

South West Museum Development Equality Action Plan 2018-2022

This Equality Action Plan should be read in tandem with the Bristol Culture – Equality Action Plan as the host organisation of South West Museum Development and the employer of the core South West Museum Development team.

1. Introduction

This document sits within the context of the Bristol Culture Museums 2018-2022 Equality Action Plan and sets out the direction of our equalities work over the next four years. It ensures that we deliver the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people. It also draws upon, and complements, Bristol City Council's Equal Opportunities policy.

This Equality Action Plan covers the period 2018-2022. Our approach is to embed this commitment to equality in all our areas of work from processes and people to programmes. It is a working document that sets out a framework for action. The South West Museum Development programme will work with Arts Council England to embed the Creative Case for Diversity both across the core South West Museum Development Team and local Museum Development Officers to support museums apply the Creative Case, but also through core services such as the small grant programme and South West Museum Skills training programme.

2. Mission and vision

Bristol Museums' mission is to be 'excellent, inclusive, resilient, valued'.

South West Museum Development Programmes' mission is 'to work with museums and partners to drive ambition, excellence and resilience to support a thriving sector to deliver valued and inspirational engagement with audiences and communities'.

The Museum Development Equalities Action Plan (EAP) contributes to this mission by saying what we will do to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in all areas of our work so that diverse people can participate, exercise voice and influence, and benefit from our work. We are also committed to making sure the museum workforce is more diverse.

This ambition will primarily be achieved by South West Museum Development through working with the museum community to diversify the volunteer workforce and embrace a more diverse volunteer work force which reflects the local community and focus on the needs of communities, particularly on those who come from lower social-economic backgrounds, age and disability. This strand of work will operate in tandem with the Audience Insights element of the South West Museum Development programme of work. We will proactively seek new partnerships with organisations that can support South West Museum Development to provide effective development support and resources to museums in order to realise this ambition. These include The Disability Cooperate Network for

Museums, The Health and Wellbeing Alliance (SW and national), Kids in Museums, Trinity and the Real Ideas Organisation (Arts Council England Bridge function).

3. Implementation

All staff will take responsibility for delivering the EAP through their work programmes.

We will work in partnership with relevant organisations to deliver the plan including Bristol City Council's Equality and Community Cohesion Team, the museums and community partners who are working with us and appropriate support networks.

Progress against the plan will be reviewed quarterly and reported to the Arts Council England, The South West Museum Development Programme Steering /Advisory Group and Bristol City Council. We will also review the plan as a whole annually as and make any changes required.

4. Our priorities

We aim to pro-actively address inequalities and promote community cohesion. We work hard to support museums to remove the barriers that diverse people may face and to be user-friendly for everyone:

- By supporting museums to create environments that are physically and intellectually accessible, based on the requirements of Accreditation and the Creative Case for Diversity.
- By supporting museums to understand their audiences so that they can deliver a varied programme of exhibitions, events and activities to ensure relevance and interest to diverse communities.
- By supporting museums to provide more diverse volunteering opportunities which reflect the makeup of their local communities.

We need to be able to understand museums in the region and their workforce based on sound data to inform how we focus our resources. By capturing data from museums in the region and more widely with partner regions this has informed, and will inform in future, our planning and decision-making.

The main protected characteristics that form the focus for South West Museum Development equalities and diversity work is Age, Social – Economic and Disability. These priorities are reflected in our EAP objectives set out below as well as in our Programme Plan.

5. Our objectives and measuring success

Our equality and diversity objectives and performance measures are described below. They are based on our research and data collected to date. All of our EAP objectives are embedded in the Museum Development Programme Plan which is currently under development. We will work with Arts Council England to ensure the wider team is confident in the application of the Creative Case for diversity and support museums to adapt to and adopt this approach through our programmes of development support and the production of relevant local case studies to disseminate good practice.

