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Diversify!
The impact of Positive Action Traineeships
Full Report

Gaby Porter

**MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION**

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1. Executive summary

Museums in the UK employ some 15,000 staff. Currently, only 4.4 per cent of this workforce is of Asian, African Caribbean or Chinese descent compared with 7 per cent of the overall UK workforce. Less than 2 per cent of museum staff working with and presenting collections are from ethnic minorities.

The Diversify scheme was initiated by the Museums Association and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) has committed a significant level of Renaissance funding to support it. The scheme is also supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the East Midlands Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

During 2003/04 MLA funded ten Positive Action Traineeships and two bursary students through Renaissance as part of Diversify. The Traineeships were intended to give black and minority ethnic graduates the opportunity to learn more about the museums sector, and participating museums the opportunity to benefit from ideas and input from staff with different backgrounds.

MLA commissioned Gaby Porter in February 2004 to undertake a short survey of the participating trainees, museums and museums studies courses involved in the Positive Action Traineeship Scheme in order to gather evidence of its benefits and demonstrate its impact on both trainees and host institutions.

Main findings

Trainees

- Trainees are unanimous that the traineeships have been a hugely positive, valuable and exceptional experience
- Only two of eight trainees had prior museum experience; with one exception, all are keen to pursue a museums career as a result of their experience and believe that they have increased their confidence to do so
- Their experience as trainees has both confirmed and transformed their perceptions of museums: while some 'stereotypical' views of museums have been confirmed (e.g. slow rate of change), trainees have gained a much deeper knowledge and understanding of the different functions of museums and the climate in which they operate
- The majority of trainees have been involved in significant projects within the host museums – including researching collections, leading to their re-appraisal and re-interpretation; developing educational workshops using collections; introducing new interpretative approaches; supporting changing exhibitions; contributing to new gallery developments
- Through their work experience, trainees have introduced new working practices and challenged longstanding divisions at the host museums – particularly those between curators and educators. They have also provided strong and positive role models for other staff
- Learning from their host museums is not enough. Trainees are keen to demonstrate their worth and to make positive contributions – one or two are concerned that the museums' expectations of them are one-way (museum to trainee) and/or ill-defined

- Linked to this, a small number of trainees believe that their work experience has been fragmented and they have not been offered opportunities to lead discrete projects. They are concerned about how this will affect their prospects
- All trainees have acquired new skills. Communication and collections management skills are the strongest areas; they have also acquired management skills
- Although they are keen not to be 'pigeonholed' into diversity issues, many trainees have a strong interest in this area. Their interest has been reflected in their approach to their work experience and they have positively influenced colleagues – especially those working closely with them
- Some trainees are ambivalent or uncomfortable with the 'positive action' label. The Diversify! networking meetings provide a useful forum for discussing this
- Trainees have shared their experience as trainees with friends and family – many of whom had not considered museums as a career. Friends and families have visited museums more than before, but usually only when there is a personal connection – such as being invited by the trainees to a specific event.

Host museums

- Museums participating in the scheme already have a strong commitment to diversifying their workforce, supporting staff development and widening access. These objectives are usually linked to the diversity objectives of their local authority/parent body. They are also keen to provide leadership to the sector, within their region and even within their authority. All have expressed an interest in having further trainees and would strongly recommend the scheme to others
- They are aware that the traineeships, as graduate programmes, will not address the most under-represented communities in their areas. They would like to see other measures to address these but realise that they would need to address deep-rooted inequalities and attitudes
- For almost all museums, the increase in capacity with an additional person and the injection of 'new blood' with young people and fresh ideas are at least as important as the diversity dimension
- Hosts are concerned about the level of competition for jobs when trainees complete their traineeships. They hope that Renaissance in the Regions funding may provide job opportunities for them
- Trainees have been assigned to senior staff – partly in order to offer a high profile to the initiative, and partly to address change issues which have arisen in some services as the trainees introduce new ideas and ways of working
- The traineeships have provided skill development to museum staff – for example, in line management and supervision; new approaches to working with collections and with target audiences. They have also brought with them and transferred specialist skills – such as an understanding of educational agendas and the national curriculum; database and digital imaging skills
- Trainees have contributed to new and extended services for users. They have researched collections: this in itself has often had outcomes for users, such as new exhibitions, events and publications. They have also undertaken research to revive neglected collections and reveal 'hidden histories'. They have contributed to re-appraisal of collecting policies
- Impact on governing bodies has been minimal. Many museums are reluctant to seek special attention for the trainees.

Museum studies courses

- Including international students as well as UK-based ethnic minority students, course tutors and leaders remark that the diverse profile of students in museums studies courses is in marked contrast to the lack of diversity in the workforce profile of museums in the UK
- Course leaders and tutors are very positive about the design of the scheme and its benefits. They feel that, through this scheme and other initiatives, they are able to make a positive contribution to diversifying the profile of museum staff
- Most courses include modules on workforce issues – including equal opportunities across the range of diversity, gender and (dis)ability
- Course leaders and tutors draw on the diverse experience of many of their students to enrich and extend discussions and group learning. They are anxious not to single out trainees – especially as other ethnic minority students may not receive any financial support. However, a few draw on trainees' experience in a more formal and structured way – they may do this for specific skills and experience, and/or for their perspective as positive action trainees
- The influence of trainees on the dynamic within the student/tutor group is as much to do with their personality and (for men - because students on museum studies courses are predominantly female) their sex as with their ethnic minority background
- The organisers of a Distance Learning programme identified the need for additional support and, in consultation with trainees on the programme, arranged additional meetings where trainees are able to discuss their role and experiences.

2. Introduction

Museums in the UK employ some 15,000 staff. Currently, only 4.4 per cent of this workforce is of Asian, African Caribbean or Chinese descent compared with 7 per cent of the overall UK workforce. Less than 2 per cent of museum staff working with and presenting collections are from ethnic minorities.

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During 2003/04 MLA funded ten Positive Action Traineeships and two bursary students through Renaissance as part of Diversify. The Traineeships were intended to give black and minority ethnic graduates the opportunity to learn more about the museums sector, and participating museums the opportunity to benefit from ideas and input from staff with different backgrounds.

MLA commissioned Gaby Porter in February 2004 to undertake a short survey of the participating trainees and museums in the Diversify! Positive Action Traineeship Scheme, in order to gather evidence of its benefits and demonstrate its impact on both trainees and host institutions.

This report draws on telephone and face-to-face interviews conducted by Gaby Porter and Anne Murch in February and March 2004 with trainees and representatives from host museums, and an email questionnaire sent to the six postgraduate university courses where the trainees are studying.

Eight trainees were interviewed; of these:

- two started their traineeship in September 2002;
- one started in April 2003;
- five started in September 2003.

Ten museums were host to these trainees, including shared hosts for two of the traineeships which were organised jointly across two services. Interviews were held with the senior managers in the host museums with responsibility for the traineeships and, where possible, with colleagues who had worked closely with the trainees.

Contact was also made with recipients and hosts of two MLA-funded bursaries, commencing September 2003. One of the bursary recipients has a full-time programme of study and is not due to join the host museum until the end of the academic year; the other is spending one day a week in the host museum. The bursary students and one of the bursary host museums did not feel able to contribute to the study because of their limited experience.

The interviewees are listed in Appendix One.

The interview questions for trainees and host institutions are given in Appendices Two and Three respectively.

