

Proposal to DCMS for the Victoria & Albert Museum's Strategic Commissioning Project 2009-2011

Design Your Life

1. Summary description of project

This project aims to inspire and facilitate the development of creative design skills through museum collections. By means of an effective partnership between museums, design organisations, schools and other young peoples' service providers, the project will develop and provide a replicable design learning 'package' to enthuse young people about creative design and its potential in their lives. The two distinctive features will be: the use of museum objects as both examples of excellence and illustrations of the creative design process; and the involvement of professional designers at all stages of the project. This design learning 'package' will establish generic principles and methodologies for using museums for creative design and will be supported by specific resources such as online material, case studies and training programmes so that after 2011 it can have the flexibility to be adapted to other learning programmes such as Find Your Talent or the 14-19 Diplomas. The methodology will also be used to add creative design workshops to partner museums' core education programmes.

2. Project objectives

- To provide young people with enjoyable opportunities to develop their skills and creativity through inspiration from museum collections
- Enable young people to continue their involvement with museum-based cultural activities after the project is finished.
- To boost young people's self esteem, engender a sense of achievement and motivation for participation in cultural activities by providing quality learning opportunities which reflect standards of excellence, innovation and risk taking as advocated by the McMaster report.
- To engage young people in design and to increase their understanding of the design process – from initial inspiration, through creative thinking and experiment to the commercial requirements of the client and their brief as well as awareness of themselves as design consumers.

- To build on research from first year of Design Your Life to establish and document a museum-based methodology that supports the Design & Technology curriculum, specifically: skills development in research and ideas generation: recording skills through drawing and digital techniques; critical analysis of design objects; evaluation and presentation skills.
- To present design and the cultural industries as a career path for young people and introduce them to professional designers as role models.
- To support the increased participation of professional designers in museum learning projects through development of case study examples, training and professional networks.
- To work together as a partnership to share resources, skills and knowledge for professional development, and disseminate project learning to the wider museum community.
- To create a legacy of online resources on museum-inspired design learning for teachers, youth leaders, designers interested in education and museum professionals.
- To extend the project's impact by involving associate museums and galleries in wider uptake of the project's theme, supported by the online resources and a dissemination/training events.

3. Context of the project

i) Meeting wider agendas

This project is well placed to meet a number of government strategic objectives.

DCSF: Every Child Matters and the Children's Plan

- The third Every Child Matters outcome 'To Enjoy and Achieve' is at the heart of this project. Our work with Looked After children in partnership with Action for Children supports the DCSF departmental strategic objective 'safeguard the young and vulnerable', with particular reference to the 'Care Matters' implementation plan, which aims to ensure that young people get high quality care and support.
- The project will 'take the next steps in achieving world class schools and an excellent education for every child' by supporting the improved delivery of the Design and Technology curriculum through the input of professional designers and also supporting the delivery of the Creative & Media diploma.
- It will 'help to make sure that young people have interesting and exciting things to do outside of school' by providing creative opportunities for youth and community groups.

DCMS: Find Your Talent

- This year we will be joined by new partner Bolton Council who are one of the Find Your Talent Pathfinder projects. The design learning package will enable museums to increase their capacity to offer five hours cultural activity per week. We will be working with the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to develop a model that can be rolled out nationally as part of Find Your Talent in 2011.

DCMS: The Creative Economy

- The project will contribute to the productivity of the creative economy by supporting creative practitioners in terms of employment, networking and professional development opportunities. It will encourage young people to take up careers in design, increasing their confidence through their achievements and helping them on the path to success.

ii) The Role of the V&A

As the world's leading museum of art and design, the V&A is ideally placed to lead the Design Your Life partnership project. The project fits well with the V&A's mission to enrich people's lives by promoting the practice of design and increasing knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the designed world. The project is a perfect match for all V&A's four established key strategic objectives:

- *To provide optimum access to collections and services for diverse audiences, now and in the future*
- *To be acknowledged and respected as the world's leading museum of art and design*
- *To promote, support and develop the UK creative economy by inspiring designers and makers, and by stimulating enjoyment and appreciation of design*
- *To operate with financial and organisational efficiency*

The V&A was founded in 1852 with the aim of making works of art available to all, educating the working population and inspiring British designers and manufacturers. The Museum still continues its work to encourage contemporary design. It is in a position to deliver excellence through its collections of historic and international importance, knowledge and expertise in its staff and contacts with contemporary designers. The new Sackler Centre for arts education enables innovative programmes for schools, students, families, young people and adults to be developed upon a unique triangle of resources: the V&A's collections and staff, the expertise of creative professionals, and the skills of our visitors. The Sackler Centre provides a space for debate on the current issues of design and its place in society, alongside opportunities to learn new skills, both digital and traditional. An

innovative element is the presence of two practitioners in residence to bring the design process to life for the visitor. An example of excellence within an established programme is the annual Creative Quarter event, which in 2008 attracted over 2,500 young people aged 13-19 to find out about the various career and education pathways available in the creative industries.

iii) Strengths and innovations of the partnership

Longevity

The strengths V&A's strategic commissioning partnership have been built up of over six years – for five years with the successful Image and Identity programme, and over the last year with the new Design Your Life theme. Most of the regional museums partners have continued in place throughout and at least half of the project co-ordinators have remained in post for this time.