Museum Development Programme SMART Equality and Diversity Objectives

- **More Sustainable and Diverse Volunteering:** The South West Museum Programme will develop its existing Sustainable Volunteer Development Service to provide development services to Accredited Museums across the South West. The service will focus on the diversification of volunteers in response to consultation with the sector and a needs assessment carried out during 2014-15 (Horrell, 2015) and the work of the programme which was established in 2016-17.
 - Increased diversity in the age range of volunteering has been identified as a key priority in existing research. Projects will be evaluated and practice shared through the South West Volunteering Forum and published online within the South West Museum Development Annual Report.
 - The programme will invest in this service with the ambition of changing and improving the practice of museums in order to support the diversification of the volunteer workforce. The provisional target (subject to the results of the 2016-18 activity) is to create a sustainable diversification of the volunteer workforce in with 12 museums across the three years 2018-21.
- **Succession Planning:** The programme will address the urgent need of museums to address succession planning and involve younger and more diverse people in their governance and operations. Through the establishment of a regional community of interest group, the South West Volunteer Forum and guided by the South West Museum Development programme steering group, the programme will work to align with major initiatives in volunteering and programmes delivered with fellow museum NPO and SSO in the region and nationally to ensure effective collaborations and shared best practice.
- **Understanding and responding to audiences:** The programme will support museums to improve standardised audience data collection to increase their understanding of audiences by working collaboratively with The Audience Agency to support museums to adopt the Audience Finder framework and through the coordination of events in the region. In line with the national Museum Development Objectives Accredited museums will be supported to better understand audiences and confidently apply data to inform their planning. We will work with key partners The Disability Cooperative Network for Museums and The Health and Wellbeing Alliance in order to implement programmes of work which respond to the identified needs of underrepresented groups.

- **Accessible Collections:** The programme will support museums to improve the quality of how they develop research, care for interpret and share their collections in order that they are accessible to wider, more diverse audiences. We will invest jointly with the Bristol Museums NPO in the development and delivery of a regional Digital Engagement Officer to provide a specialist advisory service to meet the digital development needs of museums across the region as part of this increased reach.
- **The South West Museum Development Programme Steering Group:** The Partnership will review the balance of representation on its board in preparation of the new programme period to ensure appropriate and diverse stakeholders are reflected. This will involve the transition from a board with members representative of the region's MPMs to a board determined by key areas such as Partnerships, Volunteering and Digital. This work will be undertaken in the final six months of the current programme with the intention of implementation by April 2018.
- **Accessible Skills Development:** The programme will deliver an accessible and low-cost skills programme comprising at least 20 sessions in each year of the programme to support the needs of the paid and volunteer workforce in museums. Training provision will be integrated with national SSO training and skills offer in order to support accessible access across the region. Consideration of the access needs of people wishing to participate in skills development is supported as far as possible. User data relating to accessible locations across the region and ability to travel directly inform the biannual training needs analysis. Training content will include specific sessions on the Creative Case for Diversity and as the delivery of Arts Council Creative Case briefings for MD teams in undertaken, will be addressed and woven through the wider training programme in order to embed these principles.
- **Support to Access Skills Development:** The programme will continue to provide a selection of training bursaries as a means to limit the disadvantage of the workforce at the further reaches of the region, especially where this enables access to national or out of region skills opportunities and sector conferences.
- **Involving Children and Young People:** The programme will continue to work with national SSO specifically Kids in Museums, Real Ideas Organisation and other stakeholders such as Trinity and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The network of local Museum Development Officer network will continue to support museums to engage with schools, foster local partnerships with youth organisations in order to support museums to increase participation in the local heritage.

Links to other strategies, plans, initiatives, priorities

This plan mirrors the Bristol Museums equality Action Plan 2018-2022 and is linked to, and supports, the following:

South West Museum Development Programme Plan 2018-2022
(Currently in the process of negotiation)

Equality Act 2010

<https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Bristol City Council's Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/eliminating-discrimination-council-policies>

Museums Change Lives

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-change-lives/25062013-the-vision>

The Museums Association Code of Ethics

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/ethics/code-of-ethics>