

**Keeping Heritage Alive
Skills for the Future
Evaluation Report 2015**



**The impact of a museum education training
programme across Oxford University Museums
and Collections**



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Summary

'Skills for the Future funds 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 utilise digital technologies. Awards made in 2009 and 2013.'

HLF website

Key Project Outcomes 2011-2015

- The delivery of high quality work-based training in museum education and outreach
- The creation of a successful training programme delivered across Oxford University Museums and Collections
- The development of a strong working relationship across the education departments of Oxford University Museums and Collections
- 16 full-time places for those facing barriers to gaining employment within the sector
- 88% of trainees securing employment with museum learning and engagement. The remaining 12% progressed to further study
- Active sharing of trainee experiences via social media – Twitter (780 followers) and Blog (12,000 views)
- Development of a series of formal training days for trainees and those in the wider sector. Enhanced reputation for the education departments across Oxford University Museums and Collections

'I believe having Skills for the Future on my CV really makes me stand out as a candidate as it provided me with so much experience and knowledge that will go with me in all my future roles. Another important aspect of the training was the way it encouraged me to think about and reflect on everything I do as an a Museum Educator, and I don't think I would have done this if I had entered the sector via another route.'

Carly, Cohort 2

Introduction

Oxford University Museums and Collections (OUMC) Skills for the Future project was delivered in partnership by the education departments at the Ashmolean Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Museum of The History of Science, Joint Museums Office, and Oxford Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum.

Made possible with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project aimed to deliver against the following:

- Increase the range and quality of work-based training to develop skills in the heritage sector
- Meet identified skills gaps or shortages in the heritage sector
- Increase the capacity of the sector to deliver training and share good practice
- Increase the diversity of the heritage workforce

The project was delivered between 2011-2015, and offered 16 training places for those who had experienced barriers in gaining employment within the museum education sector.

This report explores the many different aspects of the project and shares many of the positive outcomes, both for the trainees and the university museums.

Recruitment

The overall strategy for recruiting trainees to this project was to encourage applications from as wide an audience as possible. The traineeships offered a unique opportunity for those hoping to enter the museum education sector, and we hoped to select a diverse group of trainees in order to diversify the workforce and profile of the sector.

We asked that all applicants be over the age of 18, hold a degree in any subject, be eligible to work and study in the UK, and be able to demonstrate a barrier to gaining employment in this sector. Barriers could include some of the following: lack of relevant experience or postgraduate qualifications, financial reasons, change in career, physical and learning disabilities, mental health difficulties, and cultural barriers.

Applicants were also asked to describe how and why they wished to work in this particular sector.

The Project Coordinator worked with Human Resources at the Ashmolean to ensure the recruitment adhered to the University's Equality & Diversity policy, and to prepare all of the documentation for the three recruitments.

Below is a copy of the person specification used in the recruitment of the trainees

Person Specification:

Specification headings	Specification for this role		Measured by: Application (A) Interview (I)
	Essential	Desirable	
Experience	Evidence of commitment to education in a museum and collections environment	Experience of working with a range of ages and types of people	A, I
	Able to demonstrate how you have faced a barrier when trying to gain employment in a museum or heritage environment		A, I
	Experience of team work		A
	Enthusiasm for learning through objects or the natural environment		A, I
Qualifications	Undergraduate Degree level	Undergraduate Degree in heritage or learning related discipline	A
Skills	ICT literate. Competent and comfortable using Microsoft Office or similar applications and the web.		A
	Excellent communication skills, especially ability to produce word processed reports		A, I
	Excellent interpersonal skills		I
Knowledge	Good written and spoken English	Understanding of learning	A, I

Personal qualities or dispositions	Interest in how people learn Flexible, organised, independently motivated and reliable.	Awareness of the school curricula Creative/innovative thinker	A, I
Constraints	Occasional requirement to train or help at events in evenings and at weekends when necessary Willingness to receive training Willingness to train and gain experience in a range of organisations Willingness to visit other sites when necessary		
Other factors	Criminal Records Bureau check is a requirement of the post		