The email questionnaire to museums studies courses is given in Appendix Four.

Quantitative analysis of responses is given in Appendix Five.

3. Trainees

Most of the eight trainees interviewed are recent graduates, with degrees in a range of subjects – including archaeology; English and education; geography; social policy and law. One already has work experience in primary teaching.

Only two trainees have prior museum experience: one as a member of front-of-house staff in a gallery; the other as a volunteer and in a series of short-term contracts (amounting to 7-8 months in total) in three museums.

Two trainees are registered with a Distance Learning MA programme, the others are attending part-time courses at universities nearby. Because some course programmes are very intensive, some trainees in their first year of the scheme did not feel ready to fully consider their learning or impact.

The majority of trainees spend 3 or 3.5 days per week in their museum placement. Two are spending 5 days per week because the host museums found additional funding to extend their contract.

Several of the trainees are living with their parents and are less financially pressed than those supporting themselves. One trainee who is supporting herself has found part-time work (supply teaching and tutoring) to supplement her income.

Three trainees have work placements across two different museums within their regional hub. One trainee has spent a year in each of the hub museums; the second is full-time and divides her time each week between the two services; the third has spent five weeks in another museum within the hub. (This last was originally envisaged as a shared traineeship between five hub sites within the region over the two-year period, but only one additional site is now offering this opportunity.)

Benefits of the positive action traineeships

The interviewees are unanimous that the traineeships have been a hugely positive, valuable and exceptional experience. They value the combination of study and work experience.

The MA is really helpful – the mix of theory at uni – how things should be – then you come here and see the practice. It's the mix of study and work [experience], and the modules are very relevant.

They appreciate the fact that they are in larger organisations which can offer broad and varied placement programmes.

I'm fortunate – I work for quite a large local authority – I go to places throughout the county. It varies my experience – job sharing, shadowing and so on – I am not tied to one place.

They also appreciate the automatic membership of the Museums Association and the support from the Association and their employers to attend networking events, professional conferences, launch events etc.

Apart from one trainee who is undecided at the moment, all report that they are very keen to pursue a museum career as a result of their experience. They feel that the traineeships have increased their confidence to pursue museum careers.

[The traineeship] has broadened my horizons – I have a wealth of background experience – I can apply for lots of different things. It's a good position to be in.

Most also endorse the idea of having further traineeships within the organisation. One trainee was advised (incorrectly) that her employer would not be applying for a further traineeship, and felt that this reflected negatively on her own experience and achievement.

Expectations of the traineeships

Most trainees had hazy and unformed/uninformed expectations before they started.

*I was not really sure what I expected – I was a little vague – not 100% sure what I was going into... I didn't really find out until I started.
I didn't know that much about museum work internally – what curators did – I wasn't clear.*

One trainee has come into museums through an interest in social inclusion, and through his own interest in museums and galleries; another through teacher training. Some had already dismissed museum and gallery work as a career. As noted above, only two have prior museum experience.

*I visited museums and galleries quite often, I knew about the MA bursaries and considered them, then found out about the PAT. It seemed ideal.
I hadn't considered museums until I went into teaching – it was part of the teacher training. I was always interested in history, archaeology. I had been looking at a part-time MA in Archaeology.*

I spent a year struggling, with no work, I couldn't even get volunteering work in museums. I kept this in the back of my mind and then applied the following year. I realised that in museum work you have to go where the work takes you.

I had looked into museums but thought it was too difficult, I didn't have the time or money to do volunteering and I only looked at this at the end of my course so it was too late to do it while I was a student. I saw the ad in the Guardian and thought it sounds really good – I thought I'd give it a go.

I did a design degree, I wanted to do graphic design or something creative. I started working in a gallery while at college, and geared my last year project towards this. I then considered teaching. A friend cut the ad out from the Guardian, it sounded really exciting, an amazing opportunity. I didn't think I'd get it!

On the whole, trainees feel that their expectations have been met or exceeded in the traineeship. They describe this at two levels – the first, in their perceptions of museums; the second, in their immediate experience.

My expectations were exceeded because there is a lot more going on behind the scenes, in the service itself and nationally. As a visitor, I wasn't sure about the technicalities etc. – then coming in, seeing the finance side, why exhibitions can't come to some places, why some exhibitions look so old... It's very much like a business, not just a public service. It's an eye opener.

It has exceeded my expectations. I have been thrown in at the deep end – the work is very interesting and enjoyable and I have felt a sense of achievement. I didn't realise how much paper-pushing was involved until I got here. The whole thing about working behind the scenes – I'd never realised – all this research etc., and the collections part. I didn't know what a curator did. I prefer the exhibitions side of it.

As described below, the allocation of trainees to particular sites, sections and placement programmes has a huge impact on their experience and perceptions.

Placement programme and position in the organisation

The different approaches of the host museums to placement design and management have had a very strong influence on trainees' experience.

On the whole, trainees had the opportunity to discuss their own learning objectives and goals with the host museum when they were appointed. Most have a placement programme which balances a breadth of experience across the organisation with a clearly defined - 'meaty' - project for which they take responsibility.

One trainee mentioned that the intensity of the university programme had delayed his integration into museum projects and activities.

There is some tension between the desire on the part of the host museums to let trainees decide their preferences, and the trainees' desire to integrate and to contribute to the museum:

My role was not defined – I had to make the role for myself. It was an initial barrier that people didn't know why I was here or what I would do. There weren't clearly defined roles and responsibilities – this was both negative and positive. I sometimes felt as if it was more about what the organisation can do for me but I like to think I'm contributing, making a difference too.

Projects that trainees are involved in include an exhibition/outreach project with young people; participating in the development of a gallery within a larger Heritage Lottery funded capital development project and representing the curatorial department at design team meetings; mapping collections; developing an exhibition and project to contextualise non-Western collections with [non-curatorial] stories and interpretations; developing education workshops using the collections; researching, reappraising and re-interpreting archaeological collections.

Two trainees are disappointed that their placement programmes do not offer more specific and clearly defined projects:

I expected more specific projects... There are no designated special projects allocated to me. I am more like an apprentice, shadowing, not directed at all. I am expected to look for things to do. I've found it difficult ...

I haven't really led anything. When I've found out about other things going on in the museum, I've asked to be involved. I am slightly worried about the totality of my experience. When I leave here, what will I have done?

These trainees feel that the lack of role definition and delegation limits their development:

Team roles are limited – I am a trainee who helps out.

I have opportunities to meet people that my colleagues are working with. I don't really take the lead in anything, make contacts with people myself.

With Renaissance in the Regions funding, there is a different structure with exhibition and interpretation teams – they have taken exhibitions away from us [sic]. I have accepted I'm not going to get involved in exhibitions now.

One trainee suggested that museums should receive more guidance in managing the traineeships:

Institutions need more guidance on what they can do - other examples of practice - at top level - not just turning up to a couple of meetings. How it could be sustained etc.

Linked to the design of the placement, some trainees also feel that they miss out on opportunities because of their part-time presence and/or division of time across different sites:

Because I am only here for 3 ½ days a week, I miss out on lots of things.

Because I am working at two different sites, people forget to include me.

Part-time placements also limit the capacity of some trainees to participate in other activities such as seminars and conferences for professional development. This was particularly the case for the trainee who supplements her income with paid work.

Increase in knowledge and understanding about museums and career options

All trainees felt that they had considerably increased their knowledge and understanding of museums.

