

# Expanding Horizons

## Freelance Project Coordinator

### **Job Description**

**Deadline for applications:** 5pm Friday 22nd May 2026

**Reports to:** Chairs of CDCEP/NCEP (or delegated individuals) - day to day liaison with NCEP Coordinator and Project Advisory Group

**Location:** Remote Working with travel across West Northumberland and County Durham

**Timeline:** A total of 90 days from June 2026 - August 2027. Interviews will be held w/c Monday 1st June.

**Salary:** £180 per day. Additional travel costs to be agreed in advance.

### **Project Summary**

County Durham Cultural Education Partnership ([CDCEP](#)), and Northumberland LCEP ([NCEP](#)) are leading on a locality pilot project funded through the North East Combined Authority (NECA) Child Poverty Reduction Plan. NECA has allocated £50k to the Expanding Horizons pilot project to explore innovative and sustainable ways of creating equality of access to local cultural experiences for children in the North East.

Children growing up in rural areas face significant barriers to cultural access due to limited transport infrastructure and the cost of private transport. This creates a gap in opportunities that directly impacts children's self-esteem, aspirations and personal development. Evidence consistently shows that cultural education trips enhance curiosity, critical thinking, empathy, and resilience—benefits that are particularly impactful to children from disadvantaged and rural communities.

The aims of this project are to improve access to cultural school trips for North East children, no matter where they live; and to test out new ways of working to build a sustainable model which can be rolled out to other schools in the North East. This could be through community based funding and advocacy, improved access to information on transport procurement and improved mapping of existing transport links for schools.

We are recruiting a Freelance Project Coordinator to lead on the coordination and facilitation of this project.

### **The Role**

We are looking for someone with experience in working collaboratively with a range of partners, as the role will involve working with schools, pupils, cultural organisations and transport providers. The coordinator will support and attend a range of school trips which provide a cultural education experience for children, as well as working with schools to support use of existing public transport where possible. The coordinator will

be tasked with gathering evidence of the value of cultural education trips and will lead on creating transferable resources which can be used by schools at the end of the project - either supporting them to use existing public transport or to secure sponsorship from local businesses.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

- Work with CDCEP/ NCEP to agree on the cohort of schools taking part in 2026, to incorporate a range of schools. There are two strands to this project:
  - i) a cohort of schools who need to hire transport
  - ii) a cohort of schools who can test out the adoption of existing bus routes
- Build relationships with schools, taking teacher voice into consideration, and act as a point of contact to enable new cultural education trips to be planned as part of the project. Liaise with cultural organisations and transport providers, and work in partnership with schools to ensure that all relevant information is supplied in order for trips to take place.
- Manage the budget allocated to support schools with trips and liaise with the budget holder to track and monitor appropriate use of budget in line with the project proposal.
- Attend a series of new school trips across rural West Northumberland and post-industrial County Durham to oversee the experience for children, both on public and private transport. This will involve working with schools and transport providers, using the opportunity to gather photographic, verbal and video evidence of the impact on children, families, schools and communities.
- Following completion of school trips, the coordinator will develop a sponsorship pack that could be used as a template for schools to approach local businesses and could be rolled out across the North East. The sponsorship pack will use photographic, verbal and video evidence to help secure sustainable support for future trips.
- Following completion of the school trips, the coordinator will develop an information pack that can be used in CPD sessions to provide teachers with improved confidence in using public transport, showcasing the value of enhanced coordination - using the space between drop off and pick up; improved coordination for groups of schools that share a geography or belong to the same Trust; exploring/ scoping other modes of transport such as train travel. The pack will focus on learning and transferability and will show how the model could be rolled out across the North East.
- Towards the end of the project, the coordinator will work closely with Queen's Hall Arts Centre on the evaluation of the project using the "most significant change" methodology, using information and evidence gathered from the school trips, as well as the sponsorship and information packs to develop this.

## **Skills and Experience Required**

- Demonstrable experience of developing and managing creative learning projects that involve schools and cultural partners.
- Commitment to developing excellent opportunities for engaging young people in arts and cultural learning programmes.
- Excellent facilitation/ project coordination skills.
- Excellent communication skills and confidence in developing partnerships that bring together cultural partners with partners from other sectors.
- A keen interest in arts and culture and an understanding of the value that high quality cultural education experiences have on the lives of children
- Ability and willingness to travel across both counties and an understanding of the limitations and barriers facing pupils from these communities.
- Ability to deliver on time and to budget, and to brief.
- Knowledge of best practice around safeguarding.
- A valid DBS or willingness to provide information to support a DBS check

The successful applicant will understand and adhere to The Forge's safeguarding, child protection, health and safety, and equality and diversity policies.

## **How to express an interest**

To express an interest, we are inviting submissions in the following format:

- A covering letter outlining your suitability for the role and relevant experience
- A two-page CV

Please email submissions to [enquiries@intheforge.com](mailto:enquiries@intheforge.com) and let us know if you would prefer to submit your expression of interest in any other format.