Across the three cohorts of trainees we received approximately 600 applications for 16 training places. A large majority of these were from candidates either just finishing first degrees or those who had completed an MA in Museum Studies. We also received many international applications, including a high number for cohort 3 from Spain, Italy, Cyprus and Greece. We received applications predominantly from White British / White European women, and a disappointingly low number of applications from men and those from Black or Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

Qualification / Accreditation

It was planned that trainees would work towards formal accreditation provided by the University of Oxford Department for Continuing Education. It was hoped that a new Postgraduate Certificate in Museum Education & Outreach would be created and that trainees would work towards this on a part-time basis as part of their training. As there was not enough time to have this established before cohort 1 started, it was planned that the project coordinator and project steering group would work on its development whilst the cohort was underway.

After proceeding through several university committees the qualification proposal was blocked at the final hurdle. This was due to the fact that the project coordinator and members of the steering group did not hold a PhD and also because to make the postgraduate certificate viable, the Department for Continuing Education required the course to be opened up to non-trainee applicants. This was not an option that could be pursued due to the fact that the project coordinator was employed specifically to support Skills for the Future trainees only, and therefore could not offer support to non-HLF funded trainees.

The project coordinator looked at other solutions, but due to time and resource was unable to find an alternative form of accreditation at the same level. As a result, the decision was taken to create a Certificate of Recognition in Museum Education & Outreach. Although this was not accredited it was felt that it would recognise the range and quality of the work delivered by the trainees. To be awarded the Certificate, trainees were expected to complete/attend the following:

- Three placements across OUMC
- Plan, deliver and evaluate an independent project
- Attend an end of traineeship interview
- Deliver a short presentation at an end of traineeship celebration event

In addition, trainees were offered the option of completing a relevant NVQ and completing both the Discover & Explore and Bronze & Silver Arts Award Advisor training. All trainees from cohorts 2 and 3 opted for the Arts Award training. None of the trainees wanted to complete an NVQ as they all held a first degree and were more interested in focusing on the practical elements of the traineeship. The Arts Award Advisor training was a popular option as the trainees could see that having this would be beneficial to their future careers.

Trainee Induction

Each cohort of trainees was introduced to Oxford University Museums and Collections and Skills for the Future during a week-long Induction. During this week trainees were introduced to each museum, staff within each education team, Skills for the Future and their training programme. The Induction enabled trainees to spend time getting to know each other before parting to begin their first placement. It provided an opportunity for trainees to feel as comfortable as possible before their training started, enabling them to ask questions about the training programme.



Induction Week

Training Placements

Each trainee completed three placements during their training. Placements provided the trainees with vocational on-the-job experience. Each trainee was given a 12 month training programme during their induction week, which contained all of the information they needed for their training to run smoothly. Each placement was planned to ensure that trainees would develop their skills and knowledge as the programme progressed. First placements focused on the basic skills needed to be a museum education officer, and therefore included opportunities to observe education officers delivering sessions and also a number of opportunities to deliver themselves. Placement 2 provided opportunities for trainees to be involved in the day-to-day organisation and delivery of learning. Placement 3 offered opportunities for more independent development of learning experiences, particularly through their planning, delivery and evaluation of an independent project.

By the end of their placements trainees were able to demonstrate:

- passion for the potential of learning from material culture
- understanding of how learning can be at the heart of heritage organisations
- ability to develop and deliver learning experiences and resources that meet the needs of a wide range of audiences and potential audiences
- manage and enthuse education volunteers
- the use of basic techniques to evaluate their work
- reflective thinking and an ability to offer peer support
- ability to work independently
- ability to successfully work as part of a team
- ability to share their work through blogs and social media

'Being able to run sessions and teach for real was extremely useful. This gave me practical skills in judging how to work with different audiences and structure sessions effectively.'

Vicki, cohort 1

'On the job training with the support of experienced staff has helped me quickly develop the skills needed to progress my career.'

Aisling, cohort 3

'The practical experience I have gained on the traineeship has been invaluable. Towards the end of the traineeship, I actually felt like a fully-fledged member of staff, actively programming and coordinating events.'

