

BEN Diversity Training Modules

Diversity Training for staff in the heritage and environmental sectors

Black Environment Network (BEN), in consultation with ethnic community representatives, has developed a training programme addressing issues in ethnic community participation.

The training programme consists of three modules:

- Ethnic environmental participation awareness
- Working in partnership with ethnic communities
- Managing ethnic diversity in the workplace



Embedding learning at every level

The modules are aimed at staff working at all levels of environmental and heritage organisations such as the managers and rangers of country parks or nature reserves, event teams, museum curators and workers at visitor centres.

Making it happen

Course methods are participatory and involve trainees in group work, discussion and role play. Gaining an understanding of working effectively with ethnic communities requires a step-by-step approach.

A number of training sessions were funded through the BEN EQUAL Project. Modules were therefore delivered free of charge to staff working for Scottish Natural Heritage, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteering (BTCV) Scotland, the Scottish Wildlife Trust, The Forestry Commission, Historic Scotland, staff and members of the Scottish Museums Council, members of Greenspace Scotland and students from the Scottish Agricultural College.

Stimulating interest, sustaining involvement

The course content covers the key elements needed for effective and sustainable partnership work with ethnic community groups. Participants learn how to identify ways of proactively reaching out and stimulating ethnic groups to take part in environmental and heritage activities. They also learn how to maintain interest and sustain ongoing development of ethnic community participation. The modules are action oriented and have led many participants to develop their work with ethnic communities. For example, last year, BEN delivered its Diversity Training to employees of the Forestry Commission and Forest Enterprise in South Lanarkshire. They are now planning further action.





The strength of the developmental situation in Scotland is that, parallel to training, organisations can key into partnership opportunities to develop their work through BEN projects on the ground. Much can be learnt by experiencing and doing, linking knowledge with experience and action.

BEN delivered a half-day workshop to Historic Scotland Rangers last summer. Since that Diversity Training, Historic Scotland Rangers have worked with BEN's Heritage and Education Access Project (HEAP) and Umoja an African Women's group at Stirling Castle. Another educational trip is planned this spring with Barnardo's Apna Service.

The Future

Training, developmental support (mentoring) and partnerships are strategic areas of work for BEN in relation to enabling full participation by ethnic communities in the built and natural environments.

FACTFILE

- **Funders:**

ESF EQUAL Theme B, Lloyds TSB Foundation Scotland, Communities Scotland

- **Target group:**

Staff at all levels working in the environmental and heritage sectors

- **Numbers:**

150+ trainees from over 30 organisations have benefited directly through the BEN EQUAL Project

- **Resources:**

Promoting Employment Opportunities to Ethnic Communities - Guidance for the environmental heritage sectors, Heritage posters, Case Studies, BEN Training and Consultancy service. Free training can be provided through funding of partnerships training projects.

- **Key points:**

- Organisational culture change is a key aspect of positioning organisations to embrace a new challenging area of working with ethnic communities. It is necessary to train staff at all levels, as organisations need to embed awareness of diversity throughout their structures. Commitment at the top is expressed through policy and the allocation of staff time and resources in order to provide a cohesive framework for action.
- Engagement with ethnic communities needs to be seen to be long term work, with the aim of ultimately delivering full participation by ethnic communities and representation in employment and decision making structures. Partnership projects which include training provision can be developed.



For further information please contact:

BEN UK Office: 60 High Street, Llanberis, Wales, LL55 4EU Tel/Fax: 01286 870715

Email: ukoffice@ben-network.org.uk Website: www.ben-network.org.uk