0 – 28	8	Across the grantees who have responded, a total of 396 trainees have completed placements. One grantee reported that no trainees have completed yet due to unanticipated delays in starting the project.
Number of trainees receiving accreditation for their learning	44	0 – 28	8	Across the projects responding, a total of 348 trainees have received accreditation. Seven grantees reported that no trainees have received accreditation for their learning (not all projects planned to deliver formal accreditation).
Number of trainees who have moved into employment with the grantee organisation or a project partner organisation	46	0 – 10	2	Across the projects that responded, a total of 95 trainees have moved into employment within the same organisation or a partner organisation to date.
Number of trainees who have moved into employment within the wider heritage sector	42	0 – 20	5	Across the projects that responded, a total of 208 trainees had moved into employment. 35 grantees reported that at least one trainee had moved into employment within the wider heritage sector to date.

2.2 Organisational short-term outcomes

These questions required a response of yes or no, with an optional space for respondents to elaborate or clarify. The response rate for these questions was 100%.

2.2.1 Was a new training programme developed for the project?

83% reported that a new programme of training was developed specifically for the Skills for the Future project, with new content and/or the introduction of new methods of accrediting the training. The new programmes were developed with partners, often colleges or awarding organisations but sometimes with other specialists in the field:

> "Consulted with a specialist advisory panel of book conservators on specialism-specific, general conservation, and professional skills."

Most of the projects made significant efforts to develop bespoke programmes of training, in many cases tailored for each individual trainee on the project.

Most often, bespoke qualifications were made up by combining existing units already available through the Qualifications and Credit Framework (usually to form an NVQ), but in some cases new units were written specifically to meet the needs of the trainee, the organisation and the wider sector. These qualifications, having been approved by an awarding body, are now available for any organisations that want to use them, creating an on-going legacy for the programme.

Of the small number of grantees who reported no new training programme development, most were building on previous training experience and using existing qualifications; although one reported that they found they did not "have the skills, experience and resources to develop a new accreditation scheme as part of the project."

2.2.2 Was a new model of training delivery developed for the project?

87% reported that new delivery models were developed for the project, reflecting that on-the-job training was entirely new to many of the organisations.

> "This project is an area where we had not done a lot of training activity in the past and are working with skill areas where no formal training has taken place before."

Those that were delivering qualifications for the first time often had to learn how to support trainees to produce portfolios or work journals:

> "Submitted portfolios of work for their NVQs, first time our organisation has done on-the-job training with a formal outcome."

> "All new, portfolio-based mentoring approach, nothing previously existed."

Other organisations had experience of delivering accredited training, but had 'scaled up' as a result of the project.

> "The scope and scale of in-house training offered was extended, so too was the range of collaboration with heritage experts and professionals."

> "Much more comprehensive with a dedicated coordinator overseeing their progress. They completed work diaries and the feedback methods put in place have been useful in a wider context."

> "12 month period is new, previously trainees tended to be only 6 months."

Many new models were developed by the grantees including:

- a shared placement approach where trainees moved between placement providers to maximise learning and experience a range of opportunities;
- trainee-created reflective learning logs;
- whole-class learning rather than assessor/candidate planning meetings;
- continual appraisal of performance against targets every three months;
- trainee diaries;
- blogs documenting the experience of external placements;

- computer-based portfolios;
- peer learning and observation.

2.2.3 Have the trainees contributed business benefits to the grantee organisations?

Though it is not an expectation of the programme that trainees make a direct contribution to grantee organisations during the period they are learning on-the-job, grantees were invited to comment on any benefits brought by the trainees. 72% reported that trainees contributed business benefits to the organisation. Grantees were very positive about the value trainees brought to the organisations in large part because of the extra capacity and enthusiasm:

> "Over the course of their placements they provide man-power [sic], enthusiasm, leadership and contribute greatly to the overall work of the partnership projects."

> "Extra capacity of six full-time trainees has been invaluable."

> "They have significantly increased the skills and capacity of our organisation in marine heritage as we only have one member of staff working on this. They have increased our skills in surveying, habitat management, communication, working with volunteers to conduct surveys and habitat conservation."

Grantees also noted the benefits of the new ideas brought by the new entrants.

> "Good to have a younger person in the organisation with a fresh perspective on libraries."

> "The experience will inform possible future programmes."

62% reported that trainees had contributed to filling skills gaps in the organisation, particularly in the use of social media:

> "Several trainees have brought knowledge and experience of using social media which have helped address skills needs within their hosts. For example at two host organisations blogs have been established by trainees, and have been kept going after the trainee has left."

The list of business benefits provided by project managers was broad, including:

- heritage outcomes, such as surveys contributing new ecological data or the maintenance and/or refurbishment of steam engines and coaches;
- improved communications between departments and between partner organisations;
- diversified demographic profile of museum staff; and
- "Increased PR profile and increase in people contacting the organisation wondering if a similar scheme can be run in the future."

Where grantees had reported that trainees had not contributed business benefits, the main reason given was that the benefits had accrued to the trainee host organisations (rather than the lead organisation completing the survey).

2.3 Organisational medium-term outcomes

All but one of the respondents answered all of the questions in this part of the survey.

2.3.1 Have new training partnerships been developed for the project?

83% reported that new training partnerships had been developed to help plan or deliver the Skills for the Future project. The scale and diversity of these partnerships was very broad across the programme, and sometimes within individual projects.

> "New training partnerships have been established with many organisations, including North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Mersey Biobank, Bee Well Training and Coaching, Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside, Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, National Trust."

