A rush of support for new Liberation 1838 project

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The project will mark the 175th anniversary of the August 1838 liberation of nearly a million African people in the Caribbean. It is also about celebrating those who resisted enslavement, those who fought to end it, and others who worked in Britain and the Caribbean for better social, economic, and cultural conditions for the latter. Liberation 1838 will also research the key social, economic and cultural stories in the Caribbean leading up the hundreds of thousands of migrants to the UK from 1948, ie the Windrush era.

Development funding of £31,500 has been awarded to help Windrush Foundation to progress their plans to apply for a full grant in 2012.

The anniversary especially remembers unsung heroes such as Sam Sharp - Baptist lay pastor in 1820s Jamaica - and Paul Bogle - Baptist deacon in 1860s Jamaica. Exhibitions, workshops and educational material will present information on key 1820s activists in the Caribbean and Britain, as well as the British Parliamentary Debates of the 1830s.

The project, which will be based in the London Borough of Southwark, will conduct historical research into the main incidents that led to the passing of the 1833 Emancipation Act, and which led to the liberation in 1838 of Africans in the Caribbean. The project will create a website, prepare education material, hold community workshops and symposiums and present two educational exhibitions that tell the stories of liberation and legacies, using original documents, objects, and graphic panels. The touring exhibitions will visit libraries, and other venues.

Sam King MBE, co-founder of the Windrush charity and a former mayor of Southwark, said: “We’re delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this support. The project will bring to the attention of the public what happened in 1838 as many thousands of African people in the Caribbean left sugar plantations, looking forward to living their lives in peace and freedom from former slave masters’ whips. Also, we wish to let our young people here know about the contributions that their ancestors made to the prosperity and well-being of Britain.”

Sue Bowers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for London, said: “We’re extremely pleased to give initial support to the Windrush Foundation for their project, and we look forward to receiving the application for a full grant in the future."

Notes to editors

*A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

Windrush Foundation is a registered charity established in 1996 to promote good race and community relations, endeavouring to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, and working for equality of opportunity for all. It runs projects that particularly highlight the contribution (to heritage, the arts, public services, sport, entertainment,

commerce etc, in Britain and the Commonwealth) of the African Caribbean settlers who landed at Tilbury Docks, Essex, England in June 1948 on the ship Empire Windrush.

Further information

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