

The Explore Programme team are:

Christine Burridge (Perspectives series), Kath Smith (Culture and Society series), Joy Rutter (Culture and Society, Perspectives courses), Helen Watson and Jack Massey (Art), Rita Prabhu and Angela Young (Narratives: Literature, Film, Music).

Director leads: Colm O'Brien, Bronwen Calvert.

Coordinators for the Season 4 programme: Maria Goulding and Jo Campion.

How we work:

The programme team are all volunteer Explore members who undertake to liaise with tutors, Explore office, Board of Directors, Explore membership, Ampersand Inventions, and outside organisations to deliver a paid programme running from October to June and a member-led summer programme running from July to September.

The team meet a minimum of six times in the three-season academic year, with additional meetings as appropriate. The effort needed to produce each season's programme varies according to the time of year, with some intense activity required when the programme deadlines are near. The programme team members are also the first point of contact for any problems arising during a season, such as tutor illness, or any other reasons that mean sessions must be cancelled and rescheduled.

Each subject area has a sub-team of two in most cases, and that halves the amount of effort required to put the programme together. In a broader sense, the whole programme team develop ideas through discussion and give moral support to each other whenever required.

Because of the lead times required for programme planning, as each season begins, the programme team will begin to plan the next season's content. This means that any suggestions for content or changes will take time to appear in the programme. Something that arises near a season start may be factored into planning for the following season, but something that arises in the middle or end of a season will be noted for the next planning cycle.

The whole team thanks members who have come up with ideas and contact information for sessions in future programmes. If anyone is interested in finding out more about programming, do come along to one of the team meetings – contact programme@weareexplore.org.

Programme costs and hours:

The paid programme offers a minimum of 800 teaching hours over three ten-week seasons. Each hour of programme = **£57** (this figure is made up of tutor fees + room hire charge).

2015-16: 845 hours/budget £48165

2016-17: 805 hours, budget £45885

In 2015-16

Projected cost: £48165

Actual cost: £45718

Amount under budget: £2447.

- £2447 represents roughly 42 hours of programme budget

Figures: Ken Young, JCLLC Treasurer's Report for 2016 (August 2016).

In 2016-17

Original projected hours: 825

Revised hours (January 2017): 805

- 20 hours subtracted from the original projected amount of 825 hours
- 20 hours were already reduced from 2015-16's total of 845.
- Total reduction from 2015-16 to 2016-17: **40 hours**.

Members should note that the hours allocation/programme budget is tied to the numbers of Explore members paying their subscriptions. The hours/budget cannot increase unless the membership numbers do so. Of the 2016-17

programme hours, approximately **60** are free of tutor costs, as some tutors do not invoice for their teaching time. Room fees still apply in most cases.

The Director leads wish to congratulate the whole team on their careful, prudent and creative use of very limited resources.

Collaborations and connections outside Explore:

All sorts of outside connections have benefits for the Explore programme and for the organisation as a whole. Here is a summary of those developed through 2015-16 and 2016-17.

- John Grundy talk/Explore patronage scheduled for September 2017 via Kath Smith.
- Link with Tyne Bridge Publishing (conduit to distribute Explore literature to libraries) via Kath Smith.
- Northern Stage collaboration: tutor talk and theatre visit, Narratives programme.
- Curators from the Laing, Hatton, Vane and Gallagher and Turner, and the Durham Oriental Museum involved on our Art programme.
- Visits to local galleries as part of the Northern Print Biennale, organised by Helen Watson.
- Field trip arranged (for end of Season 3) to Harrison & Harrison organ builders, Durham, via suggestion from Explore member who is a former H&H employee and follow-up organisation by Angela Young.

Ongoing course collaboration with

- North East Ancient Egypt Society
- Bernician Studies Group
- Society of Antiquaries project [original document transcription]
- Diana Whaley's Name Books project [original document transcription]
- Northumberland Archives project [original document transcription]
- Lit and Phil Latin classes organised by Alan Beale

Ongoing links with individuals from local universities covering all subject areas in the programme.

Explore programme attendance data:

Figures are collected at each Explore session and collated via the Explore Office. All data available to the programme team through Google Drive. Analysis and forward planning is informed by this data and by programmers' experience and knowledge of their subject areas and tutors. Member feedback and suggestions are also assessed.

The team work to identify

- especially successful courses or sessions
- potential clashes between topics or popular tutors
- courses or sessions attracting lower numbers: development in successive seasons include changes of topic, tutor, day and time
- special note taken of sessions attracting 6-10 and 0-5 members. Note that few sessions in 2016-17 (Seasons 1 and 2) have attracted between 6 and 10 members (2 in Season 1; 1 in Season 2) and very few between 0 and 5 (0 in Season 1; 1 in Season 2).

Encouraging and responding to feedback from members:

The programme team have carried out face to face feedback sessions (Season 3 2015-16, Season 1 2016-17) and follow-up sessions, have set up a Feedback postbox in addition to the opportunities for members to email feedback via the Explore Website, and have a folder set up on the Explore sign-in table where members can find responses to feedback. It is now possible to contact the Explore programme team with feedback

- in person
- by writing a comment and posting it into the box
- by emailing the team via the link on the Explore website
- by telephoning the Explore office and leaving a message

So if you have a comment or suggestion, let us know!

Continues...

Academic Year 2017-18: Year Five objectives

The Explore Programme team will continue to offer a varied and stimulating programme across all subject areas including one-off sessions in the Monday-Thursday mornings/lunchtime series, and courses every weekday, Saturdays, and evenings.

Explore Evening: a new offer to be launched in Season 1 2017-18 will allow non-members to attend single courses on a pay-per-course basis. These will still be open to Explore members in the normal way without payment. The purpose of this experiment is for us to try and reach those, in full-time work, for example, who are unable to attend the daytime content.

The team are always considering ways to maximise the hours available to each subject area. The programme team note the generosity of those tutors who offer their teaching and expertise without invoicing Explore.

Colm O'Brien and Bronwen Calvert on behalf of the Explore Programme Team