Jenny, cohort 3

One to Ones with the Project Coordinator

When creating the training programme for the Oxford Skills for the Future trainees it was recognised that arranging regular opportunities for the trainee to have a one-to-one would enable the trainee to talk about what they had been doing on placement and for the Project Coordinator to monitor trainee progress. In reality the one-to-ones covered so much more. They have been an integral part of the success of both the trainees' time on placement and on their future careers.

One-to-ones generally were held once every fortnight. They lasted approximately one hour and took place in any of the following environments: a quiet space away from others, in museum galleries, or over a coffee in a local café.

For many trainees one-to-ones were something new. Some of the trainees responded positively to the opportunity of chatting to their line manager, for others it took them longer to adjust, especially in feeling comfortable and confident talking about their own progress and needs.

To ease trainees into the one-to-ones it was important to introduce and explain the process and purpose of the meetings and how the Project Coordinator was there to listen, support, and advise. During the early one-to-ones the Project Coordinator's role was to lead the session, encouraging the trainee to engage with the process and to feel more confident in shaping the meeting to meet their own needs. On average trainees took between six weeks to four months to feel confident taking the lead in the one-to-ones.

The things covered in meetings varied hugely. Some of these included:

- Reflecting on things that had gone well and things that had been more challenging
- Update on placement progress
- Professional development
- Personal issues, including accommodation difficulties, health and well-being
- Placement and training difficulties
- Time management
- Working with specific audiences
- Discussing ideas for independent projects and finding ways to develop ideas
- Discussions about the wider museum and museum education sector
- Feeling low in confidence and finding ways to increase confidence
- Understanding the job market, identifying jobs, applying for jobs and interview preparation

'I am finding the 1:1s useful throughout the traineeship, the nature of discussions changes in accordance with what I'm learning. Reflection about my professional development and planning for my future careers are integral parts of the traineeship and normally I find both of these things

difficult to do. At university I didn't have a tutor or mentor, so while I find the 1:1 meetings occasionally stressful for a variety of reasons - reflecting on both positives and negatives of my work and attempting to rationalise my ideas for the future – I can now see the benefits of taking the time to talk with someone who has more experience and can see the bigger picture of museum education.'

Rachel McLaughlan, cohort 3

'1:1s are the time we get to speak about anything in regards to the traineeship with our Coordinator. Whether that is just an update on what we are doing at our placements, to help with job applications, or to just talk through a difficult situation we are experiencing. They are a great way to keep the lines of communications open with our Coordinator and a place that we can trust that what we share doesn't go beyond our meeting, unless the Coordinator and trainee agree. Personally, I cannot image the traineeship without them.'

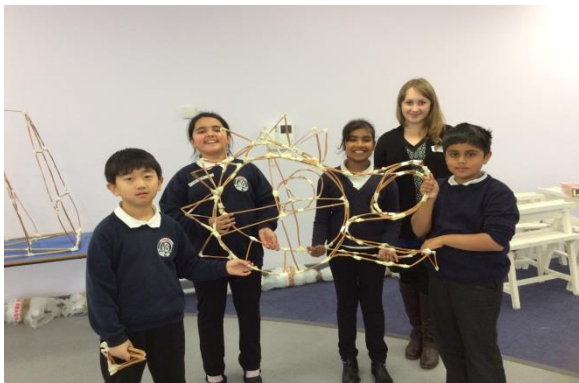
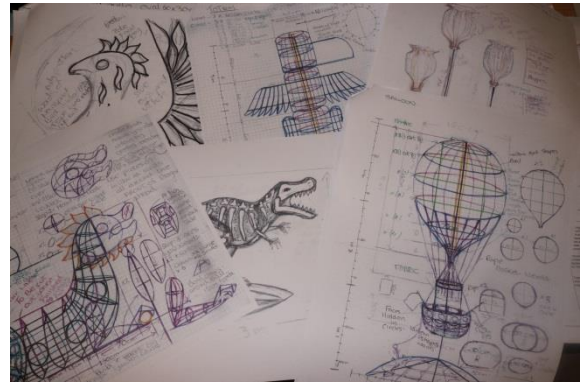
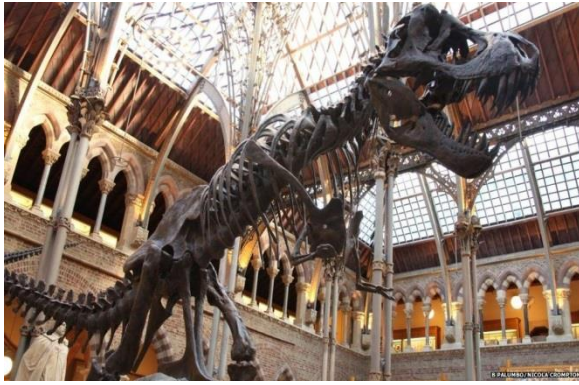
Corie Edwards, cohort 3

