

**GEM Conference 2019 – Call for Papers**  
**Torquay Museum, Devon**  
**Wednesday 11 to Friday 13 September 2019**

***CONNECTION, ACTION, INNOVATION***  
***FORGING DYNAMIC AND LASTING PARTNERSHIPS WITH COMMUNITIES***

**Call for breakout, workshop & GEM member presentation proposals**

**Deadline for proposals: Friday 10 May 2019**

## **1 Introduction**

The GEM annual conference is the landmark CPD event of the year for heritage learning in the UK. Through a combination of inspiring keynotes and practical sessions, GEM conference provides delegates with new ideas, original solutions and strengthened networks. We build a participatory space, by Gemmers, for Gemmers, uncovering new pathways and shining a spotlight on best practice and cutting-edge developments.

GEM conference is a great opportunity to connect with the fantastic heritage learning community, sharing our challenges and celebrating our innovations. This year we are collaborating with South West Museum Development to learn about the huge achievements in community relationship-building, volunteering and managing limited resources in this area. We are always proud of the uniquely friendly, supportive and positive environment of GEM conference. Delegates create a buzz and leave with renewed passion and concrete next steps, striking a balance between reconnecting with the philosophy of what we do and generating practical takeaways.

This year we are also working with the Disability Collaborative Network for Museums CIC (DCN) to ensure we run an accessible event in respect to physical, sensory and cognitive access. We will shortly be publishing more information about conference accessibility, but if you need any additional support or features in order to attend or deliver a session, please don't hesitate to get in touch with [holly@gem.org.uk](mailto:holly@gem.org.uk).

## Key information

- Dates: **Wednesday 11 to Friday 13 September 2018**
- Venue: **Torquay Museum, Devon**
- Theme: **Connection, Action, Innovation:** Forging dynamic and lasting partnerships with communities
- Sessions: Breakout sessions, Workshops, and GEM member presentations (case studies).
- Closing date: The closing date for applications to present a breakout, workshop or member presentation session is **Friday 10 May 2019**.

## 2 Conference theme

### Connection, Action, Innovation

#### *Forging dynamic and lasting partnerships with communities*

“With audiences, not for audiences” is now at the heart of heritage learning. The museum can no longer stand apart, but must live and breathe as part of a local, national and global ecosystem. Working with South West Museum Development, *Connection, Action, Innovation* will explore how learning and participation can forge dynamic and lasting partnerships with communities to cultivate innovation, activism and wellbeing, as part of this ecosystem.

The conference will tackle the challenges faced by learning teams and communities and share cutting edge developments from both small and large organisations. Together, we will explore how we can develop...

#### Connection

- Fostering relationships with communities as a hub for social action and wellbeing.
- Delivering programming that is responsive, inclusive, and represents a variety of voices.
- Questioning what a “community” is and how this affects our practice and results.

#### Action

- Discarding the idea of the museum as neutral, taking a stance against inequality.
- Challenging assumptions, building confidence, and pursuing activism to impact our shared society and wellbeing.

#### Innovation

- Developing a resilient, effective workforce that reflects local communities, and elevates contributions of staff and volunteers.
- Learning from our communities, finding exciting new pathways and practices with them.
- Empowering all voices to speak up, take charge and make change to, with, and through the museum.

Taking part in *Connection, Action, Innovation* will be invaluable to anyone working in museum, heritage and cultural learning in both large and small organisations. Please join us as we challenge the notion

that cuts have left us with little to work with, bringing innovative and passionate people together to spark inspiration and drive the heritage learning sector forward.

### 3 Session details

The GEM annual conference is the landmark CPD event of the year for heritage learning in the UK. Through a combination of inspiring keynotes and practical sessions, GEM conference provides delegates with new ideas, innovative solutions and strengthened networks. We build a participatory space, by Gemmers, for Gemmers, so we are pleased to launch our call for papers, inviting you to contribute a session and share your work. Our conferences celebrate the local area and this year we are excited to explore the great practice in the South West. But we welcome papers from across the UK and encourage you to be creative in approaching the theme.

This year we are working with the Disability Collaborative Network for Museums CIC (DCN) to ensure we run an accessible event in respect to physical, sensory and cognitive access. GEM and DCN will help speakers to adapt their sessions for accessibility, but we recommend that your submission includes some details of how it will include different learning styles. We encourage anyone to present at GEM conference. We will shortly be publishing more information about conference accessibility, but if you need any additional support or features in order to deliver a session, please don't hesitate to get in touch with [holly@gem.org.uk](mailto:holly@gem.org.uk) and we will ensure this is provided. It will in no way affect your application.

