

Fusiliers' Museum, Lancashire
Report on Workforce Development Grant 9/04/08

1. Project Activity

The project provided MODES for Windows training for staff and volunteers at the museum. Nick Pearce-Smith, a MODES Training and Support Officer, came to the museum and delivered a one day on-site training course. The trainees included two members of staff (the Documentation and Collections Officer and the Museum Custodian), and four volunteers.

Nick Pearce-Smith delivered a comprehensive course in 'How to use MODES for Windows'. He presented the course as a Powerpoint programme, and each delegate had a laptop to follow his instructions and advice. He demonstrated how to create a record for an object, how to search for an object, and what kinds of files can be attached to the programme.

As mentioned previously, it was a one-day training course, situated in the conference room. It provided delegates with a valuable opportunity to ask questions and seek advice.

2. Learning Outcomes

The project has been evaluated by questionnaires – an initial questionnaire straight after training, and another three months later. Both questionnaires had interesting results, and clearly demonstrated that those who started to use MODES straight after the course gained more from it. This has also been made clear from conversations with the delegates. Two of the volunteers began entering data the week after the course, and these two volunteers seem to have retained the most knowledge, and indeed got more out of the course.

MODES has been a new area of work to the Museum Custodian and some of the volunteers. The questionnaires demonstrate that learning to use the database has been a very positive experience. Learning how to use MODES has helped the volunteers make sense of how our museum collection is documented. Existing MODES users also benefited from receiving training, because it deepened their understanding.

The training has been constructive, because it has ensured participants have learned a new skill. MODES is computer-based, so the ICT skills of those taking part has improved. The MODES database is a system for managing information. Staff and volunteers at the museum have benefited from learning more about locating and using this information.

A very important learning outcome of this project has been a development in communication skills – writing, speaking and listening. The success of the MODES database relies on those working on it having a good working relationship. Staff and volunteers talk to each other more, and ask questions. This helps ensure that communication at the museum continually improves.

The attitudes of those that took part in the training and began to use MODES straight away have changed. Self-confidence has grown, and self-esteem has been raised. One volunteer in particular has been heavily involved in improving documentation, and has felt satisfied that he is helping to improve standards. The training was fun! It was a great opportunity for participants to work with people they do not regularly work with.

The staff and volunteers who took part in the training have developed new and existing skills. In addition, the number of records on MODES has grown very quickly.

3. How the Organisation has benefited from this

The Fusiliers' Museum has benefited a great deal from the Workforce Development Grant. It has enabled six people with a varying range of MODES experience, to receive training. The number of records has increased very quickly, and this is something that will be very important when we move to a new museum site next year. Knowledge of the archive has also improved significantly, and enquiries can be dealt with more easily.

4. How learning has been shared

Learning has been shared with other staff and volunteers at the museum. Those who attended the MODES course can help others to use the database. Knowledge of the collection has also been shared by other staff and volunteers, through vastly improved documentation.

Learning has been shared with museum users. Staff and volunteers have learned about the collection, and have been able to pass this information more effectively onto museum users.

The Documentation and Collections Officer is going to do a short presentation at the NWFED 'Shout from the Rooftops' meeting in May. The presentation will inform others of the project, and what learning outcomes were achieved.