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# **Diversity Matters Programme Year Two 2019 - 2020**

# Contents

## [Introduction](#)

## [Diversity Matters Grants Overview](#)

- [Brent Museum and Archives](#)
- [Museum of the Order of St John](#)
- [Musical Museum](#)
- [RIBA](#)

## [Conclusions on 2019 - 2020 Programme](#)

## Introduction

The Diversity Matters Programme (DMP) is a new programme for London Museum Development's (LMD's) 2018 – 2022 Programme, which is now in its second year. The overall objectives of the DMP are to increase:

- The number of non-national museums that embrace and embed diversity practices
- Engagement with museum collections and exhibitions from visitors of all backgrounds
- Participation in public programmes and activities from visitors of all backgrounds

Over the 4 years this programme will showcase how museums are embedding diversity and creating organisations, collections and public programmes, which are representative of their respective communities. It will also support emerging diversity practice to enable museums to better reflect the diversity of London and empower its audiences, staff and content creators to feel more represented and want to further engage with museums, collections and public programmes. Each year the programme will be evaluated and the programme will evolve based on feedback we receive from museum staff.

The DMP supports Arts Council England's [Creative Case for Diversity](#) agenda. At the heart of the Creative Case for Diversity is a requirement that arts and culture in England should reflect the diversity of society and local communities. It recognises both the value of diversity in enriching our arts and cultural offer, as well as ensuring all artists have access to the opportunities and resources to create truly excellent work that reflects the presence, stories and voices of all our communities. London's non-national museums, with support from LMD, will need to show how they contribute to the Creative Case for Diversity **through the work they produce, present and distribute**.

In Year Two, LMD delivered a training session entitled *Developing an Inclusive Museum – public programming, collections and collaborative practice* to support museums with their diversity work and better understand ACE's Creative Case for Diversity in June 2019. As part of the session, delivered by Deanne Naula, MDO Audiences, museums were able to find out more about the criteria and projects LMD would fund through the DMP grants programme. Unlike, Year One, it was not compulsory for museums to attend to be eligible to apply for a grant, but instead LMD strongly suggested it would be useful to museums and staff undertaking diversity work in their organisations and were thinking of applying.

As well as covering all aspects of diversity practice, the session gave 18 delegates the time to outline their diversity profile across their audiences and staff/volunteers and compare this with regional and local data. Attendees also heard from Collette Cork-Hirst, Senior Officer Equality and Diversity, about ACE's Creative Case for Diversity agenda, as well as case studies from previous DMP grantees Kingston Museum and the Royal College of Music Museum to share their approach and projects.

The session also provided key information on how to write an Equality Action Plan (EAP). Finally, Delegates also heard from representatives from both ACE and National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) about their funding opportunities to further support museums with their diversity work, practice and help to fund and deliver aspects/points/projects outlined in their EAPs. The feedback from the session was overwhelming positive and museums felt they had a better understanding of diversity practice as well as the DMP and grants overall. However, it was felt that the content could be split over two training sessions as delegates felt there was a lot of detail and information to take on board and utilise. As such, LMD plans to review how it delivers the session in Year Three and how the sessions could be better packaged up.

In Year Two, the grant programme continued to prioritise grants that supported how museums could respond to the Creative Case for Diversity agenda (public programmes/events/exhibitions and collections). Programmes that contribute to CCD initiative include:

- Considering how museums can include in the planning process the voices of people from diverse backgrounds, particularly those that data and evidence tells museums are under-represented in their work
- Identifying opportunities for museums to commission new work and engage with artists from underrepresented groups
- Consulting with people who are underrepresented, for example by working with local organisations who work with under-represented groups
- Recruiting a small number of people from communities that museums want to engage, train and support to develop new programmes
- Collecting objects that reflect the diversity of the communities the museum works with and working with the work to showcase these objects in the museum (through a public event or exhibition).

Alongside the training session and grants programme, Deanne also presented at two conferences about LMD's DMP and outlined how LMD were supporting non-national museums with their diversity work. Alongside her presentation, she also organised for museums to present on the work and projects they had been working on to showcase how London's non-national museums were embedding diversity and creating organisations, collections and public programmes, which are representative of their respective communities.