Sustainability

A sustainable legacy of Image and Identity has been established through the adoption of Image & Identity sessions within partner museums' core offer e.g. at Brighton and Shipley. Online resources have been created on the V&A's website so that even though the project is finished, teachers and group leaders are able to continue to use the Image & Identity theme.

Involvement of Action for Children

One innovative aspect of the partnership is the unique and long-term relationship that has been established with what was formerly NCH, the children's charity – now Action for Children. This has enabled project staff to understand each other's needs and structures to facilitate increased working with disadvantaged and vulnerable children, including those in local authority care as well as AfC groups. Knowledge exchanges have taken place between AfC and museum partners such as CPD on child protection for museum staff.

High profile national events

In addition, the profile raising opportunities of the three national exhibition and young people's conferences have been important in giving young people a sense of achievement and also boosting wider public awareness of the project.

Excellent evaluation record

Successive external evaluations have confirmed that Image and Identity was effective in raising young people's self-esteem, increasing their creative skills and enjoyment of museums.

Design and Technology

The Design Your Life theme constitutes an innovation of content as museums with art and design collections have traditionally worked with Art teachers rather than those teaching Design and Technology (D&T). Research for the *Design Education Blueprint* published in 2008 by the Design Council showed considerable skills gaps for D&T teachers, indicating that they needed inspiration and examples of good practice, did not commonly involve practicing designers with school work or use museums.

Involvement of design practitioners

Museums are not used to integrating designers in their programming – the established model is to use artist educators who see museum work as an additional income source. Designers do not normally have a financial need to work with museums and do not normally have experience of working with children and young people.

Design sector partners

An innovation this year is the advisory expertise of new partners: the Design Council and the Design and Technology Association (DATA). They will work with the partners to ensure curriculum relevance of the content development and also provide access to successful practicing designers who wish to work with education.

4. Partners

In addition to our core museum partners, AfC, MLA, the Design Council and DATA, we are bringing in a number of additional museums and galleries as associate partners in this next phase. Birmingham Museums are not going to be involved in the next phase due to other project commitments. Bolton Council takes their place as a core partner.

For full list of partners see Appendix 1.

5. Target Audience

- Young people aged 11-19,
- Design & Technology and Art & Design teachers specialising in design disciplines
- Youth and community group leaders
- Design professionals interested in education
- Museum professionals interested in establishing design learning programmes

6. Activities

- Design Your Life extended projects with schools and AfC groups.
- Design Your Life standard workshops integrated into core museum services.
- Design Your Life exhibition at the V&A, with accompanying young people's conference.
- Dissemination and training events for the associate museum and gallery partners and local schools.
- Online resources to support wider take-up of the project theme by museums and galleries nationwide.
- In conjunction with the Design Council a list and network of designers with the experience to run similar projects in future will be established.
- Launch of the resource material at a national seminar for museum professionals at the V&A.
- External evaluation to ensure objectives are met standards of excellence, risk taking and innovation as defined by the Mc Master report are achieved.

7. Outcomes

Please see Appendix 2 .

8. Timescales

April 2009	Completion of agreed collaborative project brief developed from March research seminar. Identification of participating schools/organisation and invitation to 08-09 Report launch reception 30 April
May-June 2009	Research and planning of projects with Schools/community organisation/designers School based CPD sessions; Evaluation framework put in place
July 2009	Museum based CPD for group leaders/teachers and designer on working from objects

July- August 2009	Summer holiday projects with Action For Children/Community Groups
Sept- Nov 2009	School based projects
December 2009	Regional showcase Events
January 2010	Evaluation process and resource development
Feb – March 2010	Resource development Planning of V&A exhibition and young people's conference Regional museum CPD events for teachers (non participating)
April 2010	Design Your life exhibition at the V&A External evaluation and review of project material Dissemination events at regional museums for museum networks
May 2010	Planning and CPD for participating teachers/group leaders CPD for project staff on resource development formats Ongoing work on these
June/July 2010	Pilot training for designers on using museums CPD for teachers/designers participating this year
August 2010	AFC/Community Groups holiday projects
September- November	Limited school- based projects used as models for resource material, to capture film footage, designer interviews etc
December	Regional show case events/resource development
January 2011	Resource development
1 Feb 2011	Deadline for resource text
March 2011	Launch of online resources/national seminar at V&A on how museums can support design learning