*[What museums are and do?] More about what museums **aren't** and what they **don't** do. Coming from outside and from an ethnic minority background, I can see clearly what they are lacking. I could only understand this internally, through being in here.*

I always thought of museums as places where information could be found. I was not aware of museums going out to educate people. They need to involve people from local communities. How best can this be done? I have a clearer understanding of this work.

For one trainee, this came more from the postgraduate course than from his work experience:

I get more of an understanding of what museums are and do from the course – the theoretical side. I get the practical side, the process, from the job.

Even the trainee with prior experience of museum work (as a volunteer and on short-term contracts) has gained a new understanding as a trainee:

I did [have museums experience] but I didn't know what museums are about, I didn't understand the underlying politics – collections versus education. I expected it to be much more collections- and research-based. It has completely changed my perspective on the role of museums and on our role – that's been really positive.

Trainees have also gained a better understanding of their career options:

I feel more positive – it has opened lots of avenues – before, I thought you could only be a curator. Now I'm quite excited, there are so many different things I could do.

For some, their new understanding of career options poses a dilemma between areas in which they may already have strengths (such as teaching) and areas in which they would like to develop (such as research). Several trainees referred to the fact that new posts coming up through Renaissance in the Regions funding were more specialist and would require them to choose a specialism.

Trainees perceive pay and experience as the strongest barriers to a museum career. They observe that their lack of museum experience may limit their career options: the people who are appointed are generally older with many years' experience. They also note that many people working in museums are on short-term contracts. They are concerned about pay levels:

The pay has really sunk in. I wanted to do it because I was interested, I hadn't thought about the money. That's the only thing that worries me about going into museums.

Development of specific skills – communication, collections management, management and professional development

One trainee already has considerable experience in communication but all others feel that they have developed these skills. This is particularly strong for those trainees who are involved in projects with audiences and communities where they had limited or no previous experience:

Definitely, working with different audiences you have to be social, there's quite a lot of negotiation, you have to go to the launches etc. I was quite shy before, it's really helped me.

As described above, some trainees felt that the opportunities for them to develop communication and other skills were limited by their placement programmes. Trainees attached to projects and tasks within a single curatorial section were more likely to express this view than trainees attached to several sections and in organisations with a strong culture of cross-departmental working.

All trainees except one reported positively on developing collections management skills. The combination of degree studies and practical work experience in museums has been particularly productive for developing collections care and research skills:

Yes, I have learned practical, hands-on [collections management] skills – it has been very good because the degree course was covering this ground at the same time. The degree course has been a big element – beneficial.

Yes, documentation, handling, research, exhibitions, literature for interpretation. I really enjoy this part, it's so helpful to relate it to the course – it provides fresh research that I can include in essays, access to documents etc.

The area in which trainees' experience is most varied is that of management and financial awareness. While some have had projects clearly delegated to them with a budget allocation, others do not have this opportunity. One trainee gained experience of budgeting through the financial allocation for her studies:

I had to budget when I went away for the study period, I had a budget, I had to find accommodation etc. I live with my parents, I'd never done it before.

Management development opportunities included attending senior management team and project meetings; meetings with other council departments; opportunities to develop project briefs and implement projects; opportunities to supervise volunteers.

Working relationships between the trainees and their managers are important in building the trainees' skills and self-esteem.

I'm drawing up the budget for an exhibition coming up – they give support, tell me who to talk to etc. They are very supportive, they don't make me feel claustrophobic. It's really exciting – I've never done anything like this before – now I'm working with an artist in South Africa.

With attendance at management meetings, I feel quite comfortable with managers now. [The senior manager] has taken a special interest in us as trainees – she's the top dog here you know – it's changed my perception.

Although they do not associate this with developing management skills and awareness, several trainees have drawn attention to and challenged work practices and assumptions because their approach to their placement cuts across traditional boundaries – particularly between curators and educators.

Curators and educators – especially among the older staff here – 'never the twain shall meet'.

Changing trainees' attitudes towards museum work

Trainees report that their attitudes to museum work have been both reinforced and changed through a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons and limitations:

Yes. It's given me the bigger picture, the whole package – the course as well as the work.

*[Changed?] To some extent. Perhaps I have a truer version of what it is – this might be a bad thing. The intention is good, usually it comes down to money. Previously I thought these people don't **want** to change.*

These were broadly positive – I've always enjoyed going to museums. It has reinforced some of the stereotypes e.g. the lack of diversity in museums.

I had [preconceptions], they were terrible – for example, that museums are full of white middle class women – then you get here, it is like that. But I realise you have to change much further down the line, e.g. who does history degrees etc.

One trainee feels that her attitudes changed as she gained an understanding of the political process and pressures on museums:

It's changed my attitudes – not about museums themselves, but about how they are perceived and influenced by councillors and the limitations of this. I am shocked and outraged by their control, which can be personal whim – the extent of their influence and interference.

Three trainees expressed their frustration with the slow rate of change in institutions – this contributed both to their attitudes about museums and to their own experience. They feel that they came in with a mandate for change but are unable to achieve it. Two trainees cited this lack of change as a barrier to working in museums.

[The lack of change] is off-putting in itself – all the intentions are there but ... it just doesn't seem like they are moving. From the inside, I can see why, from the outside I can't. Most of the audience is white middle class, they're perpetuating this. There needs to be courage in doing something which isn't necessarily going to target their safe, majority audience – who might be interested and come anyway.

In spite of the wider council agenda of inclusivity, there's a gap between what museums could be and what they are. There's a lot of change, but there are still huge barriers - in large institutions particularly. I didn't notice it before I came into museums. It's not just about diversity – it's about audience development, the curatorial voice. That's a big issue.

Impact - contributing to raising awareness of representation and cultural diversity

Some people don't even think about museums or the staff behind them – you're just invisible, whether you're black or Chinese or white.

All trainees acknowledge that they are appointed with a much wider remit, and that their organisations have already developed an understanding of issues of representation and diversity. However, they acknowledge that their presence alone has had an impact. Several have also addressed issues of representation through their work – both directly and indirectly.

For example, one trainee drew attention to a label for 'Oriental coins' which she found offensive and is now re-labelling this and another display. Another trainee is gaining experience with the curator of Eastern Art and the outreach service in providing a more diverse programme using the collections. A third has gained experience with education staff through developing events during Diwali.

A trainee observes that the host museum does not fully represent the significant contribution of a minority community within the histories it portrays, and hopes to address this within the period of the traineeship.

One trainee is attached to a substantial project to raise the profile of non-Western collections through an exhibition contextualising them with different interpretations. The trainee came in at the early stages of the project, when a cross-curatorial team had been formed to explore the idea. She has researched and developed the exhibition proposal. The exhibition will take place after her traineeship has ended, but the project is already having an impact:

The exhibition draws attention to non-Western collections which are important and overlooked. It's introducing new ways of thinking for the curatorial staff. It widens the audience to the Gallery. It changes visitors' perceptions of objects and of museums – it broadens the concept of museums – for core visitors as well as new visitors.

A trainee who came to Britain from Africa five years ago is particularly interested in how oral cultures can be represented and preserved in museums. He is a poet and performer and is using his skills and interests to increase knowledge of collections and to interpret them in new ways. He is keen to empower others:

I would like to do more research so that when we look at these objects, we have something to say about them and we involve others too. We cannot talk for other people, they can only talk for themselves, so I would like to empower them to stand up and say this or that, 'these are our views'.

