Curious Minds awarded £1m National Lottery funding to improve young people's involvement in heritage

Friday 14 July, 2017

Cultural education charity, Curious Minds, is delighted to receive news that it has been awarded funding from Heritage Lottery Fund's Kick the Dust grants programme. The funding is for a 5-year project that will create a strategic partnership between heritage and youth sectors in the North West. Curious Minds' plan is to deliver lasting transformational change and the project will be called Hope Streets.

Working with Museum Development North West (MDNW) and Youth Focus North West (YFNW), Curious Minds will work to test, refine and embed new models of youth engagement and leadership; to locate the heritage sector at the heart of young people's services in the region.

There's a Hope Street in almost every town and city in England. Hope Streets will take young people on an expedition into the past, to delve into the hidden history of their local Hope Street. Through Hope Streets, young people will begin to see that local heritage is theirs to own. It will provide a platform for 11-25 year olds from diverse backgrounds to work with heritage organisations, artists and experts to interrogate, agitate and re-present their local heritage to produce Festivals of Hope.

Thanks to National Lottery players, Curious Minds has been awarded a 'stage one pass' for this project by Heritage Lottery Fund, which gives six months to develop ideas, plans and partnerships. The delivery phase starting in Spring 2018 will concentrate on engaging young people, heritage and youth services professionals in 5 projects located in Merseyside, Greater Manchester, West Cumbria, Lancashire, and West Cheshire.

Kick the Dust is Heritage Lottery Fund's pioneering new grants programme, distributing £10m from the National Lottery to youth organisations across the UK. At its core is a group of young Heritage Ambassadors, who are on a mission to 'stir up heritage', and have helped advise on how the money should be allocated.

The Hope Streets project will include the delivery of youth-led Festivals of Hope in five towns across the North West by the end of 2019. Later phases will then concentrate on consolidating, improving and sharing the learning through local cultural education partnerships.

Commenting on the award, Curious Minds Chief Executive, Derri Burdon, said:

"Hope Streets will locate the heritage sector at the heart of young people's services as a conduit of hope in post Brexit Britain. It's an ambitious programme designed to deliver lasting transformational change. Young people will witness first-hand the social value of heritage and the way it can bring communities together in new ways with what we anticipate will be astonishing results."

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