Peer Learning

Trainees met as a group on a fortnightly basis for peer learning sessions. These were programmed to provide an opportunity for trainees to meet up, share experiences and support one another. The Project Coordinator programmed the sessions to support the day-to-day experiences the trainees were having on placement and themes that had been covered in training days. Trainees were also encouraged to suggest topics for peer learning. The sessions were also used to welcome external speakers and trainers.

Each session started with a round the table catch-up, where trainees would update the group on what they had been doing on placement, sharing good practice and talking through issues as a group. This was followed by informal coaching from the Project Coordinator or external guests on a range of themes linked to museum learning, including community engagement, establishing a school programme from scratch, understanding the national curriculum, and safeguarding.

After reviewing peer learning sessions at the end of cohort 1, it was decided to build into the timetable an opportunity for the trainees to work together as a group on a community project. The project was built into the first half of the training programme of cohorts 2 & 3. This decision was made to provide an opportunity to work on a project as a group before having to start planning and delivering their own independent project towards the end of their traineeship. Cohort 2 worked with an adult community group, and cohort 3 worked with six local primary schools in key target areas of Oxford. Both cohorts delivered projects that linked OUMC into a local community festival 'Oxford's Christmas'.



Oxford's Christmas trainee peer learning project – using OUMC as the inspiration for school children to create large scale willow and paper lanterns

Training

Training Days

Prior to Skills for the Future the training opportunities offered by the education teams across Oxford University Museum and Collections was often delivered on an ad-hoc basis, with little overall strategy. The Skills for the Future project created a well-structured, formal training programme that has been viewed as a great success by staff, trainees, and those attending from external museums. Training days have included a comprehensive overview, supported by case studies and practical activities, of the key audiences in museum education, as well as focusing on learning theory, learning from objects, and evaluation.

Training days were held across all of OUMC and were planned and developed by the Project Coordinator and Heads of Education, including creating the training timetable and organising speakers. The Project Coordinator was responsible for advertising the training days and taking all bookings.

In addition to providing opportunities for trainees to develop their knowledge, the formal training days also provided them with opportunities to network with museum professionals and volunteers external to OUMC. Professionals at the early stages of their careers and volunteers were invited to attend the majority of the training days. People attended from Vale & Downland Museum, Bletchley

Park, The Oxfordshire Museum, REME Museum of Technology, Oxford Castle, Maidenhead Heritage Centre, Roald Dahl Museum, Reading Museum, Museum of Oxford, River and Rowing Museum, The Story Museum, Jane Austen House, and Geffrye Museum.



Presentation during training day

The series of training days for cohort 1 was as follows:

- How People Learn
- Learning From Objects
- Audiences: Early Years to Key Stage 2
- Secondary to Post 16
- Audiences: Families, Working with Volunteers, Finances
- Audiences: Adults / Harder to reach audiences
- Presentation Styles / Session Management
- Evaluation
- Museums, New Media and Web-based learning
- Museums, Funding, Policies and Museum Professionalism

For cohorts 2 and 3, 'Museums, New Media and Web-based learning', and 'Funding, Policies and Museum Professionalism and Finances' were delivered via peer learning sessions. On the

recommendation of the project steering group, and based on some feedback from cohort 1, they were replaced with two training days that specifically focused on Family audiences and on Volunteers. The Presentation Styles training day was replaced with one on Communicating Science.

