Over 200 people to be trained in heritage skills thanks to Heritage Lottery Fund investment

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Today, Heritage Lottery Fund announced an investment of £2,220,900 in six skills projects across Scotland through its Skills for the Future[1] and Training Bursaries Programmes[2]. This money will deliver 231 new paid training opportunities for people seeking a career in heritage. It will not only support traditional conservation training but also a wide variety of more contemporary skills, such as using social media to get people involved in heritage.

This extra money expands HLF's popular tailored skills programmes at a time when demand for training opportunities is high.

Colin McLean, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Scotland, said: "We have been overwhelmed by the response to these programmes which clearly shows a great hunger for skills training within our sector. Last year Museums Galleries Scotland alone received over 3,200 applications for internships. HLF has been championing work-based placements for a number of years and we are pleased to be in a position to give even more financial support. It is great news for the heritage sector which a decade ago feared that many key skills would be lost."

Skills for the Future offers work-based training in a wide range of skills that are needed to look after 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. Its focus is on vocational learning, helping meet the skills shortages identified by heritage bodies, and on encouraging potential trainees from all walks of life. Trainees will learn how to get families, schools and communities involved with their heritage, bringing heritage sites and collections alive for the next generation.

In 2010, HLF funded 93 training Skills for the Future training placements. One person to benefit was Shahana Khaliq from the Southside of Glasgow who is currently enjoying a year-long internship with Museums Galleries Scotland working with Glasgow Museums. Holding down three jobs, Shahana had been finding it difficult to establish a career: "I really want to be working in the museums sector where experience is so important but I come from a background where I don't have the financial support to go and do voluntary work. I have been working since I was 16 and simply can't afford to take any unpaid work because I have bills to pay, and a home to support. This paid internship has made a massive difference to me. I have learnt so many new skills and am much more confident. I am sure it will help me secure a job in something I have always wanted to do."

Skills for the Future programme

Projects that have received additional HLF support include:

Developing Ecological Survey Skills – Scottish Wildlife Trust

The Scottish Wildlife Trust has been awarded a grant of £308,400 to deliver a unique training programme which will combine ecological survey skills with technical and business training. The course is expected to produce a number of

highly skilled ecologists who will be able to provide information to planning authorities, local record centres, the National Biodiversity Network and other environmental organisations.

Museums Galleries Scotland Intern Programme – Museums Galleries Scotland

A grant of £416,000 means Museums Galleries Scotland can continue to deliver their popular HLF-funded interns programme which will create 20 one-year placements for new entrants to the sector to learn from expertise in the workplace. The interns will be hosted by museums and galleries across and will have the opportunity to develop skills in collections management, managing volunteers, delivering programmes to the public or development using digital technology.

Building Curatorial and Learning Skills for the Heritage Sector – Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS)

A grant of £292,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund will allow RCAHMS to deliver a programme of skills training in the documentation and dissemination of archive and museum collections. RCAHMS will offer an extra 13 one-year placements to people currently under-represented in the archive and museum sector. These will provide the opportunity to learn essential and transferable sectoral skills, including how to document, conserve and digitise collection items, and how to develop communications and education programmes which inspire learning, participation and enjoyment.

Natural Communities Programmes – The Conservation Volunteers

HLF's grant of £213,100 will make possible this joint BTCV/CVNI programme, designed to help people understand, value and conserve their natural heritage. Eleven trainees will be equipped with the skills to work closely with communities to identify local environmental needs, responsibilities and opportunities and to help them put their ideas into action.

Training Bursaries Programme

The Training Bursaries Programme, originally launched in 2004, provides high-quality on-the-job accredited training over a range of 50 skill sets. 81% of those who have completed placements have gone on to secure jobs in the heritage sector.

Projects that have received additional HLF support include:

Historic Scotland: Masonry Conservation in Scotland and Northern Ireland

Awarded £726,500 from HLF for 165 training placements in masonry skills.

The Conservation Volunteers: Natural Talent in Scotland and Northern Ireland

Awarded £264,400 from HLF for training placements in conservation and land management and biological recording skills.

For information about applying for a placement and project contact details visit the Skills for the Future page.

Both the Skills for the Future and Training Bursaries Programmes are now closed to new project applications but new training placements will be created until 2015. Following strong support for the skills agenda in our recent public consultation, HLF plans to launch plans for a new open skills programme later in 2012.

Notes to editors

Launched in July 2009, Skills for the Future is an HLF programme supporting organisations across the UK to create new training places. HLF has awarded grants totalling £26.8m across the UK under this programme enabling high-quality work-based training, the development of new qualifications and capacity building in the sector.

HLF's Training Bursaries programme has been running for the last six years delivering a wide range of skills training - including blacksmithing, botanic gardening, stone masonry, thatching and book conservation. To date, over 700 placements have provided accredited work-based training with highly-skilled crafts people and environmental specialists. Today's awards take total HLF investment in this programme to £14m across the UK.

Further information

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