Training partnerships were developed with, for example:

- further education colleges;

- private training providers;
- awarding organisations;
- other local heritage organisations, such as Wildlife Trusts, and national heritage bodies such as the RSPB and National Trust;
- specialist networks, such as the Cornwall Archives Network;
- local authorities;
- universities;
- voluntary and community groups;
- Jobcentre Plus; and
- local employers, such as farmers.

The few grantees that did not develop new partnerships had existing partnerships in place or delivered the training themselves in-house.

2.3.2 Have new operational partnerships been developed for the project?

78% reported that new formal working relationships had been developed to give trainees the best industry experience possible. Some of the grantee organisations are not directly hosting trainees and many of these had developed operational partnerships with the host organisations for the first time through the Skills for the Future project.

> "We currently have 18 Heritage Building Companies registered with the scheme who host trainees and provide them with site experience and training."

> "[Our organisation] has developed new operational relationships with all of the host organisations who have helped to deliver the project."

Some of the multi-organisation projects have developed central support functions as part of the project, which may continue beyond the life of the projects.

> "We are working with other organisations training them on how to coach and mentor staff."

> "Training, support and internal verification is now (and will continue to be) provided to the host organisations."

Overall there were many examples of new relationships formed and many of these are significant in scope or scale with prospects for long-term benefits:

> "Sixty new relationships developed."

> "The vast majority of the organisations we have worked with are new partners."

> "Other London-based organisations participating in Skills for the Future - a 'grantee working group' was initiated by the Whitechapel Gallery, and reciprocal workshops and visits take place."

> "New relationships have been established with a number of external organisations though trainee project work, which will lead to long term relationships."

The few that have not developed new partnerships did not generally explain their position, though some noted that the project worked through pre-existing partnerships, which had been strengthened as a result.

2.3.3 Have recruitment processes changed significantly as part of the project?

59% of the respondents reported that recruitment processes had changed significantly from normal practice as part of the project. Project managers noted that this included using a wider range of avenues for advertising the traineeship, for example, through directly targeting local colleges or the use of social media.

> "We have advertised the positions in a wider range of places than previous vacancies, and also utilise social media (Facebook, Twitter) to a far greater extent to encourage a wide range of applicants."

A few grantees noted a fundamental change in the type of candidate they were seeking, and a corresponding alteration of the role specification to assess the value of the project to the applicant, rather than the value of the applicant to the organisation.

In order to better welcome new entrants to the sector, some grantees had introduced more practical methods of application and interview assessment - rather than the traditional use of qualifications and a formal interview.

> "A special recruitment process has been developed for the programme, this focuses on aptitude rather than qualifications and interviews. This has proved to be very successful in attracting people from disadvantaged backgrounds."

Some grantees also undertook outreach work to support the application process for the targeted candidates.

> "A CV workshop preceded the initial recruitment drive. Bridging organisations such as ELBA [East London Business Alliance and] A New Direction [a youth organisation] … were used to reach candidates from our target demographic."

Where grantees had indicated no change in recruitment processes, this was most often attributed to the organisation already having significant relevant experience in recruitment, and so changes were not required. Some grantees mentioned that existing, for example, local authority, procedures for recruitment limited the possibility for innovation in these processes.

2.3.4 Have monitoring practices changed significantly as part of the project?

This question asked about the collection of data, for example on the demographics of applicants, those shortlisted and those appointed as trainees and the monitoring of trainee progress during and beyond the traineeship. Just under half (48%) of responding organisations reported that monitoring practices have changed significantly as part of the project. However, for almost all who indicated that they had not changed, this was because they felt they already had adequate systems in place.

Additional detail provided by the grantees suggested that systems to track and support the progress of trainees had been the main change.

> "Trainee progress is monitored through quarterly updates with heads of department. This is the first time [the organisation] has run an established trainee programme, so effort is made to ensure all trainees progress well and achieve all they wish to from their training placement."
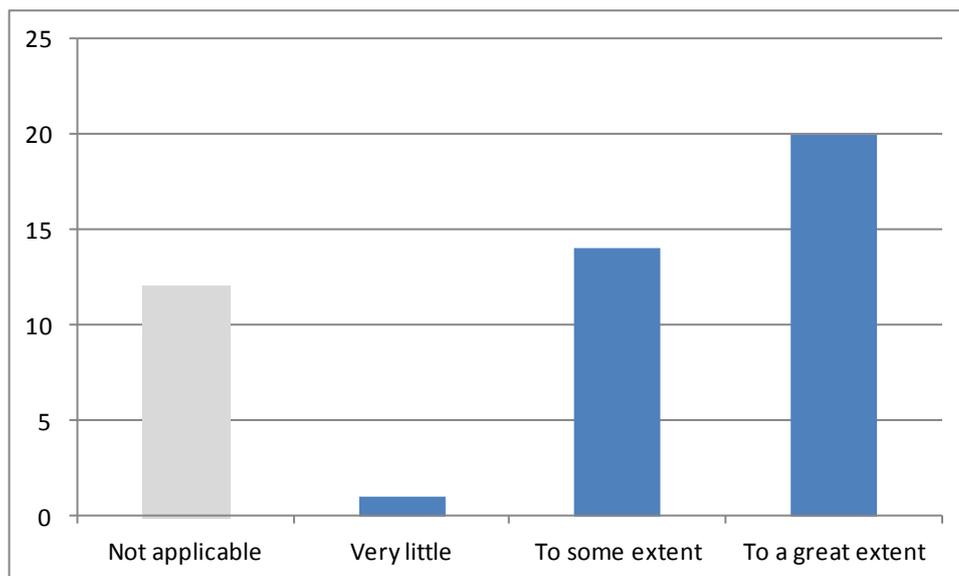
> "As an employee who has never received an appraisal … what we have done with the trainees is significantly different. We were constantly appraising, supporting and finding ways to add to their experience."