The first conference LMD were invited to present at was the Visitor Studies Group Annual Conference, where Deanne along with Brent Museum and Archives and Redbridge Museum presented to around 170 delegates. The second conference, was the regional Museum Development Network and ACE training and development day for CCD and EAPs, where Deanne presented alongside the The View to around 30 delegates. Together these events have raised the profile of LMD's DMP and shared details and approaches to the programme and grants to support the work of other Museum Development regions and museums themselves.

LMD have provided full information about the different elements of programme below, along with commentary and feedback it has received from participating museums. This information will be used to inform the planning and offer for the Year 3 Diversity Matters Programme.

## Diversity Matters Grants Overview

This aspect of the programme was managed by Rachael Crofts/Deanne Naula, Museum Development Officer Audiences. There were a total of four applications to the programme, of which following assessment LMD funded all four projects. All funded projects were given grants of between £600 and £1,000. A total of £3,700 was awarded through the Diversity Matters Programme Grants in Year Two. All the projects were completed to schedule and three of the four museums provided additional funds towards the final project.

Notable successes this year included:



- Brent Museum and Archives exhibition designed by its young people was visited by 2,000 general visitors within the first month of opening. As part of this project the young people collected 31 new items (as well as around 60 digital photographs) that help the museum collections and exhibitions resonate with a younger audience
- The Museum of the Order of St John developed two visual stories, one about visiting the museum galleries and one about going on a guided tour, which sit on their website to permanently support families and visitors with autism visiting the museum. Following the museum blogging and tweeting about the project, staff were asked to share their project, experience and tips during [@museumhour](#) as part of Autism Week in April by Autism in Museums
- Encouraged by its project with South Asian participants in Hounslow, the Musical Museum now plans to work with Hounslow's large Polish community to explore ways of highlighting recordings of Polish composers in the community and setting up discussion groups to inform future programming
- Finally, as part of the project, the Royal Institute of British Architects staff developed a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which covers the whole organisation for the first time. The policy now commits the organisation to not only improving the accessibility of the building overall, but outlines how it plans to continue to work with under-represented groups to develop activities going forward. This doesn't just include using internal budget to continue its activities for blind and partially sighted visitors, but also outlines how staff plan to develop activities for its visitors who identify as LGBTQ+ over the coming year.

The grants were used to fund the following:

Museums that worked with a group to develop a new public programme and/or activities that reflect the museum's diverse communities:	4
Events that are shaped by its diverse communities:	2
Artistic talent development initiatives to emerging, midcareer and established artists from diverse backgrounds and under-represented groups:	1
Exhibitions that showcased work/partner with artists and companies from diverse backgrounds and under-represented groups:	0

Activities/Projects/Programmes that supported people from diverse backgrounds to overcome barriers of involvement and realise their artistic and creative talents:	3
Contemporary collecting practice projects (with small interpretation panel to make visitors aware of the work):	1
Co-produced exhibition with groups from under-represented communities:	1
A targeted co-produced event with groups from under-represented communities:	2

Descriptions of each of the 2019 - 2020 projects are given below. Each of the museums have written a longer case study of their project. This includes further information on their outputs and work with their chosen protected characteristic group, as well as tips for the sector about undertaking such a project and lessons learnt from working with the group. This is available on the London Museum Development's webpages [here](#).

Diversity Matters Grants 2019 – 2020		
Name of museum and grant awarded	Information on project	Photographs of project
<p><b>Brent Museum and Archives</b></p> <p><b>£1,000</b></p> <p><i>All Roads Lead to Brent</i></p>	<p><b>Project Overview:</b></p> <p>Using social media and posters, the museum invited young people who live, work or study in Brent to take part. 5 young people were recruited as part of the project. The group immediately decided they wanted to hold an exhibition at the museum and over a six-month period, meet initially fortnightly and then weekly developed, planned and curated their own exhibition. As part of the sessions the museum ran a number of training sessions to support and develop the groups' skills and knowledge, including: event programming, interpretation text writing, marketing for cultural events, exhibition design, developing project partnerships, audience evaluation, object handling, cataloguing, object marking, photography and display training. The group sourced new objects to be accessioned and displayed, catalogued, photographed and labelled objects as well as wrote exhibition panels and labels, prepared evaluation forms and wrote content for social media. The final exhibition, <i>All Roads Lead to Brent</i>, was installed by the group and opened at the end of February 2020.</p> <p><b>What was achieved:</b></p> <p>As part of the project the museum successfully engaged with a group of young people with the work of the museum and archive service. In doing so, the museum supported its desire to work with young people and represent content from the diverse population of Brent. The young people who participated had such a positive experience that 2 participants will remain as volunteers with the service. In the first 3 weeks of the opening, the exhibition was viewed by 2,000 general visitors.</p>	 



