Lottery funds groundbreaking digital technologies placement

10/02/2012

Adam Frost joined Historic Scotland this month at South Gyle, where he took up the HLF bursary placement based on his knowledge of digital archaeology and laser scanning.

Adam's post is one of 20 year-long equivalent placements that the HLF grant of nearly £500,000 will finance. The award supports training that focuses on the built environment and filling skills gaps in the heritage sector, and aims to ensure the preservation of essential conservation skills.

Adam (22) holds a Masters degree in computational archaeology and is joining the agency's digital scanning team. He will see first hand how their work plays a central role in several of Historic Scotland's major projects, including the Scottish Ten, which is documenting all five of Scotland's World Heritage sites, and five other important sites internationally. He also will gain an insight into the team's latest project to scan and document all of the agency's 345 historic sites.

Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs Fiona Hyslop said: "The Heritage Lottery Fund award to Historic Scotland will help secure the future of the nation's historic environment. Historic Scotland's pioneering scanning team are using laser technology to great effect, and their findings are contributing to the recording of built heritage nationally and internationally, as well as improving our understanding. This grant will help further that research.

"Future placements will also help Historic Scotland achieve its aim of enhancing practical conservation, and growing its engineering heritage and repair skills, as well as tackling energy saving and carbon reduction in the heritage sector. The HLF grant will also add to the wider fund of heritage skills, and improve employment opportunities for the participants."

At Historic Scotland, Director of Conservation David Mitchell said: "We are delighted to welcome Adam and to provide a learning environment where he can develop his knowledge. His academic background will make a positive contribution to our ongoing laser scanning and digital documentation projects."

Adam, from Dorset, said he was delighted to be taking up the post: "Already I've visited Fort George, near Inverness, where we scanned the Grand Magazine, and handed over the equipment that will allow the team there to complete the scan of the entire monument. I've also completed a photographic training course on the use of SLR cameras in the field."

Funding for Adam's placement was awarded by the HLF as part of its £2.6million investment in its Skills for the Future programme in Scotland. The cash is being used to support traditional conservation training, and combined with investment in more contemporary skills aims to reinvigorate and broaden the appeal of the heritage industry to job seekers.

Project Manager for the Scottish Ten digital scanning project Lyn Wilson said: "Adam will be working in digital documentation within the Scottish Ten and all aspects of 3D reality capture. We are excited to have him, and to be taking part in the Skills for the Future programme.

“Digital documentation is a fantastic growth area and Historic Scotland is at the cutting edge of this technology, which can be applied to the built environment and heritage landscapes. It can also be used to inform conservation practices, and assist with heritage management strategies for traditional buildings.”

The remaining HLF-funded placements at Historic Scotland will be offered in four sectors – digital documentation and visualisation of traditional buildings using laser scanning; engineering heritage; practical conservation and repair skills; and energy saving and carbon reduction in the heritage sector. The 20 placements funded by the HLF grant will be filled over the next three years.

Chair of the HLF, Dame Jenny Abramsky, said: “In the current economic climate we thought very hard about how the Heritage Lottery Fund could make a difference to people’s lives at a time of real need. The answer was an innovative and ambitious programme focusing on equipping people with practical skills to help them secure future employment.”

The HLF’s wider Skills for the Future programme offers work-based training in a range of skills that can be applied to care for buildings, landscapes, habitats, species, and museum and archive collections, as well as equipping people to lead education and outreach programmes, manage volunteers and use new technology. It focuses on vocational learning, helps meet the skills gaps identified by heritage bodies, and encourages potential trainees from all walks of life.

Notes for editors

1. Historic Scotland is an executive agency of the Scottish Government charged with safeguarding the nation’s historic environment. The agency is fully accountable to Scottish Ministers and through them to the Scottish Parliament.

2. Register for media release email alerts from www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/news. If you wish to unsubscribe at any time, please email hs.website@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

3. The Year of Creative Scotland began on 1 January 2012 and will spotlight and celebrate Scotland’s cultural and creative strengths on a world stage. Through a dynamic and exciting year-long programme of activity celebrating our world-class events, festivals, culture and heritage, the year puts Scotland’s culture and creativity in the international spotlight with a focus on cultural tourism and developing the events industry and creative sector in Scotland.

4. The Year of Creative Scotland is a Scottish Government initiative led in partnership by EventScotland, VisitScotland, Creative Scotland and VOCAL. More information and resources to help businesses engage with this project can be found in the Year of Creative Scotland toolkit.

Further information

Please contact David Gray, Communications and Media Officer, on 0131 668 8503 / 07721 959 962 or email david.gray@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.