> "The skills assessment questionnaire was set up to track improvements in skills scores during the traineeships, and also to clarify trainee strengths and areas of development going into the traineeships, allowing us to focus our training most effectively."

Two grantees also mentioned that they will track the destinations of former trainees after they leave the project.

Changes reported to monitoring practices also included conducting staff appraisals for the first time; and a more systematic monitoring of applications, including capturing equalities data.

2.3.5 To what extent has the new training programme benefited the grantee organisation?

Grantees agreed that the new training approach has benefited the organisation, with 43% agreeing with the statement to a great extent.

> "It has brought our organisation to the forefront of the heritage skills sector, both in our area and nationally."

Grantees commented that the project has made staff more motivated and better prepared to work with trainees.
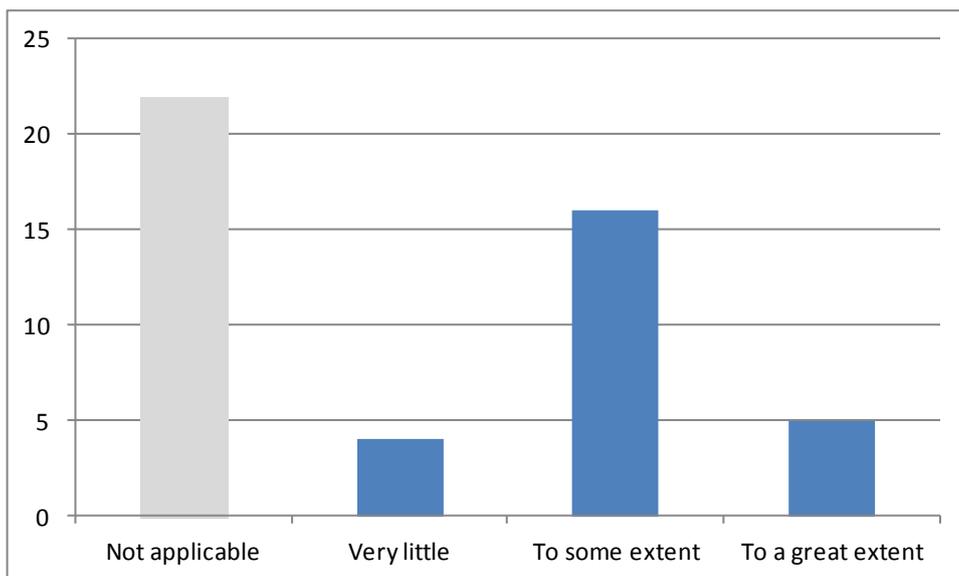
> "There is now an established culture of working with trainees amongst all staff teams."

> "We are better prepared to run additional training programmes in the future – training programmes and learning objectives are already designed and in place, and staff are now experienced in mentoring trainees."

> "The permanent staff are much more motivated and engaged in future-proofing the profession i.e. passing on valuable skills to a new generation."

Where grantees had commented that this question is not applicable, the most commonly cited reason was that the grantee was not directly hosting trainees.

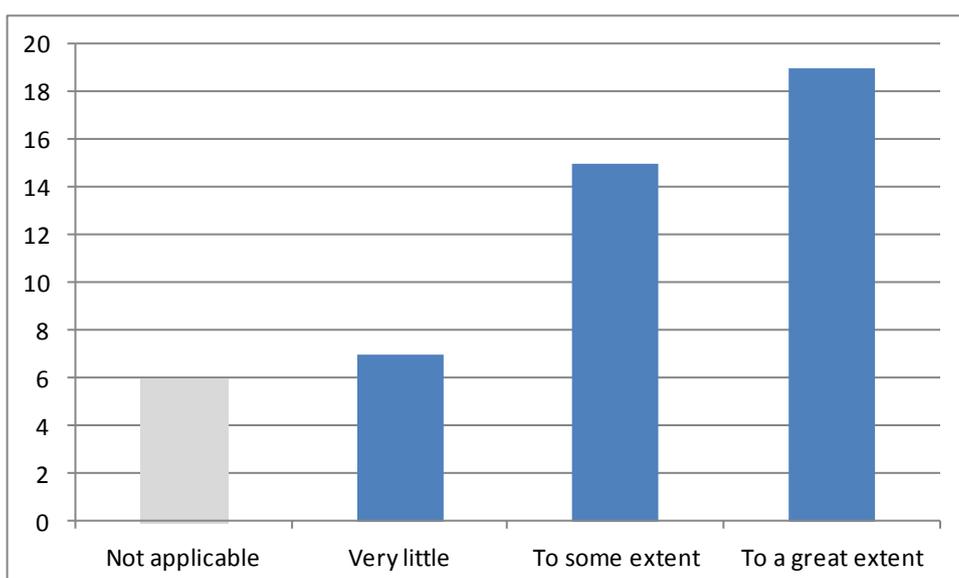### 2.3.6 To what extent have new recruitment methods and processes benefited the grantee organisations?

About half (47%) said that this was not applicable to their project. Most of these did not give an explanation either because it is their partner organisations who were responsible for recruitment or because the new recruitment processes developed for this project had not been adopted as standard practice.

For those who had a view, two thirds (67%) agreed to some extent and 21% to a great extent that there had been a benefit.