**Feedback from participants and the general public:**

Feedback from the participants included comments such as:

- *“My favourite part was seeing our work displayed in the library and having the feeling of producing something, I enjoyed participating in the community.”*
- *“... I really enjoyed the creative development of the exhibition because I like using historical information to create something that the public can understand and learn from.”*



Furthermore, the group wrote a number of social media posts to coincide with the opening of the exhibition. The exhibition includes a display on BTS, the popular K-Pop group. The tweet the participants wrote about this display received thousands of likes and retweets on Twitter, more than the museum has ever received.

**Project Legacy & how it has supported the organisation to embrace and embed diversity practice:**

This was the first time working with a group of local young people for the museum, and the staff have gained invaluable insight, experience, knowledge of with this group going forward. The success of the project makes it likely the museum will do similar projects in the future, with visitors of all backgrounds. The contemporary collecting aspect of the project, enabled the young people and museum to collect 31 new items (as well as around 60 digital photographs) within the categories of transport, industry, theatre and music, that reflect the past 20 years of changes in the borough and speak better to a younger audience. The project has enabled the museum to redisplay an area of the permanent museum to more accurately reflect a Brent's diversity. The museum has also been able to recognise and discuss what future programming young people are interested in seeing within the museum going forward.





Name of museum and grant awarded	Information on project	Photographs of project
<p><b>Museum of the Order of St John</b></p> <p>£700</p> <p><i>Welcoming families with autism</i></p>	<p><b>Project Overview:</b></p> <p>The Museum wanted to welcome families with special educational needs and neurodiversity, specifically autism, to enable them to become a fully inclusive Museum. The museum set out to establish a sustainable autism-friendly offer through the procurement of resources, staff training, the trialling of activities and consultation.</p> <p><b>What was achieved:</b></p> <p>Nine staff as well as staff from Islington Museum and The Charterhouse (local non-national museums) took part in autism awareness training. Following on from this, the museum designed two visual stories, one about visiting the museum galleries and one about going on a guided tour. In designing these, staff also looked at examples from other institutions, as well as guidance from <a href="#">Kids in Museums</a> and the <a href="#">Autism Friendly Award Guidelines</a>. The visual stories and sensory map have since been published on the museum's <a href="#">website</a> to enable families with autistic children to prepare for their visit. They have also been printed and bound and made available for visitors to borrow during their visit, along with emotions communication cards, fidgets and ear defenders.</p> <p>Staff then ran a family activity session specifically for families with autism, which also acted as a consultation session about how they could best cater for the families' needs at the Museum going forward. Staff also wrote a <a href="#">blog post</a> about the project on the museum's website. This and the visual stories were shared on Twitter for further feedback from users and received a number of comments, likes and retweets. As a result of this Autism in Museums asked the museum to share their project, experience and tips during <a href="#">@museumhour</a> as part of Autism Week on 6 April.</p>	 

**Feedback from participants and the general public:**

The families that took part in the activity and consultation session stayed a considerable length of time at the activity and were evidently happy and relaxed throughout. Having attended the activity session, both families felt confident enough to visit the galleries independently immediately afterwards, and both thought that in future they would feel able to attend activities going forward.

One parent said on their feedback form *"We had a fantastic time today. Such passion and creativity and kindness from all involved. I am sure that we would love to come back..."* On the day of the event the Museum had 56 general visitors, all of whom were made aware of the activity by the changes they made to the space and the signs explaining it and commented how pleased they were this activity was going on. Feedback from the Blog and Twitter posts as well as @museumhour have also been incredibly positive as well.

**Project Legacy & how it has supported the organisation to embrace and embed diversity practice:**

Staff in a wide variety of roles attended the training, including the museum director, curator, front-of-house staff, office assistant and learning assistants, thus ensuring an autism-friendly ethos is embedded in the museum. One member of staff said it had prompted them to consider how they could make the events that they are responsible for organising more accessible.