Cohort 2 & 3

- How People Learn
- Learning From Objects
- Audiences: Early Years to Key Stage 2
- Secondary to Post 16
- Audiences: Families
- Audiences: Adults
- Working with volunteers / Volunteers and the Law
- Communities / Harder to reach audiences
- Communicating Science
- Evaluation

Example Training Day Programme

HLF Skills for the Future Training Day: Working with Secondary to Post-16 Audiences in Museums and Collections

Time		
10-10.20	Arrival Tea and coffee	
10.20 -10.40	Welcome and Introduction	Janet Stott <i>Head of Education, Oxford University Museum of Natural History</i>
10.40-11.10	Secondary at the Pitt Rivers Museum	Andrew McLellan <i>Head of Education, Pitt Rivers Museum</i>
11.10-12.00	Digital Sketchbooks	Helen Ward & Adrian Brooks <i>Deputy Head of Education Ashmolean and Art Education Officer Joint Museums</i>
12.00-12.45	Lunch	

12.45-1.20	Post-16 Learning in Museums	Chris Parkin <i>Lead Education Officer, Museum of the History of Science</i>
1.20-2.00	Classroom Management – A chance to consider the challenges posed by secondary school audiences in museums	Sarah Lloyd <i>Secondary Education Officer, Oxford University Museum of Natural History</i>
2.00-2.15	Tea/coffee	
2.15-3.00	Working with Secondary Pupil Referral Units	Neil Stevenson <i>HLF Skills for the Future Project Co-ordinator</i>
3.00-3.15	Review	Neil Stevenson

Trainees and external attendees were invited to provide feedback. This was used to develop and improve following training days. Feedback from cohort 1 suggested that the inclusion of more activities linked to presentations would enhance the overall quality of the training days. As a result a greater number of activities were introduced into the programmes for training days during cohorts 2 & 3.

‘Training days allowed me to network with other professionals in the field and share our experiences. They also gave great insight into the work / projects being done with audiences ranging from under 5s to the elderly in care homes. I learned so much from these days, about what I can do to improve the educational outputs of museums and how I can do this. Absolutely invaluable.’

Corie Edwards, cohort 3

‘The training days are a fantastic opportunity to share ideas, such as how to engage a variety of audiences with sometimes challenging collections, to create unique and inspiring learning experiences’.

Jenny Hulmes, cohort 3

‘Five days of free CPD for both museum professionals and volunteers, both locally and regionally is a rare gift that should be celebrated. Thank You so much!’

External attendee

‘Really great to have time to hear from such a wide range of highly experienced museum professionals. They all had insights and strategies which I will incorporate into my work.’

External attendee

‘The training days have consistently been interesting, inspiring, useful & memorable. I continue to use the knowledge I have gained in these days throughout my work and into my career.’

External attendee

Due to the success of the training days, Heads of Education from across OUMC have decided to continue running training days for those in the early stages of their museum learning careers. The number of training days and the content of each is currently being discussed and finalised, with a view to launching them in early 2016.

Arts Award

Trainees in cohorts 2 & 3 completed their Discover & Explore and Bronze & Silver Arts Award Advisor training. Although this was not built into the original Skills programme, it was decided by the project steering group to build this into the training timetable due to the increasing importance of the Arts Award in museums. Completing the training made the trainees more employable.

External Training

In addition to the formal Skills for the Future training days and Arts Award training, trainees were encouraged to attend training external to OUMC. These included a number of Museum Association events and conferences, including Moving On Up; Top of The Class: Creating Successful Schools Programmes; and Coming of Age: New Thinking in Museums Learning. They were also encouraged to attend courses offered by Oxford University, including InDesign and Podcasting. Trainees were also given the opportunity to visit other museums to research specific areas of museum education.

Job Success

Oxford University Museums and Collections welcomed 16 Skills for the Future Museum Education & Outreach trainees. Fourteen trainees have gained employment in museum learning and public engagement. The remaining two trainees have moved into the education sector as a Learning Mentor and a Teaching Assistant. Both former trainees are starting a course of further study in September 2015; one will be doing an MA in Museum Studies and the other a Schools Direct placement in primary education.