> "We have made links with community partners in the local boroughs to reach out to individuals who we may not otherwise attract."

> "Aptitude assessment is now an integral part of the recruitment process for many practical jobs within the Trust."

2.3.7 To what extent is the grantee organisation more able to offer work-based training opportunities to entry-level applicants?

Grantees strongly agreed that their organisations are more able to offer work-based training opportunities to entry-level applicants, with 40% agreeing to a great extent and 32% to some extent.

Grantees added that they had more experience and a fuller understanding of work-based training as a result of the project; and that a successful working model had now been established.

> "We have improved knowledge of the considerations we need to make in order to offer these opportunities."

> "The culture of working with trainees is now strongly established and many staff have received training in working with trainees and have seen the wider benefits of the value of trainees in the workplace."

There is evidence of the project contributing towards a change in attitudes within some grantee organisations.

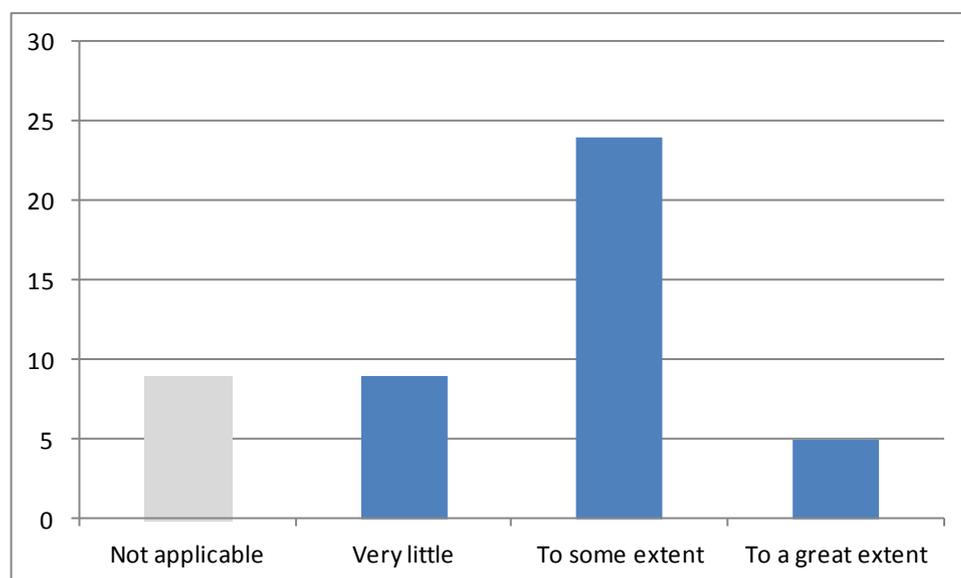> "This project has proved that entry level trainees can contribute to the business."

> "This is something that has increased and developed as the programme has progressed to where we now feel the focus is on offering excellent experience to entry level applicants, not based on qualifications or past professional experiences."

> "This has significantly changed the Trust's approach to traineeships and we now have the knowledge to sustain the programme if funding can be obtained."

Where grantees reported that they are only more able to a very little extent, the main reason given was the capacity to continue with this outside of the programme.

As with some of the other questions, 13% project managers reported the question as not applicable because the training was offered by partner organisations.

2.3.8 To what extent is the grantee organisation more able to attract and recruit a more diverse workforce?

Responses to this question were less emphatic, with 51% agreeing to some extent, and 19% reporting that there is very little change.

The explanatory comments given by grantees who agreed to some extent can be summarised as presenting gradual progress towards achieving a more diverse workforce. Grantees provided examples of measures taken:

> "By offering paid placements, applicants from a lower income household are able to apply and access work-based heritage training."

> "We have been able to recruit a more gender- and age-diverse profile of trainees than is represented in the sector. Ethnic diversification [sic] has been very challenging, and one which we continue to work on."

> "More applicants from diverse communities applying through outreach and using different approaches such as the CVS and local museums."

Grantees also commented on how these measures are contributing to an improvement in processes and organisational culture to achieve diversity outcomes.

> "This is an area that I am currently working very hard on and have had some success, although we are working to build sustainable partnerships rather than look for "quick wins" in terms of diversity. The diversity of applications has increased year on year, as has the quality of those applications, and the diversity of the workforce reflects this somewhat."

> "Our diversity target was to attract a younger workforce to an ageing sector, with only 6% of the workforce aged between 16 and 24. Through our strengthened links with universities in the region we feel we have the networks set up to more ably target younger graduates."

> "A lot of work has been done on this in the wider Trust. But we will still be doing more work … The new governing body will help with this."

> "The focus on attracting a diverse range of applicants has to some extent encouraged a cultural change within the host organisations, and has raised awareness of under-represented groups within the sector."

Some grantees have reported successes.

> "It is now seen by many that the usual route into nature conservation need not be via a degree."

> "Significant progress made recruiting young women to the programme."

There are two main reasons given why some grantees report very little change in their ability to attract and recruit a more diverse workforce. The first is that the pool of potential applicants for the project is seen as insufficiently diverse, making it very challenging to achieve a diverse workforce.

> "This area has always proved difficult for us. Given the remote location of the bursary placements and the make-up of the sector we have found it difficult to recruit from a wider workforce."

The other main reason given is that attracting a diverse workforce is already established practice for the organisation.

Most of the 19% who replied that the question was not applicable did not give a reason.

2.4   Sharing learning and looking ahead

Almost all respondents answered open questions about sharing learning and how it has informed their policy on traineeships: question 2.6.1 was answered by 46 grantees, and question 2.6.2 was answered by 45 grantees.