We have a range of session types, the main characteristics of which are given below:

- **Keynotes:** We invite high-profile speakers from inside and outside the museum and heritage learning sector to provide their perspective on the **key issues** which affect heritage educators. All delegates attend these formal keynote sessions, which are followed by questions and answers.
- **Breakouts:** These sessions are submitted by contributors. They provide an **analysis** and **overview** of aspects of the conference theme with a group of 40 delegates or less. Short presentations are combined with group discussions. Please note that the emphasis of the breakout sessions is drawing out lessons learned, rather than presenting a single case study.
- **Workshops:** These sessions are submitted by contributors. They are **hands-on** and for a smaller group of 25 delegates or less. Although the presenter may give a very short presentation, for most of the session the delegates should be actively participating. Each workshop should be relevant to the conference theme, and are an opportunity to share practical skills and learnings.
- **Members' Presentations:** These presentations are ten-minute case studies presented by GEM members in a plenary session consisting of five-six presentations. They are an opportunity for delegates to share what is happening at the chalk-face.

## Session timings

We are looking for proposals for **breakout sessions, workshops** and **GEM member presentations** for this year's GEM conference. Sessions will take place at Torquay Museum in Devon.

### Breakout Sessions

There will be nine different breakout sessions (each lasting 75 minutes), spread across the three days. (i.e. three taking place on each day):

- early afternoon (13.35 to 14.50) Wednesday 11 September 2019
- late morning (11.35 to 12.50) on Thursday 12 September 2019
- late morning (11.35 to 12.50) on Friday 13 September 2019

### Workshop Sessions

There will be workshops on Thursday 12 and Friday 13 September in the afternoon (14.10 to 16.30). Each workshop will be run twice across the afternoon to give delegates the chance to attend two of the workshops on offer in each session. Each workshop will be 60 minutes long and there will be a 20-minute break in-between.

### GEM Member Presentations

The member presentations are 10-minutes in length each and are scheduled to take place on Wednesday 11 September from 15.00 to 16.00. You need to be a GEM member to present a member presentation, however, we welcome non-members to join at the same time as applying.

***Please note that all timings are provisional and are subject to change.***

## 4 How to apply

To submit a session proposal to GEM conference:

- Think about the conference theme; what you can offer and how you would like to approach it.
- Fill in a proposal form and session plan, downloadable from the GEM Conference 2019 webpage. Please pay particular attention to the learning outcomes and keep the session plan to no more than two sides of A4 in length.
- Send a completed proposal form and session plan to the GEM office at [holly@gem.org.uk](mailto:holly@gem.org.uk) by Friday 10 May 2019.

### We can offer the following speaker discounts on conference fees:

- Breakout session leaders: 100% discount on the delegate fee for the day on which you will be presenting. Or one third off the whole conference fee.
- Workshop leaders: 100% discount on the delegate fee for the day on which you will be presenting. Or one third off the whole conference fee.
- GEM Member presentations: 50% discount on the delegate fee for the day on which you will be presenting. Or one quarter off the whole conference fee.

These discounts are offered to two speakers per breakout and workshop, and one speaker per member presentation. Further speakers will need to pay the delegate fee. GEM members pay reduced

conference fees and can make further savings by booking for the whole conference and at the early bird rate. To find out more and how to book, please visit the GEM website.

## 5 How will GEM choose?

The GEM conference committee will carefully consider all applications and decide the final selection using the criteria below to build a varied and engaging programme. The conference team hopes to be able to inform applicants of the committee's decision by Friday 31 May 2019.

The conference committee will take the following into account:

- Relevance to the conference theme (if a breakout or workshop).
- How well the proposal meets the session requirements as detailed in section 3.
- Quality of the proposed session.
- Usefulness of learning outcomes.
- Innovativeness of the session content.
- Level of CPD opportunity for the presenter.
- How recently the proposed topic aired at conference.

We hope that a GEM member may cut their teeth on a member presentation, get stuck into a workshop and work up to presenting a breakout session as their career develops. However, we would love to hear proposals from practitioners at any career level and we welcome new speakers.

## 6 Practical notes

The GEM conference committee will support speakers in the lead up to conference and on the day they present, with technical and practical assistance, access guidelines, and any questions speakers have.

We ask speakers to produce summaries of their sessions for the conference proceedings in GEM's annual *Journal of Education in Museums* and the GEM website.

We also ask speakers to produce short biographies for the delegate packs:

- Breakout session leaders: 100-150 words
- Workshop leaders: 50-100 words
- Member presenters: 50-75 words

We prefer to have copies of PowerPoint presentations, videos, slides, etc. in advance to make sure all technical aspects will work smoothly on the day, and to be able to share materials with any delegates who need to see them beforehand. You will receive information about the receipt of final session plans and materials from the conference co-ordinator. We hope to make as many resources as possible from the conference available after the event on the website, so please also provide us with all resources you are happy to share, and inform us if you do not wish your presentation/materials to be uploaded onto the website.