

## **Museums & Legacy Network**

A joint proposal from the Bloody Sunday Trust / Museum of Free Derry, the Ulster Museum (National Museums NI) and Healing Through Remembering to create a network of museums and heritage organisations specifically covering, or with a defined interest in, conflict and legacy issues. This network will be set up to work with Community/ Statutory and Departmental agencies and organizations.

As the debate around the historical legacy of the conflict in Ireland continues, museums and heritage organisations need to consider their role and purpose. This has been a difficult area for many museums and heritage organisations, but there is an important role for such organisations to play in ensuring that the historical legacy of the conflict is responsibly and accessibly curated. Museums and heritage organisations should not just be seen as institutions that record history, but can also play an active role in determining how that history should be collected, interpreted and shared, and how it can be used to inform the debate around legacy and reconciliation.

### **Aims:**

- To encourage conflict and legacy programmes in museums and heritage organisations.
- To provide support for the development of conflict and legacy programmes.
- To encourage cooperation between museums and heritage organisations working on conflict and legacy issues.
- To advocate for statutory support for the role of museums and heritage organisations in dealing with conflict and legacy issues.
- To intervene when necessary in the debate around conflict and legacy.
- To explore opportunities to engage our existing audiences and develop new audiences.
- To present this history in an ethical way primarily for the social and economic benefit of the communities whose stories are being told and for the wider community.

The network will also seek to develop a shared set of values and ethical principles for museums and heritage organisations dealing with conflict and legacy, with reference to existing standards in this area, but *will also explicitly recognize the unique nature, identity and independence of each member organisation.*

### **Objectives:**

- Education: to ensure that local, national and international visitors to museums and heritage organisations in NI will gain a greater understanding of the conflict here and the issues arising from it.
- Reconciliation: to encourage a greater degree of understanding of the differing perceptions of the conflict here with the aim of creating greater acknowledgment and acceptance of the right of different sections of our society to hold differing views on conflict and legacy issues.
- Cooperation: to encourage a wider range of museums and heritage organisations to become involved in this project so that it is reflective of our society as a whole.
- Historical: to ensure that the heritage of the conflict is properly collected and preserved to provide a resource for current and future generations.

### **Principles of Membership**

- Membership will be open to museums and heritage organisations with a specific interest or role in conflict and legacy issues.
- Members must accept the aims and objectives of this network as outlined above and commit to uphold the shared set of values and ethical principles.
- Members must be willing to recognise and accept the unique identity of other member organisations even when it is significantly different to their own.
- Members must present this history in an ethical way primarily for the social and economic benefit of the communities whose stories are being told and for the wider community.

### **First Step**

The Bloody Sunday Trust will, through the Derry Model (Conflict Transformation and Peace Building Project), dedicate initially one Heritage Module, which will invite a number of potential member organisations to Derry to discuss and further develop this proposal. Through the Derry Model the Bloody Sunday Trust will be able to facilitate a two-day

programme to include discussions and visits to relevant museums and heritage projects in the city.