Several of the trainees are uncomfortable and ambivalent about having been accepted through a positive action programme, and have encountered and/or anticipate resistance:

I am very uncomfortable about having got onto it on the basis of my colour.

From a personal viewpoint, I decide whether telling people that I'm on the scheme might have a negative reaction – positive action is a touchy subject. If people are against it, they're against the scheme rather than against me.

PAT is a problematic label – people don't know what a positive action trainee is, or people have views about it. [The senior managers] always introduce me as [name], the Positive Action Trainee – it sounds a bit like: 'Aren't we good, we've got one.'

I have met some resistance – some people think I am jumping the queue – especially volunteers and front of house staff working their way up.

They feel attitudinal barriers have not hindered their entry to museums, but are more likely to emerge once they are in employment and in relation to future career choices.

Race wasn't an issue – not a big barrier for me – until you're inside an institution, when you might experience it.

Here, race was also linked with other factors:

[Attitudinal barriers?] Possibly, I'm not conscious of it among the people I work with but I can see it might be there. Plus I'm female, plus the absence of a subject-based discipline – I might be seen as lightweight by other people, particularly if I want to bring ideas in, I'm enthusiastic.

Impact - family and friends

Trainees had a mixed response from their family and friends: some were surprised, others envious, others again were critical. Overall, the response was positive and the trainees have raised awareness of museums as a career option:

'Oh, I didn't know about that, how did you get onto it?' It has raised awareness of museums as an option and a career.

When I've met Asian people and told them what I do, it really raises their eyebrows.

Their first reaction was: 'what do you want to go into stuffy museums for?' Now they have seen what we are doing and come to the exhibitions and so on, hopefully they are changing their views.

I've talked to my friends, they think it's an excellent opportunity. Some feel it could be tokenistic but most people are really positive.

People are really impressed and say they would love to do it too.

I have had discussions with friends about what you think about positive action. They are generally positive, a few disagree with the approach.

People I was at university with have met huge barriers, given up, found it frustrating. They recognise it as a great opportunity and redressing an imbalance.

Trainees were asked whether their family and friends had visited museums more as a result of their traineeships. On the whole, trainees' family and friends go to events and exhibitions which they have been involved in, and accompany the trainee on museum visits to other places. Beyond this, their museum visiting has not increased.

Except when they come to exhibitions I have done, no. But as I go to more and other museums, I grab them and take them along.

My dad wanted me to go into economics. My family don't really understand what museums do anyway, they do go to museums but they don't really understand what we do all day in the office. But they have been very supportive.

No, they've come to see my work, come to the launch, to find out what I'm doing. They wouldn't come by themselves. I try to get them to come with me but they're always too busy. I got my brother to go to a Sikh exhibition in town, it's made a difference to him, now he mentions galleries and museums.

I have invited my family and friends to various events which they really enjoyed. Most of them didn't know they could do these things at [the gallery].

Maybe a little – slightly – I go with my family anyway, now I am going to more museums because of the course, I take family or drag friends along.

They have not visited, but they are thinking about behind the scenes, text panels, words, collections – because I'm bringing a different perspective. They're more ready to question what's said, what's on display and what's not on display. They take a text panel as fact, I point out that it's written by one person.

No, I don't think so. It has raised the arts as an acceptable career – before, they never thought about arts as a career. They hadn't any clue about what work is done in a museum – now they have a different understanding, it's not boring and dry.

4. Host museums

Of the host museums participating in traineeships, all except one are local authority services. The exception is an independent museum owned and operated by a large company. The host museums for bursary students are a local authority museum and an independent museum funded by central government.

Two museums had already had positive action trainees – one through North West Arts Board's Woo Arts Traineeship scheme; another through the local authority's own scheme.

Benefits of the traineeships

Overall, museums find it difficult to separate out benefits from the traineeship from other measures and initiatives to address under-representation through increasing workforce diversity, staff development and widening access.

We've got a long way to go – representation in staff, collections, exhibitions, programmes. This is one of many ways we are addressing it.

Consultation, community history exhibitions - these are things we wouldn't have done 10 or 15 years ago but it's difficult to isolate - there are lots of influences -SRB funding etc.

[Our commitment to cultural diversity] predates the PAT - particularly over the last 3 or 4 years, with the new management team. We want it to be a long term commitment, sustainable, a cultural shift within the organisation as a whole, rather than opportunistic and funding driven.

The impact has been to extend and reinforce what we are already doing and the culture that already exists.

All museums refer to the benefits of the traineeship within the wider context of their governing bodies' (or company's) commitment to workforce diversity and to engaging diverse communities.

It helped ... that [the council] had already done that work and had schemes to diversify so we haven't had to do the lobbying. After the Stephen Lawrence murder [the council] did their own enquiry and commission. Workforce diversity was considered as one of the issues.

One museum service described the initiative as one of a number of measures specifically addressing workforce/staff development:

[How will the traineeship impact on your internal policies and procedures?] I would like to think of this the other way round – traineeship has grown out of the way we approach staff development. We are developing opportunities for staff in the wider sense – such as secondments, buddying, mentoring. Our appraisals focus on development, not training courses.

Larger museums participating acknowledge that they are doing so partly through a sense of leadership/influence on other museums.

One local authority museum felt that it was particularly important to signal positive action in the locality because of the recent murder of an asylum seeker.

Another local authority museum which had led the way in museums in the 1970s and 1980s with Section 11 positive action positions and programmes described participation in the scheme as an 'endorsement of the service regaining respectability and confidence'.

Two museums saw the importance of investing in the future, as the scheme would contribute to a more diverse recruitment pool for senior positions, where there is a complete absence of diversity in the profile of applicants:

It will take a long time for the impact of the scheme at a senior level to be felt but at least they are putting people in the right position now.

It's difficult to find appropriately qualified and experienced people at a senior level – this is a way of seeing the potential, though it will take time.

None spontaneously mentioned diversification and interpretation of collections as a primary reason for or benefit of the traineeships.

For almost all the museums, the increase in capacity with an additional person, and the injection of 'new blood' with young people and fresh ideas, are at least as important as the diversity dimension:

It's just as much about capacity and motivation.

You benefit from having trainees in your organisation. They have brought in different perspectives, helped people to have a better cultural awareness – some of this is due to them being younger as well.

The main impact is generational – having a young person on the staff.

She is a very bright and forthcoming and open person – she brought a discussion and debate about ideas into the office... To have someone involved in the [MA course], coming with ideas and theories and so on, was very stimulating.

The experience has led some to think differently about workforce positions and development. For example, senior staff in one museum feel that the traineeship has reinforced the importance of jobs at the level of Assistant Keeper which were lost several years ago during a round of budget cuts. They have subsequently sought to create jobs at this level as part of their Renaissance in the Regions application. Another museum service is already exploring traineeships in other areas including technical and stonemasonry traineeships. A third museum service is now reviewing recruitment advertisements:

We are thinking more broadly about how we recruit staff – using networks, using local papers rather than the Museums Journal, etc.

Several people expressed concerns about the competition which the trainees would face for jobs in the sector at the end of their traineeship. Although none of the organisations has created a specific position for their trainee, they hope that they will apply as jobs are created. In this respect, the timing and link to the Renaissance in the Regions strategy are seen as important:

The test will be whether they secure employment – it's good timing because of Renaissance in the Regions which creates more opportunities, more posts, more

movement of people which creates vacancies. It's a unique situation at the moment – these two things fit well. These are professions where people tend to stay for a long time.

