Bhangra Renaissance in Kirklees

10/12/2012

Led by volunteers from the local community, the project focuses on the origins of the dance form of bhangra and its impact on the identity and shared heritage of participants in Kirklees and across the region. VIRSA (which means heritage in Punjabi) is a community group made up of young professionals and volunteers from the community who aim to research, practice and celebrate the heritage of South Asian Arts in Kirklees. Working with a range of services from the museums and libraries to the sports development teams and local schools, colleges as well as the university, we aim to strengthen the understanding and the preservation of memories based around bhangra, a folk dance from the Indian sub-continent.

Through this project we will be able to give participants a richer sense of identity and a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage of bhangra. The project will also be an opportunity to develop new bonds, understanding and fellowships with members of the wider community through the dissemination of the project, its research and findings in creative new and interactive ways.

Commenting on the award, Ranjit Uppal from VIRSA, said “We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and are confident the project will provide a valuable intergenerational experience for participants and the wider-community of Kirklees, as well as preserve the memories of the rich cultural heritage of bhangra.”

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund Yorkshire and the Humber, said “Bhangra music and dance features heavily in the heritage of communities that have migrated from South Asia to Kirklees in the last 50 years. This project will enable volunteers to learn new skills to uncover and celebrate the art of bhangra, bringing together different generations to learn about this unique heritage.”

Further information

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