Major boost for heritage skills

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Today, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has announced a further investment of £20million in 39 skills projects through its Skills for the Future Programme. This money will deliver 876 new placements, adding up to 918 years' worth of paid training opportunities for people seeking a career in heritage. It will not only support traditional heritage skills, key to sustaining our rich cultural landscape, but also a wide variety of more contemporary ones, such as business planning and digital skills.

Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of HLF, said: "Nurturing skills – of all types – continues to be a hugely important part of the Heritage Lottery Fund's portfolio of work. Skills for the Future is one of our most successful and over-subscribed programmes with fierce competition to secure funding. The 39 projects that have won through reflect the wide range of training and opportunities on offer in the heritage industry. We're delighted that through this significant investment, 876 new placements will be created right across the UK and hope that this additional funding will help encourage growth and build resilience within the sector."

Skills for the Future offers high quality work-based training in skills that are vital to look after our heritage: buildings, landscapes, habitats, species, and museum and archive collections, including 'born digital' material as well as equipping people to lead education and outreach programmes and manage volunteers. A new feature of Skills for the Future in 2013 is the inclusion of business skills, equipping new people to set up and run the next generation of small businesses that will sustain the industry. Through this programme HLF also continues to support organisations in diversifying their workforce, encouraging more young people or those from diverse cultural backgrounds to make their career in heritage.

The largest demand for grants amongst the applications has been from the natural heritage sector; consequently, a third of the successful projects are from that area of HLF's work. Dame Jenny Abramsky commented: "These decisions are timely arriving just after the State of Nature report has concluded that a devastating number of our native species are in decline. One of the ways to reverse this trend is by making sure we have sufficient numbers of trained people to protect and conserve our wildlife in the future and inspire the public to get involved. With £8m of HLF's current Skills for the Future budget being allocated to natural heritage projects we believe that it is another step towards helping reverse the situation we find ourselves in."

Projects that have received initial support include:

- **London Wildlife Trust - 'Wild Talent' - initial support for a £558,700 HLF bid, including £8,800 development funding**
  London Wildlife Trust is working with a number of partners, including London Natural History Society, the London Boroughs of Hackney and Islington, Red Kite Conservation Services, Greenspace Information for Greater London, Natural England, Surrey Wildlife Trust, Natural History Museum, Peabody, Catch 22 and Green Corridor, to recruit and work with 24 year-long trainees representative of the capital's diverse population. Trainees will undertake on-the-job learning alongside staff and a programme of training leading to a Level 2 Diploma in Environmental Conservation. They will also attend external placements with Natural England, a local authority or private contractor.

- **Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) – 'Skills in Action' - initial support for a £917,000 HLF bid, including £8,400 development funding**
  BBNPA's plans have been influenced by industry research demonstrating that skills shortages are the most common reason for vacancies in the environmental conservation sector in the UK. To rectify this BBNPA will create 36 one-year placements over a three- year period. Trainees will take a range of courses in Environmental Heritage Management, as well as other training to improve job prospects such as first aid and Welsh language skills. Experience will be gained on sites across the BBNPA and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and within Blaenavon World Heritage Site and Fforest Fawr Geopark.
- **Creative Skillset – 'Archives New Entrants Scheme' - initial support for a £309,800 HLF bid, including £10,100 development funding**
  Creative Skillset will design and set up 20 traineeships and internships within the audiovisual archive industry. The project will address key industry issues: skills shortages; limited opportunities for new entrants; and insufficient training capacity in heritage organisations. The project will safeguard the preservation of the UK's screen-based heritage by helping to recruit and develop the next generation of archivists. Individuals will receive 30 weeks of intensive training gaining a true breadth of work-ready technical skills.
- **Boiler Engineering Skills Training Trust – 'Locomotive-type Boilersmiths' - initial support for a £386,200 HLF bid, including £17,000 development funding**
  Boiler Engineering Skills Trust, based in York, is championing skills relating to the manufacture, repair and maintenance of the locomotive-type steam boiler and has recognised this area needs further investment. Ten trainees will undertake 12 month-long paid traineeships with each person receiving training from experienced engineers at a heritage boilershop such as Severn Valley Railway or Llangollen Railway. Trainees will go on short placements with other workshops as well as attending a day-release course at local engineering colleges to complete a course on boiler repair and manufacture.
- **Leeds City Council – 'Re-making Leeds: Heritage Construction Skills for the Future' - initial support for a £845,200 HLF bid, including £34,900 development funding**
  Leeds City Council, in partnership with Leeds College of Building and York College, plans to train local people to work on traditional pre-1919 buildings in the local area. Focusing on quality work-based training, accredited to NVQ Level 3, students will be drawn primarily from young people aged 19-25 years old who have just completed an NVQ2 in general construction. Providing a bursary will help break down the barriers young people face in moving into the heritage sector and ultimately increase the available pool of heritage skills in Leeds.
- **The Prince's Foundation for Building Community – 'Young Heritage Apprentices' - initial support for a £779,300 HLF bid, including £19,600 development funding**
  The Prince's Foundation for Building Community plans to train 36 young people aged 16-18 years-old in five traditional heritage skills: stonemasonry; carpentry; plastering; land crafts; and roofing. Each trainee will undertake a one-year course comprising two five-month placements and a range of short courses such as business skills. The project will address skills shortages identified by employers including those in the heritage sector.n/a

For information about placements and project details please go to the Skills for the Future section of the HLF website.

Skills for the Future is now closed to new applications but new training placements will be created until 2018.

Notes to editors

Launched in July 2009, Skills for the Future is an HLF programme supporting organisations across the UK to develop vocational learning programmes. HLF has awarded grants totalling £47m under this programme enabling high-quality

work-based training, the development of new qualifications and capacity building in the sector.

Further information

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