

Summary conclusions

Radcliffe Round Table

Heritage & Crafts

Tuesday, 13th July 2010, 2.30-5.15pm
The Art Workers Guild

Nineteen organisations participated in the meeting*. These were divided approximately equally between funders and beneficiaries in the Heritage & Crafts sector. All participants had provided briefing notes in advance of the meeting, giving background information on their organisations and raising some of the issues they felt were affecting the sector.

Felix Warnock, Chair of The Radcliffe Trust (RT), introduced and closed the meeting and Carole Milner, Adviser to the RT's Heritage & Crafts grants programme, facilitated it. The Art Workers Guild kindly hosted the meeting at its premises in Queen Square, London.

1 INTRODUCTION

Felix Warnock welcomed participants and explained the rationale behind the Round Table against the backdrop of the RT's Tercentenary Anniversary in 2014. Whilst this was an exploratory meeting with a necessarily limited number of participants, he expressed the wish that it would result in practical outcomes that would be to the benefit of all concerned.

2 SCOPE OF THE MEETING:

Carole Milner set out the scope of the meeting as covering the Heritage & Crafts sector and its sustainability. Definitions and terminology were problematic but she cited a phrase that encapsulated the relationship between crafts and heritage and between the organisations present: "... the quest for preserving traditional crafts and skills and using them within the creation of art and objects and in the conservation of our heritage ..." (ref: West Dean College). The objectives of the Round Table were to begin addressing the questions: where is funding most needed; where is more flexibility needed; what is falling between the cracks; where can joint working add value? Should the Round Table prove successful, it was hoped that it would give rise to further useful conversations.

3 HIGHLIGHTING ISSUES

Participants had raised many important issues. In order to facilitate the discussion, some of these had been grouped under broad headings. The main points arising from the discussions are summarised as follows.

i) "The sector" and fragmentation

- Whilst it may be difficult to define the sector precisely, it clearly spans both traditional/heritage crafts, designer-making, skilled trades (particularly associated with built heritage), cultural heritage conservation, restoration and preservation.
- Rather than seeing the Heritage & Crafts sector as fragmented, we should present it as rich and diverse, explain it better and make much more of the continuum within it.
- The term "heritage industry", including the crafts sector, was generally felt to be appropriate. We are not talking about hobbies but about livelihoods. Industry should be seen as being creative. "Heritage is what has been passed down to us and what we want to pass on to the future". This includes contemporary crafts.
- We would not solve the problem of terminology and divisions today but all agreed that what we have in common is the need to ensure sustainability, particularly in the current economic environment, and to think creatively and collectively about ways forward.

ii) Strategic development

- It is difficult to get an overall picture of needs and provision within the sector. There are many different players (four relevant Sector Skills Councils, All-Party Parliamentary Groups, National Heritage Training Group, National Apprenticeship Scheme, trade and professional bodies ...) and many are missing here.
- This is the first time we are having this conversation - between funders and beneficiaries and right across the sector. There is a need to start building a bigger picture. Can we make a start here?
- Advocacy is a key issue. This should extend to advocacy with young people and in schools. What are the imaginative models we can use? What is the role of the Crafts Council, the Heritage Crafts Association, Icon, the London Design Consortium, etc? The Heritage Alliance (THA) is the only wide-reaching advocacy body in the heritage sector. Do we need a new network to complement the work of THA, or could THA encourage more heritage crafts bodies into its membership?
- There need to be more conversations within communities of interest to share best practice and pool resources where appropriate.
- Does anyone know what the overall impact of grant-giving programmes is? HLF as a public body evaluates its own grant giving, as do other individual organisations. However, we do not have the bigger picture.
- There should be more overall government responsibility for strategic development within the sector but that is unlikely to happen now so can we do anything together for ourselves?
- Increasing diversity in the workforce remains an issue which is not proving easy to resolve.

iii) A cohesive framework for qualifications and standards

- There does not seem to be a cohesive, consistent framework for qualifications and standards across the sector. What can we do to influence the work of the SSCs and other relevant organisations?
- Where activity touches on conservation of cultural heritage, this is particularly important. Icon's standards and professional accreditation scheme (PACR) form the basis for most UK conservation-related qualifications. Accreditation is required for most public-funded commissioned work and the Conservation Register provides public access to accredited services. These are tried and tested systems. Do they have broader applications across the sector? Where are the links between crafts and conservation?
- How can funders help to raise standards? Can this be done without limiting their freedom to take risks?

iv) Access to information, matching and finding services (for trainee-/apprentice-/intern-/scholarships)

NB we are using here the words "trainee" and "traineeship" to encompass all these possibilities.

- A number of the organisations present hold substantial information on potential hosts, supervisors, placements and trainees as well as guidance on managing and monitoring traineeships and databases for cross-referencing information. Would there be benefit to sharing this information and are there limitations with respect to data-protection?
- Is there funding to help individuals (especially sole traders) host trainees?
- Which funders can fund individuals?
- Are we really targeting the need or just following the funding?
- How do we promote diversity?

v) Specific gaps in funding and support

On a general point, we should ensure that there are markets for the skills being nurtured and that small businesses being created can be marketed successfully and run efficiently.

