

## Let's Get Real 7:

### Developing deeper human connection across digital channels

#### PROJECT INFORMATION

##### What will LGR7 focus on and why?

LGR7 will test ways to use your existing digital channels in more thoughtful and socially purposeful ways, to foster more meaningful connection between people and communities.

Humans are social beings and we need to belong. Human connection is an innate need to create a social rapport with others, to feel heard, seen, valued and to belong. In these fraught socially divided times, where technology is at the heart of so much our human interaction, there is growing recognition of the importance of human connection and relationships for individual and societal wellbeing. Many of the challenges we face in our society today have been produced, or exacerbated by, a breakdown of understanding and connection between people.

The work of arts and heritage organisations is vital in addressing these challenges. So much of what we do is about nurturing human connection, whether through the art or exhibitions we showcase, through the human stories we facilitate and through our civic spaces open to everyone to engage and participate within.

As organisations we are trying to embrace digital technologies to build more meaningful relationships with audiences, communities and society, particularly through social media channels. However this digital activity often prioritises organisational orientated objectives, like increasing brand awareness or promoting ticket sales, rather than promoting human connection. Even when cultural organisations develop a human voice on their digital channels, showcasing an online personality and engaging in forms of digital storytelling, the primary focus is often still the organisation, its profile and objectives. There may be genuine positive human impact, but it's usually of secondary importance. We have a social responsibility to prioritise meaningful personal connection in all our work as cultural organisations, and that includes our digital activity.

We will aim to meet this responsibility by exploring how cultural organisations can align their digital activity more closely with the values-led practices that are beginning to happen more overtly in their physical spaces. Building on emerging values based digital design thinking, we will test out small-scale interventions to your existing activity on digital channels that seek to prioritise and respond to human purpose, meaning and values. For example, facilitating conversations or campaigns on social media that do more than aim to sell tickets, but instead seek to nurture particular human values like curiosity and creativity – familiar ground for many cultural practitioners – but also deeper and arguably more personal values like kindness, integrity and forgiveness.

These changes can be small and cost nothing, but their impact can be huge, not only in human and societal terms, but also in how we as cultural organisation approach, and get value from, our existing digital work.

### **Who is LGR7 for?**

LGR7 is for any museum, gallery, arts and heritage organisation that wants to create more personal and meaningful connection out of their existing digital work, and wants to collaboratively explore this with their peers, not only to advance their own strategies and practices, but to build the overall understanding of the sector.

It will be of particular interest to:

- Digital practitioners who want to emphasise the importance of effective and informed use of digital channels across their organisations and the wider sector, as central to the purpose of cultural organisations
- Marketing practitioners who want to challenge the way their organisations currently communicate with their audiences and communities
- Interpretation and/or learning practitioners who are keen to build greater relevance for their target audience groups, be they adults or children and young people, by understanding and responding more meaningfully to their specific needs as informed by digital culture
- Community engagement practitioners who want to build deeper relationships with their communities and use these relationships to inform wider strategy and practice
- Leaders who want to identify quick, low cost yet more meaningful ways to consider, and connect with, audiences through their teams' existing digital practices
- Any cultural practitioners who fulfil all or some of these roles.

LGR7 builds on the knowledge developed through all past LGR projects (in particular LGR6), but is a distinct and new project. You do not have to have participated in any of the previous projects to take part in, or benefit from, LGR7 - we welcome LGR first-timers!

We have found that taking part in LGR projects works just as well for small, medium or larger organisations as lots can be learned from collaborations across different types of practice, expertise, contexts, leadership and approaches to change and risk.

### **What will my organisation gain by participating?**

#### ***1. Develop the confidence, understanding and digital literacy of your staff.***

We are inviting two participants from each organisation to participate and attend all four workshops (if this is possible). Having two members of staff, as opposed to just one, increases

the learning across the project and improves the impact on each organisation. Individual participants will have the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from peers and to develop the confidence, language and digital literacies necessary to become agents for change within their own organisations.

2. ***Learn from a supportive, engaged community of peers with a shared sense of purpose.*** The LGR7 community will act as a source of invaluable knowledge, advice and support for you and your organisation. It will also provide a space to compare and contrast experiences and to learn from top experts.

3. ***Effect and embed positive organisational change***

You will be supported to reflect on your organisation's current practices, design small scale experiments to develop your learning, and explore practical opportunities to embed this learning back into your organisation in order to effect positive long-term organisational change.

In particular your organisation will benefit from positive change in the following areas:

- **Strategy** - You will be supported to developing your strategic thinking around your organisation's social purpose – particularly in relation to nurturing human connections - and the role that digital practice can have right across your organisation.
- **Work with communities** - You will be more informed in your participatory work with relevant communities. In particular you will learn ways to build meaningful, empathetic relationships with these communities.
- **Internal collaboration** - You will learn practical ways to break down internal working 'silos' so that people from across your organisation can collaborate more effectively
- **Working practices** - You will have time and space to experiment with different tools and tactics in a supported environment that can improve your organisation's working practices.

4. ***Develop strategic influence within the wider arts and heritage sector and with academics, policy makers and funders***

Your organisation's experience on the project will be vital in informing collaborative research findings and will be used to inform best practice across the sector. Culture24 has established trusted relationships with a broad range of cultural stakeholders, both in the UK and internationally. We will publish the project's key findings in a [final report](#) to be shared and discussed with funders, policymakers, strategic sector bodies and academia. Your organisation's expertise and experience on the project will have an influence on these discussions.

**How will LGR7 be structured and who will be involved?**

All LGR projects are structured on our established and successful objectives and methodologies - to nurture personal confidence, build organisational capacity and develop a shared understanding for the sector. It does this by promoting learning from others, learning by doing and learning together. You can read more about the Let's Get Real approach [here](#).