2.4.1   What have grantee organisations done to share project outputs and learning?

Grantees have generally engaged in more than one activity to share the achievements of their projects. Most often this has included:

- blogs or new material on grantee websites;
- open days;
- presentations at professional conferences and events; and
- articles in local and specialist press.

Other specific activities which individual grantees mentioned included attending London Skill Sharing partnership meetings and being filmed as part of a BBC programme.

2.4.2 Outside of the Skills for the Future project, what other plans do grantee organisations have to offer entry-level work-based training opportunities?

Overall, the comments given by grantees are fairly inconclusive, as might be expected given the economic constraint most heritage organisations are operating within and the interim stage of the projects' delivery.

Around half of the responses indicate that projects do not currently expect to offer entry-level work-based training opportunities in the near future. This was not because of a lack of demand or internal interest; rather, financial constraints were the main reason given.

> "If we can identify suitable funders we may work with other heritage organisation locally to apply for funded placements, using the training programmes we have developed."

> "Not in the current extremely difficult financial climate."

> "No but a review of the Hampshire Heritage Skills programme, once completed in 2014, will highlight the benefits of offering such a scheme for entry-level work-based training."

A few of the project managers mentioned specific plans:

> "Introducing short courses in traditional skills, including working with schools to promote interest."

> "Due to the success of the scheme to date we are very keen to continue it following the end of the project, and [our] fundraising team plan to explore options for other sources of funding."

> "No, but some of our hosts ... are looking at trying to keep their trainee through research grants."

> "Yes we are approaching local colleges and SSC [Sector Skills Councils] as we can now offer EDI Level 3 accredited training in Cultural Heritage."

2.5 Grantee's comments on how the project has impacted on the organisation

Forty of the 47 organisations chose to offer final comments in response to this open, free-text question. These were overwhelmingly positive. Many grantees praised the project for helping to develop organisational capacity.

> "[The organisation's] Skills for the Future project has not only benefited the trainees taking part, but also staff members involved in the project, who now have an increased capacity for mentoring those at the start of their career."

> "By becoming an accredited training centre this has validated our in-house training and enabled the organisation to provide a training framework - staff development has also been key to the project and two members of staff are now training to become qualified training assessors."

In turn, this organisational development has generated a boost to the profile and credibility of many of the grantees.

> "The benefit to the organisation in terms of capacity and the development of training opportunities has been invaluable. The programme has also been hugely beneficial to the organisation's reputation, as it has allowed us to offer a paid alternative to volunteering for people starting their careers in the Arts and Heritage sector. It has allowed us to drastically reduce our unpaid placements, which are a contentious issue in the sector. Besides this, the quality of the trainees leaving the programme and going into jobs with other organisations in the sector has also reflected very well on us and the programme."

> "Increased skills capacity of staff and new partnerships developed raised [the organisation's] profile; increased network of trainees now working in heritage."

> "The project has seemed to be very well received within the Heritage Construction Sector in Wales and has added credibility to [our organisation] as well as significantly increasing our capacity."

> "Significantly built profile, credibility. Enabled practical demonstration of the possibilities from heritage training."

Some grantees reported a cultural change within the organisation, with a new understanding of the value of trainees.

> "The project has been a huge success in changing the culture within the organisation. The role of trainees is now better understood and the benefits of working with trainees better appreciated."

> "It has shown that the right youngsters have the enthusiasm, sticking power and ability to become valuable employees of the heritage railway sector in the future."

Beyond the immediate benefits to the organisation, other grantees reported outcomes for the wider sector, both directly and through the creation of a new generation of skilled workers.

> "This project is a huge amount of work but great fun. It makes us feel good that we are doing it and if you were to ask us about how this project has impacted on other heritage organisations in Cornwall, I would say that the impact has been substantial and very positive."

> "The main impact is that the Museum will have a pool of future people to recruit from."

> "It has been good to offer training opportunities to young people who are looking to break into a career in conservation and to help them get a foot on the ladder, this has led to employment opportunities for some trainees. Some of our trainees have gone on to do long term volunteering with us…"

Finally, a few respondents used their comments to highlight the considerable time commitment required to recruit and support the trainees.

> "The impact on staff time is significant; trainees by their very nature need help, guidance, support, mentoring and training - they need time. Without a project coordinator we would not be able to manage this just from existing staff. This is a project we all hope will continue."

> "Considerably more time expended than first envisaged."

3 Analysis of trainer survey responses

This section presents an analysis of the responses to the shorter survey sent to those with a direct training role in the Skills for the Future projects. These are the people, other than project managers, who are involved in work-place training delivery, either as expert practitioners or more general mentors. This section covers:

■ these trainers' background and experience;
■ outcomes for them as a result of the project; and
■ their comments on how the project has impacted on their own knowledge and skills.