Support is needed for:

- core costs (stability and sustainability)
- matched funding
- individuals versus charitable organisations
- sole traders, to train, develop and coach others
- business mentoring and support, including marketing and promotion
- collection care in small and regional museums and galleries, libraries and archives
- the conservation of historic furnishings and works of art in parish churches
- educational work in schools
- promoting diversity best practice

4 OPPORTUNITIES AND WAYS FORWARD

Through the discussion, a number of opportunities had emerged for: sharing best practice, pooling resources, raising standards, reviewing funding streams and adding value through the funders and beneficiaries working more closely together. The following were identified as strong ideas to take forward:

- i) Building on the Round Table, there is a need for a regular or annual event/conference bringing together both funders and beneficiaries but on a larger scale if possible.
- iiii) For interested funders, it could be helpful to convene for more information exchange and to explore gaps and opportunities for joint working, creating new funding streams, providing more flexibility, raising standards, etc.
- iv) There would be advantages for a number of beneficiaries in working together, for instance in the following areas:
 - business support and mentoring schemes;
 - matching services for trainees, placements, supervisors;
 - a guidance framework for managing and monitoring traineeships;
 - an inclusive qualifications framework for parts of the sector working in the preservation of cultural heritage, including quality assurance mechanisms where appropriate;
 - tools providing public access to information on services available.
- v) A more concerted effort on Advocacy is needed, particularly at a policy level, with one organisation possibly taking the lead,
- vi) Continuing thought needs to be given to sustainability, increasing diversity and education.

5 SUMMING UP

All participants were asked to comment on the meeting. Overall it was felt that it was obvious from the Round Table that there was a great need in the sector to talk more, to feel part of a community and a network of support. There had been a divide between the heritage and contemporary worlds and this needed breaking down. At the same time, it had to be recognised that some organisations were limited to working in one arena or the other. Now that initial contact had been made, this would be much easier. The trusts and foundations already talk to one another but would welcome more collaboration. It was reassuring to hope that funders would address the key issue of sustainability. Advocacy and education would be the key in the longer term. The Round Table had generated enthusiasm and excitement but the challenge would be to actually make something happen.

6 INITIAL OUTPUTS

In the short space of time since the Round Table took place a number of steps have already been taken.

i) Heritage & Crafts event

The Radcliffe Trust is keen to build on the Round Table and ensure that, while there remains a clear need for them, such events continue to take place. These events should bring together funders and beneficiaries in the Heritage & Crafts sector. They could also provide a specific opportunity for closer discussion amongst funders and for other interest groups to convene. Their scope and size would be determined by the level of interest in the sector and by the support available from stakeholders. HLF has already confirmed that it is willing to help scope such a project as part of its work to support Training Bursaries and Skills for the Future grantees. We will be in touch with colleagues and will seek to progress this idea over the next few months.

ii) Advocacy

The Heritage Alliance has developed a strong and inclusive advocacy role in the heritage sector. THA has already made contact with some of the other organisations present at the Round Table to explore how THA's role relates to them and what potential there is for developing this in the future.

iii) HA Funders networking event

The Heritage Alliance is also exploring holding a funders' networking event, possibly for the smaller trusts and foundations, to identify emerging areas of risk across the wider heritage sector with the intention of making the best use of scarce resources. This is likely to take place in early 2011.

iv) Sharing best practice and pooling resources

From the feedback I have had, some of the delivery organisations have already made contact to look at ways they could work together in some of the areas mentioned.

v) Reviewing grant programmes

Over the next few months, RT will consider how to take account in our grants programme of the issues that have been raised, in particular sustainability, diversity and education. We will be seeking to encourage joint initiatives between delivery organisations, where there is clear benefit in pooling resources and sharing experience and best practice. We will also be looking at ways of working together with other like-minded funders.

*** Participating organisations :**

Heritage Lottery Fund: Dr Jo Reilly, Head of Participation & Learning
Icon Conservation Internships: Carol Brown, Training Development Manager
Traditional Building Skills Bursary scheme (Consortium for EH and NT): Clara Willet, Manager
Crafts Council: Amanda Jones, Director of External Relations

Anna Plowden Trust: Dr David Saunders, Trustee
Ernest Cook Trust: Nicholas Ford, Agent and Director
Headley Trust: Hester Marriott, Lead Executive; Dr. Patricia Morison, Executive
Pilgrim Trust: Georgina Naylor, Director
Queen Elisabeth Scholarship Trust: Richard Peck, Secretary
Radcliffe Trust: Felix Warnock, Chair; Carole Milner, Heritage & Crafts Adviser

Art Workers Guild: Monica Grose Hodge, Guild Secretary
Church Buildings Council: Andrew Argyrakis, Senior Conservation Officer
Cockpit Arts: Vanessa Swann, Chief Executive
Crafts Central: Tina Searle, Chief Executive; Tessa Damer, Workshops Manager
Edward James Foundation: Ellen Cheshire, Head of Communications, West Dean College and Gardens
Heritage Crafts Association: Robin Wood, Chair
Icon (The Institute of Conservation): Alison Richmond, Interim Chief Executive
NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Art Societies): David Bell, Chief Executive
The Heritage Alliance: Kate Pugh, Chief Executive

In attendance: The Trust Partnership: Benjamin Janes, Belinda Hunt; Radcliffe Trust Music Adviser: Sally Carter