



# THE CULTURAL HERITAGE PROJECT EDINBURGH



supported by



# INTRODUCTION

Action for Children have recently secured £125K of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to implement a two-year inclusion project for young women from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds who attend High Schools in the Edinburgh area.

The project is multi-layered and aims to explore the children's heritage as a positive means of supporting them to overcome barriers arising from cultural traditions, discrimination and negative media portrayals; and through building their self-confidence, enhance their opportunities to become empowered and motivated leaders of the future.

ENSA's partnership with Action for Children in delivering the project was a key component in the success of the Lottery Funding bid and this paper describes our commitment and that of our student members who will be volunteering with the project.

# SCOPE OF PROJECT

Action for Children works with over 300,000 of the most disadvantaged and hardest to reach children and young people, and focuses on helping them break through injustice, deprivation and inequality.

The project will enhance participants' sense of identity and celebrate diversity and inclusion. Participants will research historically strong women as positive role models and explore their own oral histories by working with their families and the wider community: gaining stories which will then be collated, captured and documented.

Commencing in September 2016, the project will work with 50 young women attending four high schools in Edinburgh: Royal High, Broughton, Portobello and Drummond Community. The project will form part of their school curriculum and participants will develop their learning with the support of Edinburgh University lecturers, National Galleries of Scotland curators, Action for Children, ENSA and our student volunteers.

Curators will provide bespoke workshops and access to selected paintings and objects dating from the 1600's, including collections not normally open to the public. Study workshops will also be provided by heritage experts from two departments at Edinburgh University, and these sessions will produce rich content and narrative for a project website. The website will include visual art and a documentary film, produced in partnership with local artists and film organisations.

The project will be launched at an event at the Scottish Parliament and will close with an exhibition at the National Gallery of Modern Art.

In addition to the Heritage project, participants will also have access to a bespoke Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) programme which will take into account the multiple cultural barriers to engagement with the Award. The DofE is particularly keen to engage with non-traditional participants, ensuring they are able to leverage the wide range of opportunities and skills attributed to the achieving Award and are delighted that this aspect of the Funding bid was successful.

# ENSA & STUDENT VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

ENSA's involvement in this project aligns with our Volunteering, Leadership and Community strategy which focuses on supporting our student members to make a valued and lasting contribution to their local communities. Through this project our members will have the opportunity to engage with a diverse group of young people facing cultural barriers to their personal development, and in doing so nurture their own commitment to social responsibility and global citizenship.

ENSA will recruit 8 Edinburgh Napier students who are DofE participants to work alongside the professional teams (curators, lecturers and project co-ordinators) over a sustained period to support the school children throughout the project: participating in weekly classroom sessions and undertaking related activity within the community.

The student volunteers will have an opportunity to get involved in the varied aspects of the project but a key component of their work will be supporting the school children to use their experience to evidence and obtain a Bronze or Silver DofE Award. In parallel our students will also be DofE participants and will be using their experience working with the school children to evidence their own Gold DofE Award.

ENSA's role will be to recruit, co-ordinate and support the student volunteers throughout the duration of their involvement with the project: providing opportunities for personal development guidance, employability reflection and keeping them on track as they progress towards their DofE Award.

ENSA, and its own team of student leaders, will deliver all the required DofE training to the school children, student volunteers and Action for Children employees working on the project, including delivering the DofE Leadership SCQF Level 5 course framework. Student participants will also have the opportunity to undertake leadership roles within the School framework for DofE which will enable them to participate in DofE activity beyond their University careers. The school children and student participants will also be able to access ENSA's DofE kit and equipment store to facilitate outdoor expeditions.

Throughout the project timeline there will be additional opportunities for Edinburgh Napier students (who are not undertaking DofE) to participate in roles such as website design, social media management, events organisation, film making, and roles working with the young people in developing their art projects.

ENSA has committed staff resources to manage this partnership for the duration of the project, from 2016 to 2018. There will be a recruitment and selection process for student applicants which will be publicised within the University and student community but initial enquiries can be made by contacting [e.snape@napier.ac.uk](mailto:e.snape@napier.ac.uk) (DofE Co-ordinator) or [m.wood@napier.ac.uk](mailto:m.wood@napier.ac.uk) (DofE Manager).

# OUTCOMES

The school children participating in the project and our student volunteers will all benefit from the learning and development opportunities inherent within the project.

The school children will have the opportunity to inform their peers and the wider community about their heritage research through public events, exhibitions, a website, presentations and a professional heritage documentary. This will capture participants' learning to provide a valuable project legacy. Materials will be accessible to any organisation that wants to provide similar or related heritage learning opportunities.

Through mentoring, support and guidance from the student volunteers our aspiration is that the young women participating in the project will be encouraged to consider Further and Higher Education as an option in their futures.

Some of our student volunteers may also be able to use their participation as part of their academic programmes, where there is a requirement for projects or placements to be undertaken within the external community. ENSA will be liaising with academic and placement teams to optimise the benefits of participation for the student volunteers.

All participants will use the project to contribute towards achieving Bronze, Silver or Gold DofE awards. The school children's achievements will be acknowledged at a formal event at the Scottish Parliament while our successful student volunteers will be invited to Holyrood Palace for the presentation of their award.

The planned heritage art exhibition at the National Gallery of Modern Art will provide an excellent public outreach opportunity for all the organisations involved, as well as demonstrating the cultural and artistic value of the work the young women have been undertaking. The engagement of MSPs in a project event at Holyrood will mean the impact of the young women's work will have the potential to influence national debate and policy making.

Throughout the project, Action for Children and the partners in this project, will be providing regular publicity updates on the achievements and activities of the participants and volunteers, and Action for Children will be producing regular reports for the National Lottery Heritage fund as a result of their financial investment.

by

**Maxine Wood** - ENSA Depute Manager and DofE Manager

**Ellie Snape** - ENSA DofE Co-ordinator

**Rojan Subranami** - VP Reps & Volunteers