In total trainees have gained 40 jobs in museum learning, outreach and engagement. These include permanent, fixed term, full-time, part-time, and casual contracts. By cohort these include:

Cohort 1

Education Assistant, Museum of Oxford

Education Assistant, Buckinghamshire County Museum & Roald Dahl Galleries

X3 Freelance Learning Leaders, Cogges Manor Farm

Volunteering Assistant, Oxford University Museums Joint Museums Office

Education & Volunteers Officer, St Mary the Virgin Church (HLF funded project)

Education & Outreach Officer, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

Tour Guide, Bodleian Library

Communications Officer, Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Exhibitions Assistant, Museum of the History of Science

Public Engagement Officer, Museum of The History of Science / Oxford University Museum of Natural History



Vicki, Cohort 1 - Education & Outreach Officer, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

Cohort 2

Learning & Interpretation Officer, Lakeland Arts Trust

Education Assistant, Museum of Oxford

Families, Secondary & Projects Officer, Pitt Rivers Museum / Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Communities & Learning Officer, Stowe House, Buckinghamshire

Programmes Administrator, Schools, Families & Young People, Victoria & Albert Museum

Learning & Access Manager, Centre of The Cell

Administrative Assistant, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

Membership Development Officer, RSPB

Volunteer Coordinator, HLF Wild About Hampstead Heath

Administrative Assistant, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

Freelance Learning Leader, Cogges Manor Farm



Carly, cohort 2 - Families, Secondary & Projects Officer, Pitt Rivers Museum and Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Cohort 3

Lifelong Learning & Outreach Officer, Steam Museum & Lydiard Park House, Swindon

Family Festivals Coordinator, Museum of London, Docklands

X2 Workshop Leaders, The Story Museum, Oxford

Museum Teacher, British Museum

Session Leader, The Story Museum, Oxford

Interpretive Guide, Creswell Crags Museum & Visitor Centre

Learning & Events Assistant, Natural History Museum Tring

Volunteering Administrator, Oxford University Museums Joint Museum Office

X2 Learning Assistants, Buckinghamshire County Museum & Roald Dahl Galleries

X3 Learning Activities Assistants, Historic Royal Palaces

Families Assistant (temp), Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Learning Officer, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

Interpreter and Education Assistant, Galleries of Justice Museum



Aisling, cohort 3 - Family Festivals Coordinator, Museum of London Docklands

Each cohort of trainees received coaching and mentoring in relation to understanding job specifications, writing job applications, preparing for interview and interview technique. This was mainly delivered by the Project Coordinator in peer learning sessions and one-to-ones. In addition placement mentors offered support and advice. Throughout final placements, peer learning sessions were planned to focus specifically on writing successful job applications and how to be successful at interview.

'The support I received throughout the traineeship and especially the application support in the final placement built my confidence speaking about my skills and experience and made me more

articulate at interview. With the breadth of projects I worked on during the traineeship, I had fantastic examples to discuss at interview.'

Liz Danner, Cohort 2

A major element of OUMC's Skills training was to equip trainees with the skills that would be valued by employers. The Project Coordinator contacted several employers who had employed former Skills for the Future trainees. They were asked if the training had played a part in their reasons for employing the trainee.

'Skills for the Future did play a part in us offering her (Aisling) the position (Family Festivals Coordinator). She was able to show a broad range of experience, and that she had played a practical role in delivering part of a learning programme. It was useful to see she had been able to develop some of her own materials and ideas, as the job she is doing now requires her to work independently and to manage her own programme.'

Sandra Hedblad, Senior Learning Manager, Museum of London

'Skills for the Future did play a part in Carly being appointed to Families, Secondary and Projects Assistant at the Pitt Rivers Museum and Oxford University Museum of Natural History. At the Pitt Rivers we do advertise entry level jobs, but the response we get and the quality of the applications means that in reality a minimum of six months experience, sometimes more, is necessary. Paid work, either as an education officer or as a trainee shows that someone has decided that this person is good enough quality to be paid, and that counts for something. So a traineeship, to me, looks better than an MA because it shows the person has been responsible for delivery. A traineeship on its own is unlikely to secure a job at the Pitt Rivers Museum, and Carly gained further experience at the Museum of Oxford. So straight out of the traineeship Carly would look better than MA students, but not as good as someone with a job. With a traineeship and job experience she suddenly became very employable.'

