



MLA Workforce Development Statement

April 2009

This document outlines the MLA's vision for developing the workforce in the museums, libraries and archives sector. It sets out the priority workforce activities funded and supported by MLA over the next three years. These priorities are:

- Leadership development
- Widening entry routes
- Increasing the demographic diversity of the workforce
- E-skills development

INTRODUCTION

Museums, libraries and archives play an important role in the cultural, social and educational life of communities across England. Increasingly there is recognition and expectation of the ever greater contribution that museums libraries and archives can make to the quality of life for people and local communities outside of their traditional arenas. These include positive contributions to health and wellbeing, combating social exclusion, life long learning, community empowerment, placeshaping, regeneration and supporting the local economies. A confident and resourceful workforce is essential to drive the necessary improvement in the sector in order to contribute fully to these wider agendas. ¹

Since 2005, MLA Council has invested approximately £2.7 million pounds in workforce development nationally through the workforce development programme Learning for Change ². This investment has been used to fund MLA generated activities and programmes and has been offered as grants to organisations to run projects and programmes, (in particular the Sector Skills Councils). Substantial investment has come through the Renaissance programme.

MLA currently funds two sector skills councils: Creative and Cultural Skills and Life Long Learning UK. Both have been asked to support MLA's current workforce priorities and to with the other sector skills councils and to prioritise the following areas of activity

- widening entry routes
- greater workforce diversity
- staff development and continuing professional development (CPD)
- the development of national occupational standards (NOS)
- leadership and the development of entrepreneurial skills
- guidelines for work placements^{3/4}

¹ A Passion for Excellence- an improvement strategy for culture and sport, LGA, 2008

² Figures from MLA finance department. At the time of writing, investment by former regional agencies is not known

³ CCSkills funding agreement 2008-9

⁴ LLUK funding agreement 2008-9

DEVELOPING A NEW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A new policy environment

The policy environment has moved on since MLA produced its last workforce development strategy, Learning for Change, in 2004. The sector is now propelled by the powerful drivers of the Leitch review, A Passion for Excellence, Every Child Matters and the Fresh Minds report.

- The Leitch Review described how along with all of UK workforce, museums, libraries and archives must develop an excellent, world class workforce to help to secure the future prosperity of the UK.
- A Passion for Excellence⁵ challenges museums, libraries and archives to develop a highly skilled and excellent workforce that is able to improve the sector and the services that are delivered.
- The Freshminds/DCMS report⁶ highlighted how the sector needs to engage with non-traditional audiences, and the need for community relations skills is reinforced by the DCLG White Paper, Communities in Control which calls for a greater role for communities in developing and delivering services.
- Every Child Matters⁷ calls for museums, libraries and archives to make a positive contribution to the wellbeing and development of children and young people in the UK.

Responding to the recession

The sector has a part to play in supporting communities to mitigate the worst effects of the economic recession. Museums, libraries and archives must develop services to counter social and economic deprivation which can fracture community cohesion, a rise in poor health (including mental illness) and domestic abuse. The sector (particularly libraries) has a long tradition in developing services to promote social inclusion, provide information and guidance and opportunities to develop new skills for jobseekers. This good practice in promoting informal learning must now be shared and developed.

OUR VISION FOR THE SECTOR

The museum, library and archive workforce should be vibrant, diverse, and well-led. It should be able to innovate and to seize opportunities to develop services and to form new strategic and delivery partnerships.

⁵ A Passion for Excellence

⁶ Culture on Demand – How to engage a broader audience, DCMS/Freshminds, 2007

⁷ <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

It should be able to build a sustainable sector and demonstrate the value of that sector to national and local stakeholders.

In order to achieve this, between 2009-2012 MLA's future workforce development policies and programmes will focus on:

- **Leadership**
 - Developing and supporting leaders who are visionary, innovative and able to take risks.
- **Widening entry routes**
 - Identifying and disseminating new approaches and best practice to recruitment, retention, training and development.
 - Supporting new entry routes and progression pathways and improve entry level training.
- **Increasing the demographic diversity of the workforce**
 - Diversify the workforce at every level, including governance.
- **E-skills development**
 - Ensure that there is a core competencies framework in place and support a culture of CPD and continuous learning so that the sector has the skills it needs to engage in priority areas such as e-skills.

PROPOSED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Workforce Diversity

Delivered 2009-10

- Develop our diversity and equalities policy including the business case for a diverse workforce
- Commission research into the ethnic makeup of the museum, library and archive workforce across England and use this to set diversity targets for the sector and evidence progress.
- Continue to support BAME leadership courses such as Powerbrokers, Diversify management courses and Encompass, but set in train new measures for evaluating their effectiveness

Delivered 2010 onwards

- Reinvigorate Diversify by increasing the numbers of management trainees, working with Board members and trustees; providing equality and diversity mentors for organisations
- Develop a diversification scheme for archives as part of the action plan to accompany the Archives strategy

- Work with DCMS to develop an action plan to increase diversity at board level for national museums, and encourage the sector to follow best practice examples.
- Set diversity targets within our funding programmes.

Widening Entry Routes

Delivered 2009-10

- Support organisational and cultural change to ensure that entrants from new pathways are valued in environments where they are able to succeed.
- Continue to develop and fund apprenticeships and Foundation Degrees and work closely with the SSCs to ensure that the qualifications are welcomed by employers.
- Use the NOS as a core competencies framework to support a culture of CPD and continuous learning.

Leadership

Delivered 2009-10

- Continue to fund the Clore leadership programme and Clore short courses
- Continue to work with the Cultural Leadership Programme and encourage the sector to access this investment.
- Continue to fund training for elected members and cabinet holders to ensure they understand the value and needs of the sector
- Work with those responsible for leadership training to ensure robust evaluation of the programmes to identify the most effective approaches to creating effective leaders
- Develop entrepreneurial skills training to ensure that all leaders (particularly emerging leaders) can identify and exploit opportunities for success and development
- Develop and fund a national mentorship scheme for individuals and organisations linked to our leadership investment

E-Skills

Delivered 2009-10

- Ensure that the workforce has the skills to deliver the priorities identified by Digital Britain and the Digital Inclusion strategy by undertaking skills audits of current e.skills
- Work with partners such as UK Online, JISC and the Digital Preservation Coalition to secure resources and training to develop these skills
- Ensure that the development of e-skills is a priority in any future SSC funding agreement

Ongoing Activities

In addition to these specific interventions, a number of ongoing activities will underpin and support MLA's workforce development strategy:

- Set a clear vision of the workforce and skills needed to deliver innovative, modern and vibrant services that meet people's needs
 - Use the vision to communicate clear messages about the workforce needed to deliver the best outcomes for communities
 - Re-shaping our funding agreements with the sector skills councils to reflect our new priorities

- Pilot and test new approaches which will deliver against our vision e.g.:
 - Scope a bursary improvement programme to replace some of the current investment programmes so that the sector has access to funding which can empower it to take control of its own CPD and skills development

- Set clear baselines and targets
 - Research the demographic makeup of the workforce in order to monitor and evaluate all sponsored workforce programmes and their performance against these targets

- Undertake horizon scanning to ensure that our priorities are up to date

- Disseminate best practice
 - Identify and disseminate best practice via the best practice site on the MLA website, our meetings with sector bodies and key stakeholders and our knowledge exchange programmes

- Help key stakeholders understand the skills and investment needed in the workforce to deliver the best outcomes for communities