3.1 Trainers background and experience

Respondents were asked a series of closed questions to establish the level of their previous experience in the heritage sector and in supervising trainees. All respondents answered these questions.
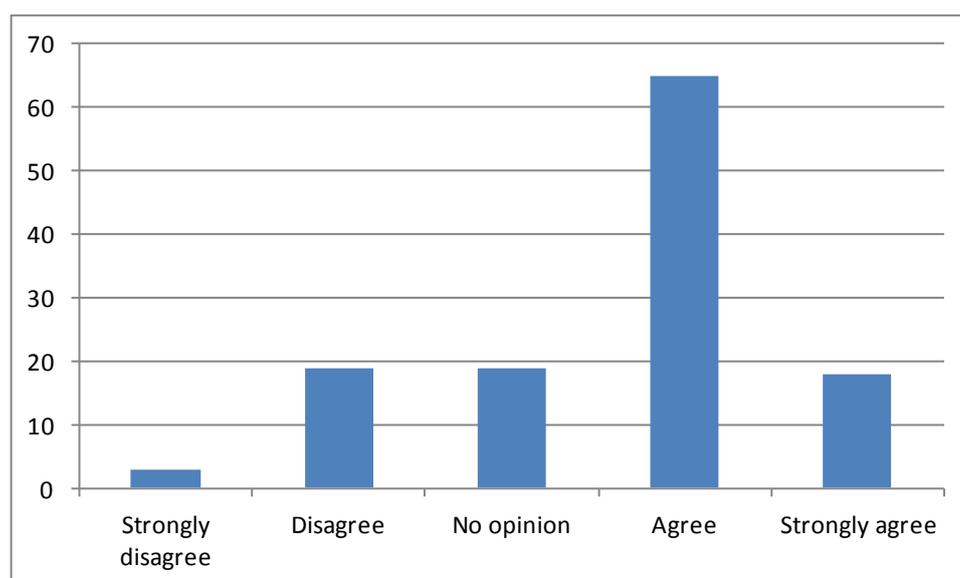
The survey responses indicate an experienced workforce providing training and supervision on the Skills for the Future projects. On average, the respondents had 11 years' experience with their current employer, and 15 years' experience working in the heritage sector more broadly. 90% were already working with their current employer before the project began; 8% began employment during the project; and 2% after.

Previous experience of training or supervising trainees is mixed. 45% report that they had some experience, and 36% a lot while 19% had only a little experience or none at all. Prior to training or supervising trainees, 50% had a short oral or written briefing; 27% had a short briefing and also a training session; and 23% received no guidance.

3.2 Outcomes for the trainers

Survey respondents were asked to report to what extent they agreed with statements describing outcomes from the project for trainers. Almost all responded to these questions (123 of 125).
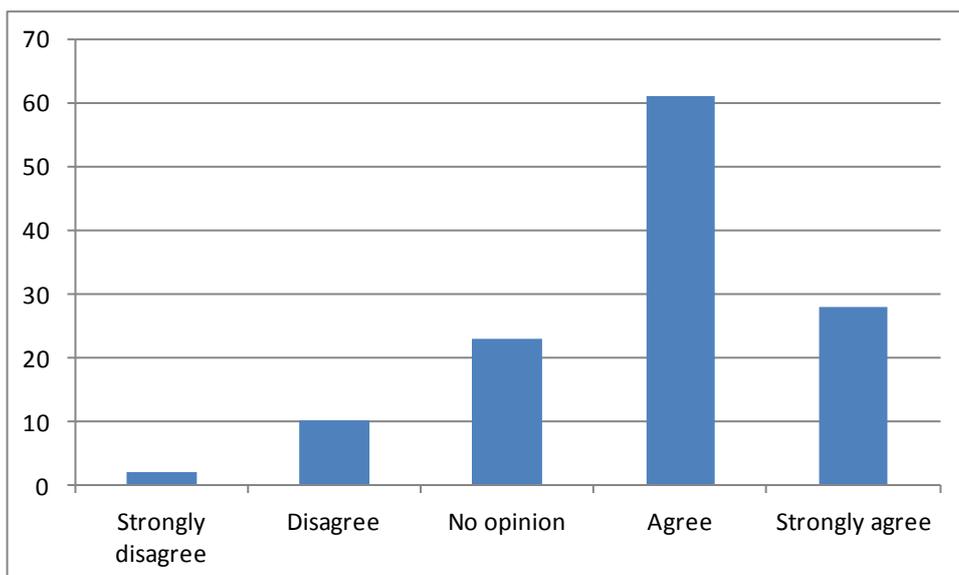
3.2.1 Increased knowledge in their area of work?

52% of respondents agree that they have increased knowledge in their area of work as a result of involvement in the project.

> "Training someone allows you to take a fresh look at your subject, what you are doing and how you do it."
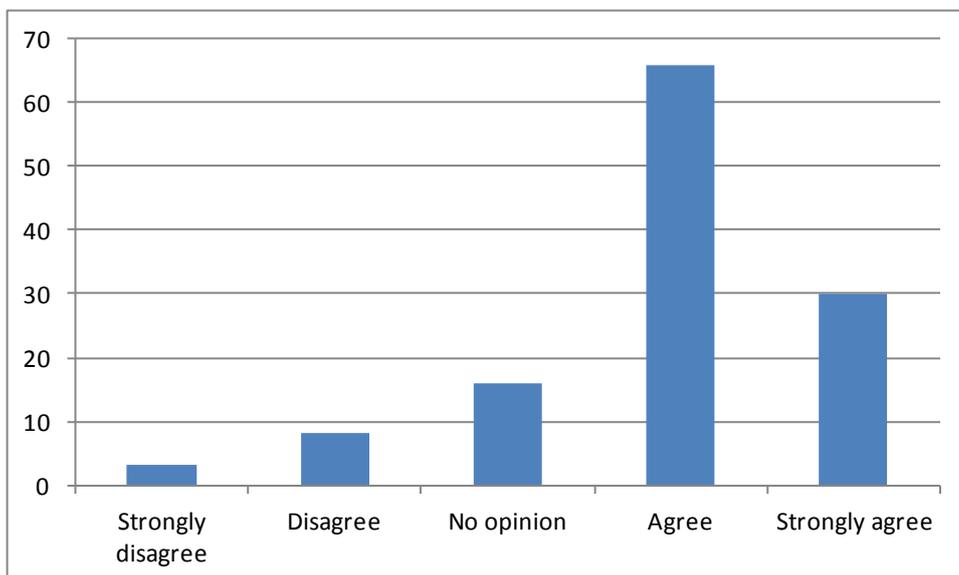
3.2.2   Improved skills relevant to their job?