The very positive feedback from participants continues to support with internal advocacy, and the museum plans on offering regular autism-friendly family activity sessions. The museum also plans on applying for the Autism Friendly Award to further embed their autism-friendly work and will ensure those with autism feel welcome and confident in visiting the Museum.

**Coming on a guided tour of the Museum of the Order of St John**



You can visit the Museum galleries at any time during our opening hours. To visit the historic rooms upstairs at St John's Gate as well as the church and crypt you must go on a guided tour.

You can find out the times of our guided tours on the Museum website.

When you arrive, tell a museum assistant if you would like to go on a tour. They will give you a token for it.





Name of museum and grant awarded	Information on project	Photographs of project
<p><b>Musical Museum</b></p> <p><b>£1,000</b></p> <p><i>The Hounslow Bollywood Dance Project @ The Musical Museum</i></p>	<p><b>Project Overview:</b></p> <p>The museum is situated in the highly diverse London Borough of Hounslow, with 51% of the population BAME. Audience research conducted at the museum in 2019 showed that 73% of visitors were white. The museum wanted to raise their profile within the large South Asian community and engage them in broader programming to attract more visitors from this ethnic group.</p> <p><b>What was achieved:</b></p> <p>The museum decided to partner with Hounslow Seniors Trust, who have a high percentage of Asian participants, to support staff with this project. Staff spoke with participants of Trust events in local day centres and community spaces in the borough. Participants suggested that they would be interested in attending Bollywood dance classes and the museum decided to include these sessions in the Winter/Spring programme. This was the first time the museum had actively sought to specifically programme events to attract greater ethnic diversity amongst its visitors. Initially, four classes were planned for the Over 50's and two for children with a demonstration event planned in February. The over 50's classes were well attended with 32 participants attending 9 workshops. An extra class was put on to rehearse for the event. However, at this session participants felt nervous about performing in public and asked to postpone the event until later in the year when they felt more confident. As such the museum put on an additional three classes for participants. The museum and participants originally suggested that they would perform at the museum's Open Day in July, and hoped to continue to attend sessions to build their confidence. However, with the museum being closed due to COVID-19, this event has been postponed until the Autumn. In the meantime a video of one the sessions has been taken and shared</p>	 

on the museum's website and social media channels to share the work with other visitors. Some participants had not visited the museum before and following the workshops, were interested in the exhibitions currently on display and explored the collections on display. It is hoped that following lockdown these participants will bring their friends and family to visit.


#### **Feedback from participants and the general public:**

The feedback from participants and Hounslow Seniors Trust was very positive. Participants enjoyed the classes, the quality of the teaching, and liked the venue and cafe. Participants look forward to sharing their new skills and hearing what visitors think when it is safe to do so over the coming months.

#### **Project Legacy & how it has supported the organisation to embrace and embed diversity practice:**

The museum wants to continue to address the need to engage broader audiences with the museum's collection by seeking collaborations with organisations to better bridge the gap between the museum's predominantly Western music production history with developments in other cultures. At the suggestion of participants, the museum is exploring links to Indian music. Staff have also found that Hounslow has a high Polish community and the museum is exploring ways of highlighting recordings of Polish composers in the community and setting up discussion groups to inform future programming. The museum also plans to work with other partners to develop new heritage activities and sessions for children to build on their experience of the children's Bollywood sessions. The museum has sought to be more community focussed in recent years, but accepts there is much more they can and should be doing. The museums plans will reflect this going forward, with the support of staff, volunteers and the building of strong partnerships to engage more of the museum's community.



Name of museum and grant awarded	Information on project	Photographs of project
<p><b>RIBA</b></p> <p><b>£1,000</b></p> <p><i>Opening the RIBA: Architectural workshop and experiences for blind and partially sighted people</i></p>	<p><b>Project Overview:</b></p> <p>The museum wanted to diversify the visitor profile visiting their building and engaging with their architectural collections. The museum wanted to host a creative workshop for people who are blind or partially sighted. Until this project, no programme or activity directly supported or considered the needs of this audience, and subsequently few blind and partially sighted visitors tended to visit.</p> <p><b>What was achieved:</b></p> <p>The museum decided to partner with VocalEyes, an organisation with many years of experience in working with blind and partially sighted people and artist Sally Booth, who is partially sighted, to give the museum confidence and access to a network that allowed them to connect and recruit people from the blind and partially sighted community. As part of the planning process group discussed the suitability of the building and what could be offered that would be stimulating for blind and partially sighted people. Staff, VocalEyes and Sally created one bespoke, free event that lasted half a day and provided a guided tour, social space and creative workshop for people to discover more about architecture through its exhibitions for 10 participants. The first part of the event consisted of a guided tour of two temporary exhibitions at the RIBA. This was accompanied with a variety of handling objects, audio descriptions and large images – all created especially for the participants, which proved to be very popular with participants. This was followed by a refreshments break, a social occasion to encourage staff and participants to mix and discuss the exhibition in a relaxed environment. The second part of the event was a guided creative workshop using 3D drawing pens, where participants could create their own architectural model inspired by</p>	 