Two trainees from an earlier scheme within the same museum service have already secured jobs in this way – one as a permanent appointment, the other as a fixed term contract.

Host museums also acknowledge that many of the trainees are exceptional:

I suspect that even without the scheme she herself would have been snapped up. The PAT has enabled her to do it sooner and more easily than she might otherwise have been able to do.

She has excellent research skills. She listens well and is learning fast. [She] has been involved in very public projects and has integrated well into the organisation.

He's very bright – when he's working on collections, he notices things and picks up principles very well. He asks very pertinent questions, he has very good analytical skills, and is able to put these into the context of museums.

Two museums are clear that the traineeships, which target graduates, have not assisted them in their goal of attracting people in some of the most deprived – and diverse – communities within their authority. This would require much more strategic and long-term measures:

How do you really address those access issues from someone who isn't culturally 'clued up' – someone from [that area] who would never aspire to it? It needs to be more strategic, programmed into the education sector more successfully. 0.2% of students from [that area] go into higher education.

The museum culture isn't in the local community for them to come through to us at the moment.

One museum hopes that their participation in the scheme will positively influence future applications for posts:

We are more likely to get applications from other PATs elsewhere when jobs come up.

Two museums are seeking to retain the trainees in contract positions to complete projects. One museum has already created a short fixed term contract for two months after the end of the traineeship, to complete an exhibition project which they are attached to. Another is seeking to secure internal or external funding to create a contract for the trainee to undertake a discrete piece of work on interpretation of collections, in consultation with a local community.

One service has employed a trainee for one additional day per week, as a temporary measure to cover for a vacant position.

All the museums interviewed have expressed an interest in having a further traineeship. Two of these would be as partnerships with another hub museum within their regions.

Trainees' placement programme and position in the organisation

Almost all the museums stress that they sought to provide a broad experience of the service and (for most trainees) to design a placement programme which also met the trainee's interests and preferences. They did not expect trainees to be attached to a particular area of the collections or with particular audiences connected with their origins.

It is tokenism to assume that because she is South Asian she will have that collections interest... You cannot assume that because they are Asian or black their interest will be Asian or black culture.

[She] is able to do much more thinking about exhibitions, not having to do all the stuff about cultural diversity – that wasn't the intention with the placement – it's about her interests, not a single issue.

We haven't fully expected or wanted them to solely work on black history areas.

The appointment was made, then we got a sense of what the person wanted to do. We didn't want to ghettoise her into black issues therefore we didn't set goals. We were giving someone an opportunity to influence the position – we hadn't got a clear vision of what that might be.

In one case, where the trainee expressed a long-term interest in working in an area outside the specialism of the chosen museum (archaeology), her supervisor arranged for her to spend time in a large museum nearby with relevant collections.

As described above under the trainees' experience, the actual placement programme and perception of the role of the trainee has a huge impact on both their individual experience and their impact in the organisation. In designing the programmes, some museums suggest that there was a tension between offering the trainee broad experience and enabling them to take on a specific project or area of responsibility where they could demonstrate achievement. This is especially difficult for museums where the trainees are spending their placement at two or more sites.

One host was cautious about delegating some tasks because of the trainee's lack of museum experience:

It's a learning process on both sides. We have to judge whether she's ready because she's coming in without any experience.

Most museums felt that it was important to allocate managerial responsibility for the trainee at a senior level in the organisation in order to demonstrate commitment.

Support from senior managers is important in managing some of the effects of the traineeships – both for the trainees themselves and for others. Because the trainees came in with an explicit or implicit agenda for change, they have encountered resistance from other staff:

It's a large service, some people have been here for a very long time, they've come in and challenged some areas. They've come in expecting to make changes – it's not easy – things don't happen overnight. There has been some resistance from some people.

However, allocating trainees to senior managers does also have drawbacks, especially in larger organisations:

It's difficult to find time, especially when the organisation is going through a time of huge change and restructuring with Renaissance in the Regions. It's important that they don't get lost.

Because it's a larger organisation, and she wasn't attached to an individual team, it's more difficult for her to find her place and adjust.

In relation to promoting the traineeships to governing bodies and external media, most museums do not wish to 'hold [trainees] up' to councillors and the press as an example:

There is a question about the philosophy of the traineeships. I don't want [him] to be an object, I don't want to hold him up as an object.

We have introduced her [to councillors] but we haven't tried to labour the point that she's different from anyone else... We want to treat this as a graduate traineeship rather than a positive action traineeship.

Link to corporate objectives

Several museums refer to their participation in the scheme as contributing to Best Value and Comprehensive Performance Assessments. All place the scheme within the wider context of local authority and/or corporate objectives including workforce diversity and development; regeneration through culture; community cohesion; access and audience development – especially for people who are traditionally not users of cultural services.

For many, the traineeship also meet hub objectives.

Two museums talked about the shift within their local authorities from qualification-based recruitment criteria to person- and competence-centred criteria.

You can train people to do stuff, you can't train them to be a certain kind of person.

In this context, the traineeships offer an opportunity to engage people with limited or no museum experience and qualifications, but strong and relevant skills and abilities. One museum sees the traineeship as an opportunity to experiment with trainee schemes as an alternative route for accepting people into the service. They are now exploring traineeships in three other areas of the service.

Another museum is about to take a younger trainee under the Aim Higher programme.

In the only case where a museum appointed a trainee with considerable relevant specialist experience, the trainee left after a few months. The museum then offered the traineeship to the candidate who had been their second choice at interview, and who brought very different strengths – in particular, experience of primary education:

[With the 1st traineeship] we were probably seduced by the fact of someone having very detailed knowledge of a particular area of the collections.

Several museums made reference to other local authority departments having followed their lead in embarking on positive action traineeships. For example, in one authority, the archives

department is currently applying for Heritage Lottery funding for a similar scheme; in another, a senior trainee position is being created in the marketing department for the whole authority.

Impact - raising awareness of representation and cultural diversity internally

Again, interviewees more usually describe the traineeship as an indication that the service has *already* reached a certain level of maturity and awareness in relation to these issues, rather than that the traineeships have themselves changed the culture.

We had looked at PAT previously but felt the service wasn't grown up enough, supportive enough. For this one, I felt it was, and I feel my judgement was right, it has worked out.

As described above, most host museums were keen not to 'pigeonhole' or 'ghettoise' their trainees, but to allow them to determine the focus of their placement. Thus, raising awareness of representation and cultural diversity is incidental and/or linked to trainees' own interests.

Many museums describe how the trainees themselves, and their personal qualities, make a difference:

On a personal level, [he] is so engaging, it has made a difference, made people think.

She has made a very positive contribution across the organisation – she is very able and competent therefore she has fitted in very well in both interpersonal and curatorial terms... She is a very open and committed person.

In sections of the organisation with no immediate experience of diversity, the presence of trainees has definitely made a difference. In all cases cited, curators were identified as the section of staff who had little or no previous experience of working with colleagues from diverse backgrounds:

Just the very fact that someone is around does raise that issue... especially in the collections team – she's the first member of staff with non-European origin.

He has definitely had an impact on individuals – for example, [he has had an impact on] one person in the History Department who is resistant to the theory [of positive action] but has worked with him. He has increased familiarity, broken down barriers.

