# Revealing Hidden Histories 2023

Expression of Interest

# Revealing Hidden Histories outline:

The aim of this programme is to create a methodology for museums to identify, research and engage their audiences with untold stories from their collections. This year the team at Museums Worcestershire are working with West Midlands Museum Development (WMMD) to deliver the programme. The 2023 Revealing Hidden Histories programme is designed to:

* Help museum staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of underused elements in their collections and unlock their hidden potential
* Help museum staff to overcome barriers to telling hidden histories, such as managing environmental conditions or hazardous materials
* Support museum staff who hope to engage new audiences with hidden histories via community outreach with less represented audiences
* Support knowledge sharing across the organisation and wider region
* Improve documentation records and interpretation

# The programme will:

* Support the museum to research an area of its collection, or an individual object, which has been identified as having an interesting untold story. This should be something that has not been interpreted before and which may have links to a challenging, emotive or contentious narrative that need to be tackled appropriately
* Or support the museum to overcome barriers to engaging audiences with untold histories. This could include understanding environmental conditions, displaying complex objects or managing hazardous materials
* Or support the museum to engage new audience and community groups in researching and telling the stories of its hidden histories. This could include an aspiration to plan for new collections outreach or co-curation
* Help the museum to source a relevant specialist who will spend time with museum staff (either in person or remotely) to look at the collection item(s), barriers or approach to engaging new audiences and help to identify a way forward
* Facilitate mentoring support with other museums taking part in the project and/ or who have undertaken similar work in the past

# Conditions of Participation

* The programme is open to Accredited museums or those officially registered as Working Towards Accreditation in the West Midlands region. A maximum of four museums will be invited to take part.
* NPOs and national museums are no eligible to apply
* Host organisations must provide a member of staff to work with the specialist and to liaise with them throughout the programme
* Representatives from the museum must attend a sharing event to take place in November 2023 to disseminate the information and feedback from the work with the subject specialist to other programme participants from across the region
* The museum must write a brief case study of the programme for submission to WMMD
* The museum must complete and submit an Organisation Health Check to WMMD by Tuesday 31 October (*unless you have completed one within the last 12 months*)
* The museum must take part in the Annual Museum Survey 2023 *(summer 2023, date tbc)* which helps us establish benchmarking for the museum sector regionally and nationally

# Programme Timetable

* Submission of Expression of Interest forms by **5pm, Friday 21 April**
* Successful applicants notified by **Friday 28 April**
* The programme must be completed by **Tuesday 31 October**
* The case study must be submitted by **Tuesday 31 October**
* Sharing event to be held week commencing **29 November**

## Further Information

If you have any questions about the programme please contact Deborah Fox [deborah.fox@worcester.gov.uk](https://igmt.sharepoint.com/sites/MuseumDevelopment/Shared%20Documents/General/Admin/Templates/deborah.fox@worcester.gov.uk)

# Want to participate?

Please complete all sections of the Expression of Interest form on the next page and return the completed form to [deborah.fox@worcestershire.gov.uk](https://igmt.sharepoint.com/sites/MuseumDevelopment/Shared%20Documents/General/Admin/Templates/deborah.fox@worcestershire.gov.uk) no later than **5pm, Friday 21 April**.

# Expression of Interest Form

Applications should demonstrate relevance to the following areas:

* Impact on community and/ or audience
* Impact on workforce skills
* Improvement in collection care and/ or understanding

1) Please give an indication of the collection, barriers to using collection or community engagement and participation which you would like to use as the focus for this programme.

Please give an indication of why you feel it is important that they should be explored in more detail. It is suggested that the number of items, barriers or community work be kept to a manageable size.

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2) Please outline why your museum will benefit from the Revealing Hidden Histories programme and how you will make collection item(s) and stories accessible to visitors as a result of this programme (max. 100 words)

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3) Please state how many members of your staff/ volunteers will be available to work with the subject specialist.

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## Your details:

Museum:

Name:

Job title:

Email:

Telephone:

I confirm that I will fully participate in the programme and have the permission and support of my senior management team.

Signed: Date:

Please return the completed form to [deborah.fox@worcestershire.gov.uk](https://igmt.sharepoint.com/sites/MuseumDevelopment/Shared%20Documents/General/Admin/Templates/deborah.fox@worcestershire.gov.uk) no later than **5pm, Friday 21 April**.