their own previous experiences or by what they had seen at the RIBA, i.e. its building, collections and exhibitions.

#### **Feedback from participants and the general public:**

Feedback received from participants was both positive and informative. All participants seemed pleased with their visit and the work they created. The workshop was shared afterwards on [Twitter](#). This tweet had 1,370 impressions, 98 engagements, 13 likes and four retweets. Staff have also written a detailed story about the project for the website to show cultural venues can become more inclusive and diverse.

#### **Project Legacy & how it has supported the organisation to embrace and embed diversity practice:**

Importantly, for most participants, it was their first visit to the RIBA, and they all expressed the desire to return. The detailed feedback from participants on the day will shape the museum's next programme activities with this audience using internal budgets. The feedback on the building's accessibility continues to support internal discussions to advocate for more accessible spaces. The workshop also helped to diversify the museum's visitor profile and provided evidence that outreach activities to engage specific audiences does work. As such staff are working to include public activities to support underrepresented groups of visitors, specifically to engage with its collections. This activity development is further supported by the new Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy covering the whole RIBA for the first time, which was developed alongside this project. Since the original application, an internal EDI group was formed and has met several times to support, develop and approve this work with RIBA's Council. To further support this EDI policy, working groups have been formed this year to look at specific aspects of EDI, the most recent being one to cover issues affecting those who identify as LGBTQ+.





## Conclusions on the 2019 - 2020 Diversity Matters Programme Grants

In Year Two the profile of LMD's programme has been raised significantly amongst Arts Council England, other Museum Development Teams across the country as well as with non-national museums. This interest in the training and grant programme has prompted conversations at all levels about our approach and how it is supporting London's non-national museums on their journey to be more representative of their diverse communities. Alongside this LMD have provided a number of significant support sessions to individual museums to share expertise including detailed tips, resources and knowledge to support them in either starting, developing and/or embedding their work in this area. Staff have continued to be incredibly grateful for LMD's time, insights and knowledge in helping them to shape their own ideas, projects and grants programmes.

Interestingly, at the same time the number of London's non-national museums who applied for the £1,000 has fallen. Having spoken to a number of delegates who attended the training and decided not to apply, the key barrier to applying reported by a number of these museums, was the requirement to submit an Equality Action Plan (EAP) signed by the Board of Trustees (or equivalent) as part of the application process. LMD recognises that the development of an EAP, as well as getting it signed off at this level, in a relatively short period of time is a barrier for many museums. This is particularly true of those museums who sit within much larger organisations, whose primary function is not the museum itself. In Years One and Two it has made sense to strengthen the development of both Creative Case for Diversity and EAPs by combining them into one programme. However, the reality of doing this is that has also prevented LMD from supporting a number of willing museums from developing their diversity practice.

This year RIBA submitted a museum specific rather than an organisational EAP as part of the application. In the subsequent discussions following the application LMD provided RIBA with the time and support to work with their HR and Departments across the wider organisation to develop an organisational plan. These conversations and subsequent document have had far greater impact as it acknowledged working document rather than a policy and plan for the sake of writing one. RIBA museum staff overwhelming felt it provided leverage for a small team to raise it with senior management and put audience development and diversity practice on their agenda.

LMD has also learnt important lessons from this, which it plans to use to enhance the Year Three programme. LMD knows these conversations, subsequent planning and sign off that happened within RIBA, is not possible for other willing museums within larger organisations, and the requirement continues to act as a barrier for museums wanting to work with their communities to diversify their collections and programmes from applying. As such, LMD have raised this barrier and our experience of managing this programme with both Arts Council England and other Museum Development providers at regional and national level. These conversations are continuing into Year Three with LMD taking a central role in these discussions. It is hoped that following on from this dialogue, LMD's Year Three programme will allow for some flexibility that will address this and allow museum staff to not just attend the briefing/training session, which they find incredibly informative and useful, but also enable more of them to apply for the grants and further offer of support to unsuccessful applicants.