One member of staff supervising a trainee feels that talking to and working with the trainee has changed his own views:

At first, I thought it would be a great scheme for everybody. I wish I had had that opportunity. Then I read the MA website and realised the long term impact. It will take a few years for the profession to change... I think we will see a lot more changes as people move into their 1st and 2nd jobs.

In one organisation, where a Black Staff Group already existed, the museum observes that the trainee has revitalised and energised its members:

The Black Staff Group... haven't really had a focus – she gave them new vitality. Other members of the Group are in Support Services, Marketing, Education, Conservation. Because she is in Curatorial, and is more proactive, they feel they can influence programmes, exhibitions. She has raised their awareness that they can have an impact

on policy. She has added to the debate. She has unlocked some of the things that were there already in text and policy. She is a role model, especially for front-of-house and support services staff – raising their aspirations.

In one case, the very act of applying for a traineeship brought issues to the surface among existing staff. This was seen as a positive opportunity to address covert attitudes and values directly:

The managers I work with were totally on board with what we were doing. We prepared and talked about it in the senior management team. We felt able to have that conversation – we felt able to challenge people. It was probably a conversation that needed to happen. It does send out some strong messages about what you think.

The fact that many of the trainees are from a middle class background, with apparently 'Western' values and aspirations, has also led to deeper exploration and discussion about identity and diversity:

We've recruited from the middle class belt, she has similar aspirations and a contemporary Western focus but sees herself as 'other' – it's interesting.

Several of those interviewed referred to the need to be extremely careful about the recruitment and grading process when the posts were established because of the extra sensitivities of these positions.

You need political support and enough financial resources to do it without resentment from other staff. You need to think carefully about the grading, it's more sensitive than other posts.

You have to be prepared to confront unexpected difficulties. The recruitment process itself is quite tricky – who's eligible and who's not?

We got guidance from the local council on what to say in the ad, but the Personnel Department seemed totally flummoxed by it!

Impact - creating learning opportunities for staff

Many of the traineeships have created learning opportunities in line management and supervision. This is especially important in services with few staff and low turnover:

Staff in a mentoring role found the experience very positive and developmental. There isn't much opportunity... to learn from more experienced staff and pass on to newer staff... It's difficult to get that next step up – it's a safe way of trying out people management.

This is a different experience for me, to manage someone at a professional level. The other staff I manage are front-of-house.

The trainees also bring new skills and ways of working which they pass on to other staff and volunteers:

[He] is leading on an intergenerational project. The staff working with him have learned new skills. It is part of the section's intention to work with staff, integrate their work.

He brought skills with him – databases, Photoshop- he's much quicker than me!

In at least one case, the trainee has also created learning opportunities for others with whom they are involved outside the museum – such as members of local communities.

[She] worked on an exhibition on the Salvation Army. Because she had more time, they got much more input – it was a positive experience for them, it would help them to do something like that again in the future.

In at least three services, trainees have increased liaison between the educational and curatorial teams through embracing both curatorial and outreach/education programmes. This has helped to break down longstanding barriers between education and curatorial staff and changed working practices. One trainee held a seminar for the collections team on how collections can be used to meet the National Curriculum and QCA frameworks.

In a more general sense, the existence of the traineeships has prompted colleagues in at least one museum to think about their roles and their own career development:

The most significant impact has been for other (non-qualified) staff to see that you can combine working and additional qualifications – for example, staff working on projects are looking at part-time courses. This relates to class as well as diversity.

Impact – changing attitudes of members of governing bodies towards cultural diversity in the workforce and governing bodies

Most of the museums said that their elected members/governing body are too remote from this level of detail to even be aware of the traineeships. As these broadly lie within council policies anyway, the museums did not feel a strong need or desire to draw attention to them.

Even where governors or elected members are aware of the traineeships, they have not had an impact on their attitudes towards workforce diversity or diversity within the governing body itself. On the whole, this is because governing bodies are already ‘signed up’ to these policies.

Impact – creating or extending services for users

Here, the most significant contribution is capacity: the traineeships are described as an additional person who therefore allows the host museums to make a more considered and concerted drive to improve or extend services:

Especially with the Youth Service... it was an area where we had done bits and pieces but we hadn't succeeded before. We have done more work, more connected, over a longer period. Now we have a higher profile with the Youth Service, they are coming to us.

It has freed up time for the Exhibitions Officer so she can take a step back and think about what she's doing. It has bought us a little bit of time.

As described above, trainees also introduce fresh perspectives and ideas, they challenge existing practice and stimulate new approaches.

She has made lots of interactive activities for visitors – she has good ideas - she has enhanced visitors' experience, especially for younger visitors. We would not have had the time to do that without her.

The majority of the museums interviewed have had trainees for less than a year, and therefore the limited impact on services is understandable. Several expect to have achieved a significant impact on services by the end of the traineeship.

Impact - collections and the interpretation of collections

Again, because of the limited length of the traineeships and the fact that the majority had been running for only six months at the time of the interviews, their impact on collections and interpretation has been limited.

One trainee has explored a single collection which the museum had not used before:

She looked at the anthropology collection, made us aware of it, did a small temporary exhibition about it, linked to Black History Month.

Another trainee is translating inscriptions and documentation on Chinese collections to increase knowledge and understanding. A third trainee researched a major collector and analysed his field notebooks. Her research has led to a re-appraisal and re-interpretation of collections, and highlighted links with collections in other major museums. The collections have been conserved and redisplayed and the museum is preparing a grant application for an exhibition and publication on the collector.

One trainee has enabled the service where she works to develop a changing exhibition programme in addition to the permanent displays. This trainee is spending her work experience at two museum services and has been able to facilitate loans between the two museums for these exhibitions.

A service which has had successive traineeships has undertaken a larger scale project looking across all the collections, using trainees:

The mapping project means we are interpreting collections in new ways. It's in the early stages, it's an impetus to work in new directions.

Another service had already created a cross-departmental team to look at 'hidden histories' in the collections and multiple approaches to interpretation. The trainee has researched neglected collections, drawing on internal records and researching new sources, including local communities. This research would not have taken place without a dedicated person with enthusiasm and ability, a strong interest in that area, and relevant skills:

[Through her work], I've become more and more aware of areas of the collections which have been neglected, intellectually and physically. We have used these categories of primary and secondary collections. It's bringing some of these things to the fore, fantastic things, we need champions for them.

This museum is now seeking additional funding to create a fixed term contract for the trainee at the end of her placement so that she can prepare an exhibition using this research.

In some services, collecting policies were already being reviewed:

We did review the collecting policy a year ago with the view of reflecting [the city's] changing demographics. Our longer term interpretation plans are in terms of representing the city's histories and heritage – it needs to be much more inclusive, representative.

Again, it's difficult to separate – the PAT is running alongside an HLF project 'Cultural Diversity In-Visible Histories' – looking at collections, exhibitions, especially contemporary collecting, and the experience of migration. We want to continue the momentum after HLF funding through similar and sustained initiatives internally.

In interpreting collections, the presence of trainees and their desire to make changes has highlighted for senior managers the issue that short term projects are relatively successful as vehicles for introducing different, and multiple, themes and perspectives but the main problem lies with long term, 'permanent' displays.

Would you recommend the scheme to others?

All museums participating in the scheme strongly endorse it and would recommend it to others – several have already done so:

Go for it, it's great!

I have already! I have mentioned it and recommended it to other people – not just in museums - in theatre etc.