The project structure includes:

- Four full day collaborative workshops that includes:
  - Hearing and learning from a range of experts from inside and outside the sector,
  - Participating in collaborative exercises and discussion to build shared learning
- Four supported research phases taking place between workshops in your own organisations
- Virtual mentoring sessions with appropriate experts from Culture24, Carnegie UK Trust, Common Cause Foundation and selected individuals from inside and outside the sector
- Ongoing online collaboration across the peer group via Basecamp

### **What does it cost?**

LGR7 is based on a collaborative funding model where each participating organisation contributes towards the overall cost of the project. This model represents significant value for money for each participating organisation due to the high cost of accessing expert advice, the huge value derived from shared learning across the project cohort and the practical approaches to embedding long term organisational change. Culture24 is a charity and the budget for this project is based on cost recovery.

The cost of LGR7 is based on a sliding scale, according to the size of your organisation. This is broken down as follows:

Type of organisation	Cost (plus VAT)
Either: National or Major Regional Museums ( <a href="#">as defined as members of NMDC</a> ), or Large organisations - <i>total income from all sources in the last reported financial year is greater than £1 Million</i>	<b>£2,950</b>
Medium organisations - <i>total income from all sources in the last reported financial year of between £250,000 and £1 Million</i>	<b>£2,450</b>
Small organisations - <i>total income from all sources in the last reported financial year of under £250,000</i>	<b>£1,450</b>
<p>Two subsidised places - Culture24 recognise that many arts and heritage organisations are small and have no more than 5 full time paid staff.</p> <p>We feel it's important that this project is accessible to these organisations. As such, we are offering two subsidised places to qualifying museums for a contribution that is affordable.</p> <p>The criteria to qualify is that you have no more than 5 full time paid staff</p> <p>If we receive more than 2 applications for these subsidised places we will decide based on the reasons why you think the project will benefit your organisation.</p>	<b>£150 each</b>

Using such a sliding scale for participants is the fairest way to encourage a cross-section of participating organisations including smaller ones.

#### ***Discount for LGR6 participants***

We are offering a 10% discount to any LGR6 participants who join LGR7.

#### **What is included in the cost?**

- Hosting of the four workshops, including lunch and refreshments
- Management of the project
- Support for all aspects of the research including data gathering and analysis
- Co-ordination of the group's shared communication channel through Basecamp
- Cost of bringing in external experts at workshops to present their thinking, provide strategic advice and facilitate workshop sessions as appropriate
- Cost of all workshop materials
- Cost of a mentor to work with you on your individual action research
- Analysis and sharing of insights and data from the research
- The writing and production of a final project report for publication and advocacy
- An end of project celebratory social event
- Discount on tickets to our next LGR conference

### **What is not included in the cost?**

- The cost of travel and accommodation to the workshops
- The cost of your staff time
- Any internal or external costs needed to support your own research experiments.

### **What exactly is the commitment for me and my organisation?**

- Two nominated participants to represent your organisation and attend all four full day workshops.  
We appreciate that for some smaller organisations this might be difficult and we ask that you consider nominating a volunteer or perhaps a board member to attend alongside one staff member. If it is impossible to nominate two people, that's not a problem and we'd still love to have you on the project: please get in touch with us to discuss how we can make this work.
- Commitment to a minimum of 18 days staff time across the project - approximately 2 days per month - to run your experiments in your setting, (March to November) plus attendance at the four workshops
- Support of your leadership to:
  - Participate fully in the project,
  - Embed any appropriate learning back into the organisation and
  - Share learning more widely with the sector
- Commitment to the key project principles and practices, namely
  - Support, encourage and provide advice to fellow peers within the project
  - Be open and honest
  - Work experimentally and collaboratively both as part of the project cohort but also within each organisation

### **What is the timetable?**

Date	Action/event	Objectives
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2019	Deadline for registering interest	
Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	Confirmation of place and fellow participants	
Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	<b>Workshop 1</b> Wellcome Collection, London	Identify key ideas/principles relating to the project themes
March to May 2019	<b>Research phase 1</b>	Each organisation defines how key ideas explored at first workshop relate to their own specific contexts (supported by ongoing mentoring)
Wed 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2019	<b>Workshop 2</b> Wellcome Collection, London	Come up with ideas and plans for practical experiments for each organisation.
May to July 2019	<b>Research phase 2</b>	Each organisation runs and analyses their experiments (supported by ongoing mentoring)
Wed 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	<b>Workshop 3</b> Wellcome Collection, London	Collaboratively review experiments to identify shared learning and come up with practical suggestions to embed learning back in each organisation
July to September 2019	<b>Research phase 3</b>	Try out practical actions to embed key learning back into each organisation (supported by ongoing mentoring)
Thu 26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	<b>Workshop 4</b> Wellcome Collection, London	Collaboratively review all project activities and identify shared learning for the sector. Come up with practical ways to share learning with specific networks and the wider sector

Sept to November 2019	<b>Research phase 4</b>	Each organisation shares wider learning within their networks and with the wider sector as appropriate (supported by ongoing mentoring)
January 2020	<b>LGR7 Report published</b>	Publishing report to the sector and sharing it with key strategic stakeholders

### **How do I register my interest?**

To register your interest, please complete [this short form](#) by **Friday 22nd February 2019**. If you need a little bit more time to decide, no problem, just let us know. We will then follow up with a phone conversation to ensure the project meets your needs and answer any questions you might have.

If we do not have the desired number of organisations (at least 8) signed up by end of February 2019, we will consider delaying the project so that it starts in May 2019 rather than March 2019. Do let us know if that is preferable to you.

Meanwhile if you have any questions, please contact Sejul Malde on [sejul@culture24.org.uk](mailto:sejul@culture24.org.uk) or 01273 523989.