Newcastle’s Bangladesh Youth Organisation receives lottery grant to look back in time

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This 18-month project focuses on the settlement of the Bangladeshi community in Newcastle over the last 60 years.

Eighteen young people from across Newcastle will work in partnership with Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (TWAM) to record experiences from older generations using film and video. These short interviews will provide the building blocks for the creation of a documentary-style soap which will be screened in cinemas across Tyneside. This will be a fresh way for the young people to tell the story of their multicultural identity in a way that will attract a wide audience from across the community.

Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund North East, Ivor Crowther, said: "HLF is thrilled to support this project which demonstrates how important it is for people to gain a better understanding of their cultural heritage. It will allow current and future generations to learn about their own identities and compare them with others."

Alam Gir, from the Bangladesh Youth Organisation, said:
"We are all very excited and pleased to be able to take a deeper look into our histories and past lives. This project will give the NBYO a higher profile in the community and encourage others to take an active part in future projects."

‘Our Roots’ will work with young British Asian Muslims who in the past have felt disconnected from their roots and cultural tradition through trying to fit into mainstream society. They will explore the difficulties their families faced as new arrivals in the 1950s, living in a society that was very different from where they had lived before. From social interaction and acceptance, to the differences in food, clothing, family life and work, the young people will interview, collect information and turn it into the short soap- style documentary.

The 18 volunteers will work together and be the decision makers for the project. They will take on the responsibility for the creative writing, direction and production of the film. They will receive an accredited certificate of achievement to celebrate their newly developed skills in heritage, media, creative writing, project management and decision making. These skills will help build self confidence for their future.

There will be three initial screenings of the film at the (HLF- funded) Tyneside Cinema and the Bangladesh Youth and Community Centre. SKY channel 814, an international Bangladesh speaking channel, have agreed to screen the film in the UK and then across the world on the completion of the project.

The ‘Our Roots’ project was developed after the successful delivery of a small pilot project looking into the history of the Bangladesh community in the North East. The NBYO can now concentrate on sharing further knowledge of first-hand experiences on what life was like when they first arrived in Newcastle

Notes to editors

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic

places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects allocating £4.5billion across the UK including £214million in the North East.

Further information

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