I would urge people to do it because I think it's really important that the sector does broaden out and is seen as a place to work and a place to be for people from very different backgrounds.

Go for it, it's a very valuable addition to the staff and in the long term will also make a big difference to the audiences we reach

At the same time, they emphasised the need for organisations to commit to careful consideration and preparation, rather than entering into the scheme because they believe it will raise their profile:

The secret is making sure that you don't just do it for another pair of hands, you can provide something really valuable and relevant for people to do.

It's really important that:

- *they have the right support at a high level so that the traineeship is properly supported and implemented. It was important for us that [the Head of Service] supported the traineeships and [another senior manager] and I have championed them;*
- *they get a broad experience in their role and in the workplace. It's important that they don't just work on black history projects but gain experience across all areas;*
- *other staff understand why you're doing it, what contribution they make, what the benefits are, so that it's not seen as discriminatory. It's important to explain that it stems from inequality in the first place;*
- *you keep track of trainees – especially in a large organisation – are they getting on ok?*

Many people stress the importance of 'ensur[ing] the person is introduced and integrated, not an add on and isolated'.

Treat them like another member of staff, realise their potential as a future museums worker. Give them a full range of experience.

5. Museums Studies Courses

Six postgraduate museums studies courses have positive action trainees attending their courses as part-time students (one of these courses is a distance learning programme). Course leaders and tutors tend not to differentiate between international students and UK based ethnic minority students. They comment that the diverse profile of students attending the courses is in marked contrast to the lack of diversity in the workforce profile of museums.

Diversity is high on universities' agendas and all the museums studies courses receive students from diverse backgrounds:

The course team has been involved in extensive discussions with this university on the principle of supporting the Diversify initiative within its own 'Widening Participation' policy. ...However, this is aimed specifically at undergraduates, responding directly to Government policy, and excludes postgraduates.

Over the past three years we have begun to take students from more diverse backgrounds even without our positive action trainees. We used regularly to have students from Europe, South America and the Far East... but we are starting to get non-white students from the UK too, not all from positive action posts. Of course we welcome and encourage this.

While they embrace the ethos of and support for positive action, most course leaders and tutors with positive action trainees among their students are keen to integrate them with other students:

Our philosophy has been to integrate Diversify! participants into the student body so that, as far as possible, they receive the same experience. This has grown out of ongoing consultation.... Several students have been clear that they do not want to be singled out in any way.

We try not to place too strong a spotlight on the 'Diversify' trainees and bursary holders during the sessions [about diversity and equal opportunities], especially since we have other students from ethnic minorities who are not receiving financial assistance from the fund.

Personally I would feel it invidious to single out a particular group.

The experience of talking and working with other students may support trainees in overcoming their discomfort and developing a clearer understanding of their own position as positive action trainees:

Most students grow in confidence and become more comfortable with and develop their own very useful opinions on the use of positive action. (Several students mentioned this development/growth at the MA review day in Birmingham last year).

Course leaders and tutors welcome this initiative as providing a further opportunity to contribute to the longer term goal of diversifying the workforce profile:

... The more there is a critical mass of non-white students, the less they will need special measures, and our aim would be to create the circumstances where they don't feel that they are anything unusual... We would hope to get continued support for

positive action as we feel we are getting to the point where we actually might be making a bit of difference to the profile of new entrants to the profession.

They are very positive about the design of the scheme and its benefits:

As a part time student he has the advantage of an academic infrastructure for learning and work experience. As a graduate, he is familiar with the requirements of a teaching/learning environment. As an employee [sic], he has sound workplace experience which is underpinned by theoretical understanding. Both his workplace colleagues and his postgraduate student peers benefit from his combined theoretical and practical training.

The influence of positive action traineeships on course content varies: some staff leading and teaching the courses say that they have been influenced by the presence of trainees; others that they respond to the wider context of student diversity rather than specifically to the trainees.

My approach to teaching has always been influenced by ethnic minority and international students who help me to get the UK students to challenge their 'traditional' perceptions and understandings of museums, galleries and heritage.

Yes, the presence of both trainees has raised my and - I think - the students' awareness of diversity issues in museum practice and theory. This is also true of overseas students on the programme. It's that mix of people from different cultural backgrounds that contributes to a much richer teaching environment and conversations. I always try to draw on all the students' experiences in discussions - so the more diverse the group, the more challenging and enriching is the debate.

I have talked about the scheme and its objectives in the course of wider discussions about the structure and profile of the profession. Those kinds of professional issues are frequently raised and debated in my classes (e.g. this week we were discussing the gender imbalance among museum educators, the profile of national museum directors, etc).

There is extensive and in-depth consideration of the ways that museums communicate with and for different groups. We occasionally mention the position of women, which is an issue common to all countries.

Most courses link diversity with other equal opportunities agendas in this way. In some cases, the positive action scheme has informed new teaching programmes focusing on workforce composition, bias and equal opportunities issues relating to minority ethnic communities, women and disabled people. In others, these programmes already existed.

All students are encouraged to contribute their personal and workplace experience in presentations, seminars, discussions and other group learning, including trainees. In addition, leaders and tutors may draw on the specific experiences of current and past trainees in a more structured way, as part of teaching sessions. These may be linked to diversity, or to other particular expertises which the students have:

As a poet, he has a good understanding of 'intangible cultural heritage' and I have drawn on his expertise on a couple of occasions during lectures - as I have done with his other prior understandings of heritage management in southern Africa.

We have included a short formal session by [the trainee] in our Access to Collections session this year, along with informal contributions which are encouraged where

appropriate. Next year's core module on interpretation, outreach and access issues will provide further opportunities for his input.

[He] has spoken about his own cultural background, the aspirations within his community and the perceived barriers to people of his background pursuing a career in museums/heritage. This was most enlightening.

We generally find that it is following completion of the course and after gaining additional experience that students are in a position to (and feel comfortable about) contributing to teaching and other activities... E.g. a Diversify participant [has been] invited to feed back into departmental activities following completion of the course to participate in a colloquium to test the findings of a current research project. [She] was invited because her curatorial experience combined with her experience of investigating collections for 'hidden histories' would enable her to bring fresh perspectives and insights to the research topic of disability representation.

The impact of trainees on the dynamic within the student group has as much to do with their personality and, for male trainees, their sex, as their background:

He has a gentle nature and I believe that he has had a very positive impact on a number of the international students who due to their cultural backgrounds find it difficult to engage in class and group discussions.

The influence on the group dynamic is more dependent on [his] character and sex, as the students are predominantly female. Group work features strongly in the course and the presentations to which he has brought a new and unique angle reflect the presence of an intelligent, culturally aware person and are the richer for this.

Students from other countries probably affect the dynamic more because, for example, the American [students] are generally very outgoing while the Chinese [students] are quite reticent in group discussions. These are probably bigger factors than the ethnicity of home students. Generally, I believe that the students are very receptive to diversity of every kind and occasionally lament the fact that the majority of them are (still!) women, white and (for want of a more nuanced phrase) middle class.

Course leaders and tutors were asked whether they have offered any different and/or additional support to trainees. The responses indicated that some students need support in specific areas:

This particular trainee comes with a background in creative writing. Consequently, he has needed additional support in terms of developing a good academic writing style. We are giving [her] additional support with research training, because that's an area where she's struggling a little. Our approach is that one size doesn't fit all - and we try to respond to the requirements of the individual.

None needed! All students get individual attention and support, as much as they require.