9. Milestones

July 2009	CPD for group leaders/teachers and designer on working from objects
December 2009	2009/10 schools/AfC projects complete
April 2010	Design Your Life exhibition at the V&A Young people's conference
May 2010	Start of resource development by project staff

July 2010	Pilot of generic training programmes for teachers/designers on working with museums
December 2010	2010/11 schools AfC projects complete
15 January 2011	Deadline for resource text
Mid March 2011	Launch of online resource plus national seminar on how museums can support design learning

10. Use of Funds

Individual Museum Projects

Brighton	18,000	
Manchester	18,000	
Sheffield	18,000	
Shipley	18,000	
Bolton	18,000	
V&A	18,000	108,000

V&A National Coordination Costs

Salary costs (coordinator and administrator)	20,900	
Travel	1,000	
Evaluation & research	6,000	
Exhibition	7,000	
Conference	5,000	
Partner CPD	2,500	
Partner advisory costs	1,600	44,000

Other

Action for Children	8,000	
Web resources (MLA funding)	Amount tbc	
Funding for dissemination/training events to involve associate museums (MLA funding)	Amount tbc	8,000

Total DCMS Funding **£160,000**

11. Project Management

The effective structure developed over the past six years of the partnership will be retained with the project managed by a national project manager three days per week at the V&A and regional co-ordinators in post two days a week. There will be partnership meetings every two months and in between communications will be maintained by email and online discussion.

In addition this year the Design Council joins the partnership to advise on learning content and links with designers – there will be bi-monthly meetings of a content advisory group with Design Council staff, the project manager and specialist design teachers.

12. Key risks and how they will be managed

- Further maternity leaves. This is an unknown but not unlikely risk given the age and gender of the co-coordinators. We will ensure that there is good knowledge of the project by the co-ordinators' line managers so that cover can be provided if necessary. Ideally some contingency would have been put in the budget but as this is already stretched it has been decided not to do this.
- Uncertainty about future funding streams and how the current work could fit into future structures such as Find Your Talent, particularly as in some regions there have been no FYT pathfinder projects.
- Some uncertainty about the continuity of funding for the second year given the economic circumstances and the possibility of an election by May 2010. Although the project is planned for 2 years with the assumption that it will have sustainability beyond, it will also be organised so that there can be tangible outcomes if it needs to finish in 2010, i.e. case studies and an interim report and dissemination .

Appendix 1: Project Partners

Partner	Associate partners/notes
The Victoria & Albert Museum	Orleans House Museum, Richmond; Leighton House Museum, Kensington& Chelsea; William Morris & Vestry House Museum Walthamstow; Museum of Domestic Interiors, University of Middlesex
Brighton Museum & Art Gallery	Hampshire County Museums and Archive, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust; Oxford University Museums. All these act as umbrella associations over several smaller museums.
Manchester Art Galleries	Manchester Craft & Design Centre; Manchester Museum; Whitworth Art Gallery; Manchester Metropolitan University Museum of Science & Industry
Museums-Sheffield	Bradford, Leeds, York and Hull Museum services, Sheffield Industrial Trust
Tyne & Wear Museums: Shipley Art Gallery	Hatton Gallery, Newcastle University; Bede's World, Church Bank, Jarrow, Tyne & Wear ; Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough; Hartlepool's Maritime Experience; Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art
Bolton Council	Find Your Talent Pathfinder project involving Bolton Museum
Action For Children	Action for Children has been working with the UK's most vulnerable children since 1869. It works with nearly 170,000 children, young people and their families through nearly 450 projects across the UK.
The Design Council	The national strategic body for design
The Design & Technology Association	A subject association of over 6,000 specialist teachers
Museums, Libraries and Archive Council	To provide support in cascading the learning of DYL to associate partner museums and also to development of the online learning resources

