

CASE STUDY 6

HORNIMAN MUSEUM

LONDON

Why take part?	The Youth Engagement Officer thought that it would be a great way for the museum's youth panel to make a real contribution to the work of the museum and were keen to be part of a national campaign.
Who took part?	Four members of the museum's youth panel aged 16-19. The older members of the panel found it easier to have time off from college approved or juggle their schedules to be able to take part.
What did they do?	The group developed a new visitor trail for the African Worlds exhibition and took over the museum's Facebook and Twitter accounts for the day. The youth panel had always been keen to produce a trail for the museum and this was an opportunity for the museum and young people to try something new.
How did they spend their time on the day?	<p>The young people had spent some time in previous panel meetings discussing the format and content of the trail. They had input from the Digital Media Manager who helped them shape their ideas and give them advice about accessibility and the museum's styling.</p> <p>On the day, they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Split into two teams, taking photos and exploring the collections to come up with questions.• Tweeted their draft questions to test interest and iron out any ambiguities in the wording (they also Facebooked about the trail but found the response to be higher on Twitter).• Produced their final version of the trail with the help of the Digital Media Manager.
What happened next?	<p>Thanks to the commitment of museum staff to provide the young people with their time and expertise on the day, the young people understood what would work in the museum and created a simple yet robust resource. The trail is now part of the museum's permanent resource, appearing on their website for visitors to download and in hard copy at the entrance desk http://www.horniman.ac.uk/visit/displays/display/african-worlds/display-chapter/african-worlds. Spurred on by seeing their work in use at the museum, the youth panel are looking for more ways that they can enhance the experience for visitors.</p>

The museum is hoping that through the young people's positive experience of taking over the museum, more young people will want to join the youth panel. It has certainly been an empowering experience for the young people, on leaving at the end of the day, one participant asked if there were any jobs available at the museum!

'I would also like to say that working with a smaller group of young people really benefitted everyone all around – it gave them focus and responsibilities were easily delegated and they all felt thoroughly involved.'

Kat Leung, Youth Participation Officer

'The best part was interacting with people who replied on Twitter and Facebook, we were amazed by the number of people who replied!'

Horniman Takeover Day participant



Takeover Day Kids in Museums 2011 www.kidsinmuseums.org.uk