Skills for the Future programme funding for the National Galleries of Scotland

04/04/2014

The 'National Galleries of Scotland Heritage Lottery Fund Collections Online Traineeships' is a training programme for 18-24 year-olds. The project will be a dedicated training programme focusing on developing skills which are in demand throughout the heritage sector.

Starting in September 2014, two groups of six trainees will spend 18 months gaining first-hand experience of handling, documenting, digitising and researching the NGS collection of photography and works on paper. It is estimated that 20,000-30,000 works from the collection will be digitised during the project, due to end in July 2018. The outcome of the trainees' work on the collection will be available online through the NGS website.

As museums and galleries across the UK and the world continue to widen access to collections online, the NGS recognises the need to provide the heritage sector with trained, qualified professionals who are able to deliver digitisation and online curatorial projects. The traineeships will offer a unique opportunity for its participants to learn a range of heritage skills and to gain an SQA-accredited qualification relevant to a future career in heritage. The trainees will learn skills ranging from art and object handling and storage, curatorial research to online curatorial interpretation and writing skills to copyright clearance and research.

Sir John Leighton, Director-General of the National Galleries of Scotland said: "We are delighted to have been awarded this generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable young people to have access to and training in the skills required for a career in the heritage sector. It will also help enormously in making our collections even more accessible."

The project will also be an opportunity for NGS to share their own leading expertise in this area and further collaborate with the National Library of Scotland, their shared-services partner. The trainees will be able to spend 20 weeks working with the National Library Scotland to learn from the library's experience with works such as books, maps, manuscripts and their extensive photography collection.

The trainees will be based in Edinburgh at the Scottish National Gallery and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, where the prints, drawings and photography collections are located, and the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art where the Collections Care department is based.

NGS is already strongly committed to offering volunteer placements across the organisation; over the last three years several volunteers have worked on digitisation-related projects, with the vast majority gaining employment in the culture sector and beyond following their internship. It is expected that at the end of the project, the trainees will become highly employable in the heritage sector, from galleries and museums to collections management, professional imaging, publications, research and more widely in cultural management.

For further information please contact the National Galleries Press Office on 0131 624 6314 / 6325 or email: pressinfo@nationalgalleries.org.