Appendix 2: Project Outcomes charted against Strategic Commissioning aims

1	Strategic Commissioning overall aims	Outcomes from Find Your Talent and the McMaster report	Design Your Life project outcomes
1.1	Encouraging national and regional museum/gallery partnership through sharing collections and expertise.		Project staff will develop expertise on how museums support creative design from bi-monthly CPD meetings. This will be disseminated through training events to associate partners. Key works and examples of design processes from different collections will be shared as online resources
1.2	Encouraging partnership between the museum sector and the educational sector.		An ongoing advisory partnership will be established with the Design and Technology Association and the Design Council. Each partner will develop close links with schools networks through consultation, programme planning and CPD.
1.3	Encouraging national and regional partnership to deliver access and community building		The national partnership with Action for Children will enable work young people at risk of social exclusion as will the work being done with Looked After children by the Manchester project. At least half schools worked with have not visited museums before and a high proportion of these are in areas of economic deprivation.
1.4	Supporting the key aims of Find Your Talent:	Find Your Talent Outcomes (Young people will become...)	
1.4.i	- learning through culture	Culturally productive – confident in their own creativity to make their own work	Young people will learn a range of practical and creative skills under guidance of professional designers in order to make their own work. They will gain confidence through the celebration and display of their work.
1.4.ii	- learning in and about culture	Culturally aware – knowing what there is where it is and how to access it –	They will gain confidence in visiting museums, and become aware of other cultural opportunities beyond Design Your Life.

		feeling ownership of the cultural world	They will gain awareness of professional design careers and how they too can achieve this in the future.
1.4.iii		Culturally knowledgeable – understanding how cultural products are made, able to talk about the making, and transfer that understanding across contexts and cultural practices	Through the museum visit and their own making process they will understand how a range of products are designed and made. They will compare examples of similar objects from museum collections to reflect on the differences and similarities of design process across different contexts and cultures
1.4.IV		Culturally literate- able to understand cultural texts objects and performances, talk about what they mean to them, make informed reflective judgements about their value.	They will discuss and reflect what makes good design and the role of taste and fashion. They will become more aware of their own design choices to become a more informed consumer of design
1.4.v		A cultural leader – identifying and supporting other youth people to develop their skills and capabilities and behaviours, contributing to their shaping of local and national Cultural provision.	Young people with particular skills and aptitude in creative design will be identified and encouraged to pursue other opportunities both within and beyond the museums e.g. peer-led young people’s forum. At the end of the project each young person will be helped to create an activity plan to support continued involvement in museum-based cultural activities.
1.5	Delivering McMaster priorities for	McMaster recommendations	
1.5.i	a) excellence	-that excellence in culture occurs when an experience affects and changes an individual - that practitioners communicating	External evaluation will chart changes of attitudes, motivation and skill levels amongst participants and their experience of achievement

		<p>about their work be the primary tool of any programme of audience engagement</p> <p>- that practitioners take responsibility for the cultural ecology and actively engage with the development of their peers and the next generation</p>	<p>Practicing designers will be integral to each project to communicate about the design process and their inspiration from museum objects</p> <p>A professional network and training will be established for designers wanting to work in museum context</p>
1.5.ii	b) innovation and risk taking	- “involves experimentation, pushing boundaries in ways which may not work. It demands courage, curiosity desire and a degree of spontaneity”.	<p>Innovation is working in depth with the design and technology curriculum as opposed to art and design. Also using professional designers to help deliver museum projects. Projects will be ambitious, set high expectations of students and cross subject boundaries</p> <p>Designers will be inexperienced with working with young people and will need support , and risk over ambition, and not achieving outcomes for final exhibition</p>
2	Strategic Commissioning education aims		
2.1	Motivating and engaging children of all kinds		The broad range of the partnership means that the project engages with young people with wide range of background both in and out of school
2.2	Providing different learning experiences to encourage , accommodate and develop different learning styles and skills		The combination of museum and classroom based learning provides a range of practical and creative learning opportunities. Design your life methodology will also encourage reflection and presentation skills
2.3	Developing different skills and encouraging children to see connections across the		Projects will work across the curriculum wherever possible. Design projects encompass skills across the curriculum – research, literacy, numeracy , IT, Business enterprise, presentation and

	curriculum		communication skills.
2.4	Recognising and developing respect for different personal interests, needs, aptitudes and cultural perspectives		Respect and listening to other will be essential part of project behaviour contracts. The context and needs of design for related objects will be discussed across different cultural backgrounds
2.5	Supporting teachers, museum educators and others in achieving these aims.		Participating teachers will gain increased confidence in using museums to support design learning within the curriculum and will develop new skills to promote creativity with young people. Staff from participating museums and partner organisations will gain an increased understanding of design-based learning and how museums can support this
3	Strategic Commissioning Community aims		
3.1	Encouraging active citizenship through museums and galleries.		An introduction to museums and cultural entitlement will be a core message of the projects. Families will be invited to celebration events and young people will be encouraged to take up further cultural opportunities.
3.2	Promoting social inclusion through museums and galleries by making a positive impact on the regions.		Working in partnership and with the associate partner museums on a local level will increase impact of project as promoter of socially inclusive working