As in Year One, the four successful grantees were strong applications and the assessment panel felt they had understood the importance of working with participants, groups and partners to co-produce, co-create and co-curate exhibitions and activities. All four projects funded through LMD's DMP programme have added to Arts Council England's Creative Case for Diversity agenda **through the work they've produced, presented and distributed**. All four projects worked with a group of people from the list of Arts Council England's protected characteristics to develop and co-produce, co-create and co-curate new public programme outputs and activities that helped the museum reflect its wider diverse communities.

Through the programme, three of London's non-national museums have started their journey to embrace and embed diversity practices within their public programmes. Like museums in Year One, this cohort of staff and museums have all learnt key lessons from their project and have increased their own skills, which will further support them to embed their knowledge and practice into their audience development/learning plans and their wider organisation going forward. These museums are showing encouraging signs by planning to continue with partnerships, individuals and projects going forward to support them on their journey to become more inclusive and ensuring their diversity practice continues to evolve and reflect its local diverse communities.

The final museum, Brent Museum and Archives, showcases how LMD's DMP grant programme continues to endorse and support museums on their journey to be more diverse and representative of their boroughs' residents, having received a grant in both funding years. In this case the second project challenged the museum's diversity work in different ways, yet following the end of the project some of the participants expressed a desire to stay on as volunteers for the first time. In becoming volunteers these participants support the museum to diversify its volunteer team profile. Alongside this, and as a result of their work over the last two years, Brent Museum and Archives are beginning to see changes in their general visitor profile, and now their workforce, supporting them to demonstrate to the Council how the museum is more reflective of its diverse borough.

All four museums this year reported how their projects' respective outputs have helped to raise the profile of this work across the organisation and with wider stakeholders. In doing so, they believe they have gained important support from staff across all levels of their museum and their wider organisation, which will enable them to continue to develop their diversity work and audience profile going forward. Stories such as these demonstrate that diversifying your profile, programmes and content doesn't happen overnight, yet small projects can have a big impact to enable museums to be more representative of their communities. Projects and grants programmes such as DMP continue to support museums on their journey to be more representative.

Like Year One, projects have either supported them to either maintain and evolve their diversity practice in different ways or support museums to kick start their museums emerging diversity practice. Through the programmes they have run, their outcomes and outputs, they have demonstrated how they are listening to and empowering their audiences, staff and content creators to feel more represented and want to further engage with their museums, collections and public programmes.

It is hoped that more success stories from both grant years will be reported over the coming months through their Impact Reports, to endorse and showcase the positive changes that are happening across London's non-national museums in their engagement from visitors of all backgrounds with their

collections, exhibitions as well as an increase in participation in their public programmes and activities from more diverse communities. It is also hoped that these museums will also start to see and report about the changes that have occurred within their workforce as a result of this work.

From the positive feedback from current cohort of museums involved, LMD's DMP will continue to run in Year Three and support museums to work with audiences/groups and visitors that reflect the diversity of society and local communities. From the feedback from museums undertaking the Year Two programme, LMD will look at ways the training session can be broken down to enable further discussions and conversations between and within museums. It is also hoped that the criteria and requirement of an EAP within the grant process will have changed and be more supportive of museums within larger organisations, following LMDs discussions with regional and national Arts Council England and other regional Museum Development providers. Any changes will be clearly communicated with the sector when the grant and training session launches in Year Three.

LMD feel they are using the knowledge and findings from Years One and Two to help inform and help shape the DMP Year Three programme for the better. Staff believe in utilising this reflective process of continued programme evaluation, the Year Three programme has the potential to be more helpful, supportive and impactful for London's non-national museums undertaking this important work. As such, the LMD team looks forward to receiving more applications in Year Three which support museums with their diversity work and enable the work they produce, present and distribute to reflect its wider diverse communities. In doing so, London's museums will continue to add important case studies that support Arts Council England's Creative Case for Diversity national initiative that share best practice, tips, and knowledge from a non-national, non-NPO perspective.