



JOB DESCRIPTION: Engagement Officer & Story Curator – “Sea Story” Project

Salary: £26,000 - £30,000 FTE

Contract: Fixed-term, 24 months

Hours: Full-time (1 FTE). 37.5 hours per week

Location: Whitby Marine Discovery Centre, with community-based work across Whitby

Reports to: Project Manager

Direct reports: Volunteers (10–15), freelance sessional support where applicable, oversight and coordination of project Steering Group (10-12)

Start date: 1 June 2026

ROLE PURPOSE:

The Engagement Officer & Story Curator will lead the delivery of “Sea Story”, a two-year community heritage, education and conservation project funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The role combines community engagement, oral history/story collection, education development, and interpretation support.

You will work directly with schools, older residents, community groups, fishermen, families and volunteers to gather and curate Whitby’s maritime stories. You will also deliver workshops, help shape digital and physical interpretation, support in the creation and delivery of community storytelling events, and ensure local people are at the heart of how their heritage is represented.

This is a creative, people-centred role perfect for someone who is passionate about communities, heritage, and storytelling as a tool for connection and learning.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Story Collection & Oral Histories

- Lead the story-gathering process, working closely with volunteers to collect memories, oral histories and personal narratives relating to Whitby's fishing and maritime heritage.
- Conduct sensitive, ethical and inclusive interviews with older residents, fishers, families and community groups.
- Prepare participants, manage consent forms, and handle data securely in line with GDPR.
- Work with the project stakeholders, including contracted professionals and a project Steering Group to select and curate stories for interpretation, digital content and the upgraded Heritage Wall.

2. Community & School Engagement

- Plan and deliver 10–15 intergenerational storytelling workshops in collaboration with local schools (KS1–2), enabling children to hear memories directly from older residents.
- Support delivery of community animation workshops (led by a local creative), ensuring stories are accurately and creatively represented.
- Work closely with teachers to develop educational workbooks featuring local stories that meet curriculum needs and accessibility expectations.
- Build relationships with local partners including fishing industry representatives, community groups, and heritage organisations.

3. Volunteer Management and Training

- Recruit 10–15 volunteers representing local communities.
- Coordinate volunteer rotas, duties, and learning needs.
- Support volunteer training in oral history capture, event support, and community engagement.
- Provide ongoing leadership and support to volunteers, ensuring their wellbeing and heritage learning.
- Recruit, coordinate and lead a project Steering Group of 10-12 local people including professionals (e.g. education, fishing industry, audio recording), and residents, supporting them to contribute to project decision-making and output creation.

4. Content Development & Interpretation

- Work with the Museum Consultant and Graphic Designer to shape the storyline and learning themes of the Heritage Wall.
- Coordinate the selection of story excerpts, audio clips, and visuals for digital and physical interpretation.
- Draft text for digital content, signs, QR-linked pages, and resources as needed, working with the Web Agency to create an accessible and engaging digital hub/ web pages to host curated stories and digital outputs (e.g. animation).

5. Digital & Educational Resources

- Support development of dedicated “*Sea Story*” web hub /pages by preparing story summaries, text, audio transcripts and metadata.
- Work with a local creator to support the delivery of community-led animation workshops.
- Work with the Project Manager and Web Agency to ensure digital content is accessible and usable for diverse audiences – including uploading content to digital spaces using CMS.
- Contribute to the creation of the *Sea Story* curriculum-linked booklet, including drafting text, ensuring stories and biodiversity messages are accurate and engaging.

6. Events & Public Engagement

- Support with the creation and delivery of key project events, including:
 - Storytelling Evenings
 - “*Sea Story Showcase*” finale event
 - Free community open days / outreach
- Represent the Centre at public events, talks, festivals and community meetings.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation & Administration

- Collect participation data and feedback for NLHF evaluation.
- Work alongside the Evaluation Consultant and Steering Group to design light-touch feedback tools.

- Maintain accurate records, consents, contact logs, and safeguarding documentation.
 - Provide progress reports to the Project Manager and Board.
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Safeguarding & Data Protection

The role involves work with children, older adults and vulnerable groups.

- Enhanced DBS check is required.
 - Strict data protection procedures must be followed.
 - Training will be provided in safeguarding, oral history ethics and consent.
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PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential Experience & Skills

- Experience in community engagement, heritage, education, storytelling or oral history collection.
- Excellent communication skills and confidence working with people of all ages.
- Ability to gather and record stories sensitively and ethically.
- Experience delivering workshops or sessions in community or school settings.
- Strong organisational and project coordination abilities.
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusion, accessibility and community representation.
- Good digital skills, including file management, content drafting and basic audio handling.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively.

Desirable

- Experience working with children or schools (KS1–2).
- Experience of working with older people (65+).
- Experience designing or contributing to heritage interpretation.

- Knowledge of Whitby, fishing communities, maritime heritage or coastal environments.
- Experience supporting volunteers.
- Skills in audio editing, photography or content creation.
- Familiarity with NLHF-funded projects.