Andrew McLellan, Head of Education, Pitt Rivers Museum

Legacy of Skills for the Future

Trainees

Trainees have developed the skills to plan, deliver and evaluate education programmes for a variety of audiences, including schoolchildren, adult learners and family audiences. They have been trained to understand learning styles and to put learning theory into practice, as well as developing the interpretation and narrative skills required to deliver object-based learning. Trainees have also gained the skills needed to successfully use new media and web-based learning in a museum or botanic garden context, and have developed practical experience of managing volunteers in the sector.

Trainees have been coached in how to apply for jobs and how to be successful at interview. Combined with the 'on the job' skills they have developed, they have been able to confidently demonstrate their employability. The number of interviews and job offers they have received are a testament to this.

Trainees have reflected on the importance of regular one-to-ones and opportunities to share skills and knowledge with colleagues. They will take this forward into their careers and implement similar opportunities in their place of work.

'The traineeship has been an amazing opportunity which has been instrumental in getting me to where I want to be career wise. The skills I have developed and experience I gained mean I am optimistic about my future career and excited to put what I have learnt to good use.'

Aisling Serrant, Cohort 3

'After nearly four years volunteering with museum collections and working front of house, my experience with Skills for the Future enabled me to gain a manager level maternity cover post. The difference in my role is huge, in terms of responsibility, reach and salary. Before getting onto the traineeship program I had grown frustrated with the difficulty in getting "my foot in the door" within the heritage sector. The traineeship enabled me to gain on the job experience within learning and engagement, which then enabled me to get a full time post in science engagement.'

Liz Danner, Cohort 2

Oxford University Museums & Collections

Skills for the Future offered an excellent opportunity for all staff involved to develop their own skills. Working with and supporting trainees was a new experience for many staff in the education teams across OUMC. Support was provided by the Project Coordinator and Heads of Education, and staff were encouraged to attend any relevant training via the University of Oxford.

For some staff, working with a trainee was initially a daunting experience. However, they soon came to realise the positive impact trainees had on their teams, their work and how it made them feel about their own skills and knowledge. As a result staff enjoyed sharing their experience and case studies with trainees and external museum professionals at training days.

'I value working with trainees because they offer a new perspective on what we do. When you're flat out delivering or developing, you often don't allow yourself time to sit back and think about whether this approach is the best one. You've always done it this way, so why would you change it now? But once you start talking about this with a trainee, you need to justify what you're doing and why you're approaching it in that way. This forces you to reflect on your own practice, and offers the opportunity to discuss the trainee's opinions and suggestions. With experience outside of Oxford University, and a pair of fresh eyes to look at what we do, trainees help keep us on our toes.'

Rachel Parle, University of Oxford Museum of Natural History

An important legacy for the museums is that each of the trainees who moved on to a career in museum education have taken everything they learned here in Oxford with them, and are now beginning to implement this in their places of work. They have been immersed in detailed discussion, observation and delivery and will therefore act as great advocates and ambassadors for the quality of museum learning at Oxford University.

Throughout the project all of the museums worked exceptionally well together. It is hoped that the relationships between the museums will continue to develop and that they will continue to work together in the future.

'Our team now has experience of training and mentoring team members; gained skills and knowledge. We would feel confident about taking on trainees if another opportunity arose.'

Head of Public Engagement, Oxford University Museum of Natural History

'We have developed skills and knowledge within the Ashmolean Education team about working with trainees. We would now be confident in taking this forward if other opportunities arose. We have a body of knowledge that we can draw on.'

Head of Education, Ashmolean Museum

'The overall positive experience of having trainees has made us more open to the possibility of having trainees in the future.'

Lead Education Officer, Museum of The History of Science

'We definitely tried some new things which we wouldn't have otherwise, e.g working with children's centres and other outreach groups such as MIND on a growing food project, and starting Science Saturdays at the University Museum of Natural History for families with children aged 8+.'

Head of Volunteering & Outreach, Joint Museums Office