Skills for the Future evaluation, 2014

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A grants programme funding high quality, paid, work-based training opportunities which help attract new entrants to the heritage workforce.

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PDF Gweld Interim evaluation of Skills for the Future cohort 1 project manager and trainer surveys as PDF (531.59 KB)	531.59 KB
PDF Gweld Interim evaluation of Skills for the Future cohort 1 trainee case studies as PDF(1.26 MB)	1.26 MB
PDF Gweld Evaluation of Skills for the Future - final report as PDF(720.49 KB)	720.49 KB

HLF commissioned an independent review and analysis of the 48 evaluation reports completed to date by Skills for the Future grantees. This represents 45 of 54 projects funded in the first cohort in 2010 and 3 of 39 projects from the second cohort funded in 2014.

The aim of this research was to:

- Establish the extent to which the four aims of the programme have been achieved through a synthesis evaluation.
- Conduct a meta evaluation, assessing the methodology, structure, content and quality of the evaluation reports.
- Provide recommendations to HLF (and future grantees) with a view to improving the quality and usefulness of project evaluations.

Key Findings

The achievements of the Skills for the Future grantees include:

- A consensus that the work-based approach is a very effective way to provide new entrants with the necessary skills to pursue a career in the heritage sector.
- A very high rate of successful outcomes for participants.
- An acknowledgement of the need for a more diverse workforce and some progress towards making change, but there is insufficient evidence to draw clear conclusions on progress towards significant workforce diversity.

The meta evaluation found that too few reports met the standard that would be expected of an evaluation of a project of the scale of Skills for the Future projects and showed that:

- There does not seem to be a correlation between the apparent quality of the project and the quality of the evaluation.

- A final evaluation is much more than a final activity report.
- Evaluating a project requires a different skillset to that required for project management or delivery and requires sufficient resource.

Overall just over one third, 37%, of reports were graded as good or excellent with just under half, 44%, not considered satisfactory overall. We will share finding and guidance with current grantees and encourage grantees with completed projects to share evaluation reports via our online community. This review forms part of the ongoing evaluation of Skills for the Future. Other commissioned reports are available on HLF's website.