

6 June 2018

National Trust for Scotland launches new volunteer project

The National Trust for Scotland has marked the end of National Volunteers Week (1-7 June 2018) by launching a new project geared toward providing a tangible outcome for those who give up their free time to help the charity protect Scotland's heritage.

The 'Pathways to Success: Accrediting the Volunteer Experience' is a three-year programme that will establish the Trust as an accredited SQA assessment centre and allow it to offer an SQA Award in 'Volunteering Skills', providing participants with formal recognition of their contribution.

The award will be available at SCQF levels three, four and five, and forms part of a wider initiative to encourage volunteers from new demographic groups, particularly young people and those seeking a career in the heritage sector, by positioning volunteering as a viable entry point into employment.

Carol-Ann Boyter, Head of People at the National Trust for Scotland, said: "This announcement is a visible demonstration of our commitment to engage a more diverse workforce, while addressing skills gaps to ensure a thriving sector in years to come.

"The SQA assessment centre will be fully operational in early Spring 2019 throughout the Trust's entire estate and will run over the next three years. During this time, we will train eight assessors and two internal verifiers who will help up to 72 volunteers complete the SQA Volunteering Skills Award.

"It is our hope that by offering a tangible and beneficial outcome people will recognise volunteering as vocational training, allowing us to engage new audiences from across Scotland."

The 'Pathways to Success: Accrediting the Volunteer Experience' project is funded by Museums Galleries Scotland through the Scottish Government's Vocational Pathways Fund, which allocated £100,000 to address the need for high quality affordable vocational training in Scotland's museums and heritage sector. The National Trust for Scotland was one of five recipients and received a £16,628 grant from the fund.

John McLeish, Interim CEO at Museum Galleries Scotland, added: "MGS is committed to the development of vocational skills within Scotland's museums sector. We are pleased to be able to support the National Trust for Scotland as they take positive steps to address existing

skills gaps, diversify their workforce, and provide a rewarding experience for their volunteers.”

In an aim to give back to those who give up a little of their time but make a big difference, the National Trust for Scotland will also be introducing Saltire Awards – the Scottish Government’s national youth volunteer awards programme – allowing young volunteers, aged between 12 and 25, to gain recognition for their commitment, contribution and achievements. The awards will be open to current and new volunteers, and those who apply also receive Young Scot points.

For more information about volunteering with the National Trust for Scotland contact: volunteers@nts.org.uk.

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