49% of respondents agree that they have improved skills relevant to their job as a result of their project; and a further 23% reported that they strongly agree.

> "As a Chartered Building Surveyor my skills were enhanced by my involvement with the programme. There are synergies between carpentry and joinery in connection with historic building conservation and that carried out with boat restoration and the skills learnt by the apprentices can be utilised in either area."
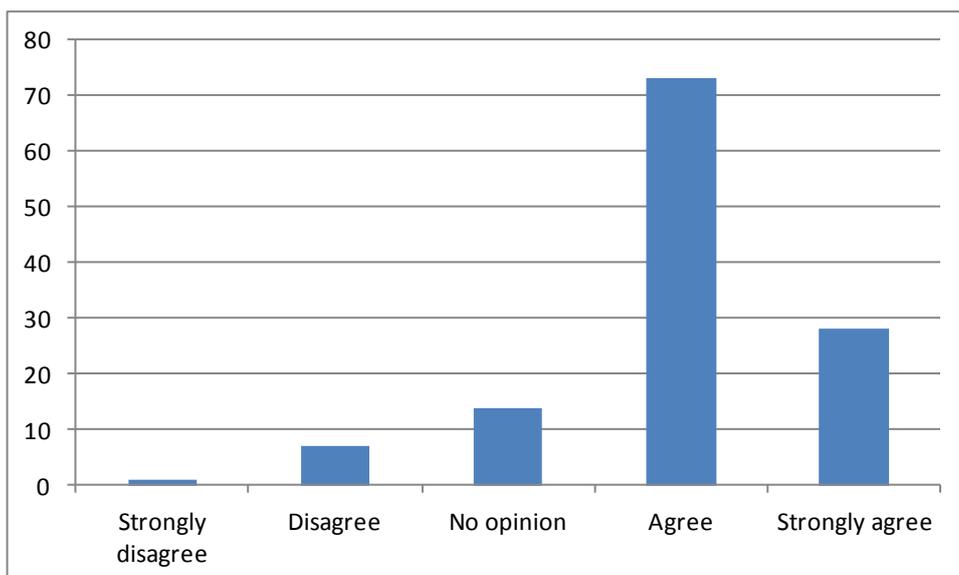
3.2.3   New skills for training or supervising trainees?

54% agree that they have developed new skills for training or supervising trainees. A further 24% strongly agree with this statement.

> "This has been a great opportunity for me to develop my skills in line management and development training."

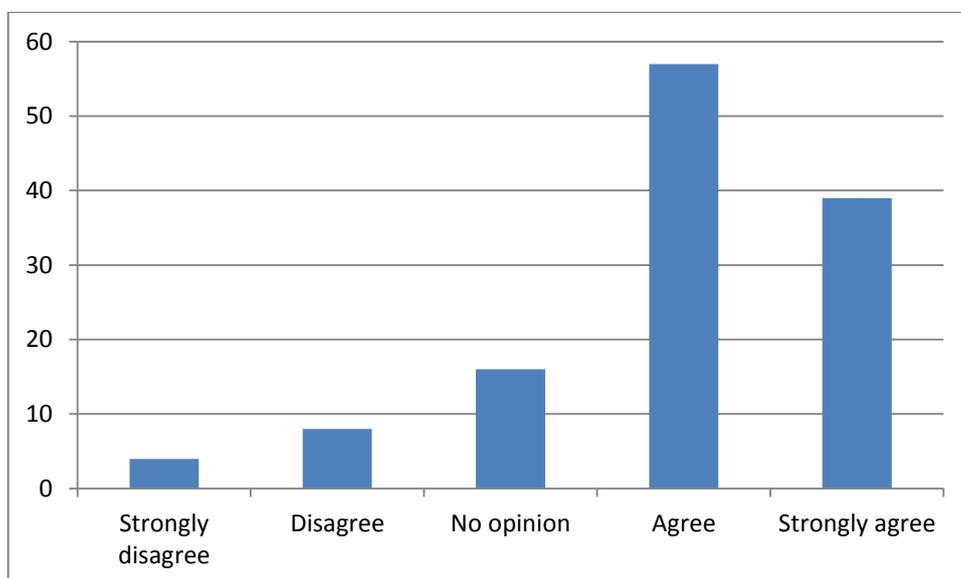### 3.2.4 Better able to support trainees to complete their training?

59% agree that they are better able to support trainees to complete their training, and a further 23% strongly agree.

> "This project has been fantastic. The structured learning and development approach has worked very well and helped me formulate more ideas around how best to provide opportunities for these types of roles within my work area."

> "The project has been fantastic for my own CPD as it has allowed me to focus on staff and volunteer management/training in fresh ways."

3.2.5 More interested in supporting work-based learning to develop new entrants to the sector?

46% agree that they are more interested in supporting work-based learning to develop new entrants to the sector, and a further 31% strongly agree.

"I am grateful to be involved in supervised training within the heritage sector, and strongly believe that the only way to keep, maintain and evaluate traditional skills within our society is to have approved accredited and dedicated teachers and trainers helping fellow crafts persons and conservators who fully understand and keep our crafts alive."

