Heritage Lottery Fund invests £2million in skills in London

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These eight programmes will not only support traditional conservation training in the region but also a wide variety of more contemporary skills, such as managing volunteers and digitising archives and landscape surveying helping to reinvigorate and broaden the appeal of the heritage industry to job-seekers. They will provide almost 100 people with the chance to gain tangible heritage based skills and help preserve London's rich and diverse heritage.

The projects are at various locations all over the city ranging from Lambeth to Greenwich and Whitechapel, each equipping trainees with different skills across the heritage sector.

Dame Jenny Abramsky, Chair of the HLF, said: "When the recession kicked-in last year we thought very hard about how the Heritage Lottery Fund could make a difference to people's lives at a time of real need. The answer was an innovative and ambitious programme focusing on equipping people with practical skills to help them secure future employment.

"We have been astounded by the response which clearly shows a great hunger for skills training within our sector. We're delighted to be supporting 54 projects – from learning how to digitise archives to conserving historic gardens – and we know that the range of placements on offer will attract people who might not previously have considered working in heritage."

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 gaps identified by heritage bodies, and on encouraging potential trainees from all walks of life. Trainees will learn how to engage families, schools and communities with their heritage, bringing heritage sites and collections alive for the next generation.

The London projects come as part of an overall investment of £17m – treble the amount originally set aside - in 54** projects across the country. This money will deliver 808 placements and adds-up to an impressive 780 years' worth of paid training opportunities for people across the UK seeking a career in heritage.

The successful projects in London are:

Training the Curator – The British Museum, London
HLF's grant of £510,200 will bring together the British Museum and five regional partners to deliver a work-based training programme encouraging practical skills among a diverse future generation of heritage curators and collection managers. Trainees will learn how to handle and display objects as well as how to best communicate with the public. The programme will offer 15 people, at least half of them from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, an 18-month traineeship with six months based at the British Museum and 12-months at a partner museum.

Growing Skills Project – Trees for Cities
Located in the LB of Lambeth, Trees for Cities will use an HLF grant of £125,100 to deliver a three year project which

will provide training for 12 women in various horticulture skills. These skills will enable the trainees to learn how to preserve and nurture natural landscapes of historical value through hedge trimming, brush cutting. Work will be carried out at a number of sites across London such as the Edward Memorial Park in Tower Hamlets, Strawberry Hill in Richmond, even stretching down to the Pavilion Gardens in Brighton.

New Pathways – Eastside Community Heritage
This award of £211,900 will fund a 2.5 year project training 12 under 25's to deliver varied community heritage projects around London. Focusing specifically on oral history collecting, the trainees will learn: oral history interviewing and transcribing; how to develop relationships with people in their community; curating oral history exhibitions; and digitising. Trainees will get on the job training at a variety of venues including the Black Cultural Archives, Redbridge Museum, Autograph, the Refugee and Migrant Forum of East London and the London Metropolitan Archives. The training will also work towards an NQF L2-3 qualification.

Championing Sustainability in Heritage – Garden Museum
The Garden Museum, based in the LB of Lambeth will be running a four year project with an HLF grant of £100,900, training young people in sustainability within the heritage sector. The museum will provide training in organic horticulture and food production, environmental gallery practice, and volunteer management and access among a host of other skills. This project aims to fill current skills gaps in the sector enabling attractions such as museums, historic buildings and rural heritage networks to improve their sustainability and to reducing heritage loss due to environmental change.

Strengthening our common life by nurturing heritage skills – Cultural Co-operation
Cultural Co-operation's project will use its HLF grant of £321,400 to secure 13 placements across 2 years at an impressive and varied mix of 10 heritage organizations - 8 in London and 2 beyond. The placements themselves will focus on increasing cultural and ethnic diversity within these organizations, whilst the project as a whole aims to leave a permanent legacy for the sector by creating new and enhanced accreditation standards in Heritage & Diversity.

Conservation Skills Initiative – National Maritime Museum
The Conservation Skills Initiative is a project run by the National Maritime Museum based in Greenwich which holds some of the countries most important maritime heritage including, naval uniforms, ship models and navigational instruments. The project will run for four years using an HLF grant of £122,900, and will train six people over one year placements in the conservation and preservation department of the museum. They will concentrate on textiles and metal work, aiding the preservation of the museums valuable collections.

The Museum and its Future – Tate
The Tate will use an HLF grant of £688,600 to provide twenty work-based placements over 18 months. The programme will focus on providing training opportunities in practical skills such as the conservation, collection handling, and documentation of collections, looking mainly at 20th and 21st century materials. These training placements seek to help museums to look to the future; addressing skills gaps across the heritage sector as our collections of modern materials grow. Tate will be drawing on a network of partner museums across the country to ensure that trainees gain access to a broad range of expertise and networking opportunities.

Cultural Heritage Skills in London's East End – Whitechapel Gallery
Located in the LB of Tower Hamlets, the Whitechapel Gallery will run a 2 year project offering training and work placements to 12 local young people using a dedicated grant of £264,000. Trainees will learn a range of cultural heritage skills within the gallery itself including conservation and research skills, digital technology training and community engagement. The Gallery which first opened its doors in 1901 presents a wealth of modern and

contemporary art giving the trainees excellent hands-on experience in the museums and arts sector.

John Penrose MP, Minister for Tourism and Heritage, will be attending an HLF announcement event at the British Museum, hosted by Dame Jenny Abramsky, at 9.30am on Tuesday 8 June. This will offer the opportunity to meet both past HLF skills applicants and some of the new organisations being awarded money. Please contact Katie Owen on 020 7591 6036 / 07973 613820 if you would like to attend.

Notes to editors

** Launched in July 2009, Skills for the Future is a one-off HLF programme supporting organisations across the UK to create new training places. Grants range from £100,000 to £1million for a number of traineeships over a period of up to five years with an emphasis on high-quality work-based training.

** For a list of all 54 projects

Skills for the Future is complementary to HLF's existing £10m Training Bursary Programme which has been running for the last four years delivering a wide range of skills training - including blacksmithing, botanic gardening, stone masonry, thatching and book conservation. In the UK, over 700 placements have been created providing accredited work-based training with highly-skilled crafts people and environmental specialists. In combination with the Skills for the Future placements, this means that over 1,500 training opportunities have been created by HLF.

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 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK, including £850million to projects in London alone.

Further information

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