At the University of Leicester - the only university currently running a distance learning programme - the lessons learned from Diversify! bursaries and trainees on the full time programme have been adapted and applied to the part-time/distance learning courses:

We identified the need for additional support over and above the network of associate tutors, listserv and the summer school which are available to all students. Following consultation with distance learning Diversify participants we set up and have now held two meetings which bring them all together at Leicester to share their experiences of

the programme and of being positive action trainees. Feedback from students suggests that these have been helpful and we plan to continue to hold them twice a year.

Only one host museum expressed reservations about the MA course which the bursary student attached to their museum is attending. In this case, they feel that it is a management course with little relevance to the level in which the trainee will be gaining experience in the museum and in any immediate future job.

Appendix One: People interviewed

Trainees (telephone or face-to-face):

Karmi Bains	Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry
Farena Bashir	Bradford Museums, Galleries and Heritage
Kieran Bossoopun	Lincolnshire
David Chan	London's Transport Museum
Vanessa Mitchell	Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery/Wolverhampton Art Gallery
Nkosana Mpofo	Tyne and Wear Museums
Emma Poulter	Harris Museum and Art Gallery/Manchester City Galleries
Sarwat Siddiqui	Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery

Host Museums (telephone or face-to-face):

Ray Barnett	Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery
Jennifer Beaver	Horniman Museum, London
Heather Cummings	Lincolnshire Heritage Service
Stephanie Gilluly	Lincolnshire Heritage Service
Oliver Green	London's Transport Museum
Martin Harrison Putnam	London's Transport Museum
Emma Heslewood	Harris Museum and Art Gallery
Christine Hopper	Bradford Museums, Galleries and Heritage
Rita McLean	Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
Liz Mitchell	Manchester Art Gallery
Kate Newnham	Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery
David Shaw	Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry
Helen Steatham	Bantock House Museum, Wolverhampton
Moira Stevenson	Manchester City Galleries
Mark Suggitt	Bradford Museums, Galleries and Heritage
Alex Walker	Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston
Helen White	Tyne and Wear Museums

Museums Studies Courses (email):

Gerard Corsane	University of Newcastle, Museum Studies
Tony Herbert	Ironbridge Institute, University of Birmingham
Suzanne Keene	University College London, Museum Studies
Helen Rees	Centre for Museology, University of Manchester
Richard Sandell	Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester
Deborah Skinner	Centre for Museum and Heritage Management, Nottingham Trent University
Louise Tythacott	Centre for Museology, University of Manchester

Appendix Two: Interview questions for trainees

- 1 Before you accepted this traineeship, what other career options had you been considering?
- 2 What were your original expectations of the job? To what extent have these been achieved? If not, why not?
- 3 To what extent has it:
 - a. provided you with a better understanding of career options in museums and of what museums are and do?
 - b. developed your:
 - i. Communication skills (audiences, marketing, education, outreach)?
 - ii. Collections management skills (collections care, exhibition, research, publications, ICT)?
 - iii. Management and financial awareness (your team role, attendance at management and board meetings, budgeting experience)?
 - iv. Professional development (networking; membership of professional groups; training; conferences and seminars)?
 - c. changed your attitudes towards museum work?
 - d. built your confidence?
 - e. made you decide to pursue a museum career?
- 4 What do you see as the main barriers to pursuing a museum career?
- 5 Please comment on the impact you feel you have made within the organisation in terms of:
 - a) raising awareness of representation/cultural diversity internally?
 - b) the range of services for users? If so, have these new/extended services been evaluated with users? What feedback did you receive from them?
 - c) collections and the interpretation of collections?
- 6 Have you talked to other people outside the museums about the PAT scheme and the traineeship? If so, what responses have you had to it?
- 7 Have your friends and family visited museums more as a result of your involvement?

Appendix Three: Questions for host museums

- 1 How did this traineeship support your corporate objectives?
- 2 What was your expectation of the traineeship? Has this been met/exceeded? In what ways?
- 3 What impact has the traineeship had on the museum in terms of:
 - d) raising awareness of representation/cultural diversity internally?
 - e) creating learning opportunities for other staff?
 - f) changing attitudes of members of governing bodies towards cultural diversity in museum workforce and governing bodies?
 - g) the range of services for users? If so, have these new/extended services been evaluated with users? What feedback did you receive from them?
 - h) collections and the interpretation of collections?
- 4 How have you extended/do you intend to extend any benefits beyond the traineeship?
- 5 How will the traineeship impact on your internal policies and procedures; including staff development, recruitment; volunteering, consultation, collecting? Have you got definite plans or proposals for these?
- 6 Have you sought media and/or political attention for the Positive Action Traineeship? Have you been successful in attracting this attention for the trainee and for your organisation?
- 7 If you were talking to another organisation which is thinking of taking on a Positive Action Trainee, what would you say to them?

Appendix Four: Questions for museums studies courses

(Email questionnaire)

We are interested to know whether and, if so, how trainees have had an impact on the course in any of the following ways:

1. Your approach to teaching the course.
2. Have you already, or do you anticipate, drawing on the trainee's experience through asking them to contribute to the teaching programme?
3. Any impact on the dynamic within the student group.
4. Has the presence of the trainee(s) opened up discussion within the course about the profile of people working in museums in the UK and/or more broadly?
5. Have you offered any different/additional support to the trainee(s)?

Appendix Five: Quantitative analysis of returns

Impact of Diversify! Positive Action Traineeships on trainees

	2002 - 2004*			2003 - 2005					% y/x
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
<i>To what extent has the traineeship provided you with a better understanding of:</i>									
Career?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	100%
What museums are & do?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	100%
<i>To what extent has the traineeship developed your:</i>									
Communication skills?	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	N	87.5%
Collections management skills?	N	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	X	87.5%
Management skills/financial awareness?	Y	X	Y	X	Y	X	N	N	75%
Professional development?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	100%
<i>To what extent has the traineeship:</i>									
Changed your attitudes to museum work?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	X	Y	87.5%
Built your confidence?	Y	X	Y	Y	X	Y	Y	Y	100%
Made you decide to pursue a museums career?	X	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	87.5%

Key:

Y Yes

X To some extent

N No (also included 'too early to say')

* Also includes one trainee who started in April 2003 for 2 years

Impact of Diversify! Positive Action Traineeships on host museums

	2002 - 2004					2003 - 2005					% y/x
	Cov	Bir	Man	Pre	Bri	Bra	Lin	Ltm	TW	Wol	
<i>What impact has the traineeship had in terms of:</i>											
Raising awareness of diversity/representation?	N	Y	N	X	Y	N	X	N	Y/X	X	60%
Creating learning opportunities for other staff?	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	X	90%
Changing attitudes of gov bodies to diversity?	N	X	N	N	N	X	N	N/a	N	N	20%
Extending/ creating new services for users?	X	Y	N	Y	X	N	Y	N	Y	X	70%
Collections and the interpretation of collections?	X	Y	X	Y	Y	X	N	X	X	Y	90%

Key:

- Y Yes
- X To some extent
- N No (also included 'too early to say')
- N/a Does not have a governing body

- Bir Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
- Bra Bradford Museums, Galleries and Heritage
- Bri Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery
- Cov Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry
- Lin Lincolnshire Heritage Service
- Ltm London's Transport Museum
- Man Manchester City Galleries
- Pre Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston
- TW Tyne and Wear Museums
- Wol Bantock House Museum, Wolverhampton

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