3.3 Trainers' comments on how the project has impacted on their knowledge and skills

72 of the 125 respondents gave open responses on how working on the project has contributed to their personal knowledge and skills. It was clear from the comments made that many trainers have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to support new entrants to the sector.

> "One of the many satisfying parts of my job is training and encouraging new people into this area of work. hanks to the HLF for making it possible to bring on talented young people who will benefit the heritage industry and be a great advocates in the future."

> "Although a great deal of extra work I thoroughly enjoyed supervising the trainees, learning from them as well as supporting them to reach their potential. We miss them very much and had hoped they could have become permanent members of staff."

In addition to the benefits to staff described above in Section 3.2, respondents also suggested the value of the project to organisational culture and to the wider sector.

> "The project has shown that trainees can make a significant contribution to our work; staff across the organisation now recognise the value of the programme and are keen to take part in similar work in their own areas."

> "It has been a very rewarding project to be involved with and has enriched our working environment. What skills I have hopefully shared has been amply rewarded by the exchange of ideas and a fresh perspective."

> "Work based learning and training new people in this way is sorely needed in the environment sector and this project is a great opportunity. Just need funding for creating those opportunities to keep being made available."

The majority of comments were positive. However, it may be useful to present some of the negative comments to suggest areas for improvement which were mentioned by more than a few. Most commonly, negative comments concerned perceived problems with those trainees targeted and the length of the training offered.

> "I support the need to widen the sector to those with disabilities but I question the restriction of these posts to those with a qualification below a certain level as it doesn't seem to be attracting the targeted 'audience' of those desperately trying to break into the sector."

> "I feel it is misguided to aim bursary conservation traineeships at the 16-19 age group when there are so many genuinely dedicated and enthusiastic older people who would benefit, and more likely progress, from a scheme following the 'skills for wildlife' structure."

> "The posts attract a huge amount of interest when advertised but the candidates interviewed seem to have little to no desire to build a career in the museum sector after the 12 month internship."

> "I believe that TWO years training is quite inadequate to teach a young person the highly skilled nature of our work. Traditionally apprentices had FIVE years on the job training before they were considered skilled."

A few of the negative comments concerned capacity constraints in relation to the work required for the project.

> "We have all been thrown in the deep end a bit here … this has to happen without any thought for the impact and pressure put on departments which is tricky for all sides during busy periods."

> "Personally it has been a steep-learning curve and quite hard to fit in alongside an already heavily-loaded job as there is only one person in the section. Also found it difficult to fit in the necessary theory side of the work in a purely work-based training [setting]."

> "The paperwork required to keep track of training and costs has been a steep learning curve, as this was the first time I have supervised a SftF student."

Finally, a few other comments suggested the importance of good management and training to make the most of the traineeships.

> "Specific expectations of project need to be set out better at the beginning as these seemed to change as project went along."

> "Time management is the main difficulty as regular work goes on and you want to make sure the trainee is getting sufficient support. Some [of the potential training] projects that were funding-dependant did not happen so some of the experiences planned for the trainee had to be adjusted."

> "Lack of relevant training for supervisors involved in this project has already been discussed with [the organisation], who have promised improvements for the next round of funded traineeships."

4 Conclusions

This section presents the conclusions of our analysis, assessing the extent to which the programme aims are being met at an interim stage of the projects' delivery.

4.1 Meeting the aims of the programme

Evidence collected from the organisational and staff surveys suggests that grantee organisations are delivering against the aims and objectives of the programme.

The projects are **increasing the range and quality of work-based training to develop skills gaps and shortages in the heritage sector.** Most of the training infrastructure did not exist prior to the Skills for the Future project: 83% of projects developed a completely new training programme and 87% developed a new model of delivery. Furthermore, 83% developed new training partnerships. The programme has enabled an expansion in the range, scale and quality of work-based training available for entry-level placements in the sector.

It is clear that the projects are **increasing the capacity of the sector to deliver training and share good practice.** As noted above, grantee organisations have made significant and fundamental changes to current training delivery. These changes are said to have benefited organisations to a great extent; grantees have now developed both the infrastructure and the organisational culture to support trainees. Practice is shared across the partnerships arranged for the project – 78% report new operational partnerships: on grantee websites, through presentations at conferences and events and in articles in the local and specialist press.

There are early signs that projects are **increasing the diversity of the heritage workforce.** This is not likely to happen to a significant extent overnight, but a small majority of grantees have made changes to recruitment processes for this project. There is evidence of new methods and channels for recruitment, and of new monitoring arrangements to track the success of outreach and diversity practices. Challenges remain if this aim is to be achieved across the programme.

4.2 Impact of the programme on organisations' ability to deliver training

The survey responses have shown that **the programme is having significant impacts on grantee organisations, their partners and the wider sector in terms of their understanding of and ability to deliver high quality vocational training**.

Organisations and staff alike have commented on the cultural shift that organisations have experienced as a result of developing and delivering their programme of training, as well as the establishment of a new training infrastructure through the development of the programme, the model of delivery and the training partnerships. Overall, 72% of project managers agree that their organisation is more able to offer work-based training opportunities than before the project.

These self-evaluation findings are supported by the reported outputs. Each project employs a varying number of trainees; 88% of trainees that have completed placements so far have left with an accredited qualification, and more than three-quarters of the trainees who have completed placements have since found employment. Within the context of the current financial climate, grantees have commented that this has reflected positively on the image and credibility of their organisations to produce trainees who are valued in the sector.

Finally, most training delivery staff agree that they have increased knowledge, skills and motivations to support work-based learning to develop new entrants to the sector.