

Touring Exhibitions Group Marketplace 2019

Claire Walsh, Exhibitions and Interpretation Manager, Natural History Museum at Tring

I'm told that each year the TEG marketplace gets better, since I've not been before I can't comment on this year, other than to say that it was definitely worth a trip to Birmingham. I've come away inspired to think about how we might tour our small temporary exhibitions and the benefits to the wider organisation. I found my trip to TEG marketplace was also a very quick way to obtain information about a lot of potential touring exhibitions for our gallery without having to trawl the internet.

If you haven't had significant experience of touring exhibitions then the TEG website is a really good place to start. There are lots of resources with loads of really useful information which you can download including contracts. <https://touringexhibitionsgroup.org.uk/research-resources/>

At the event I spoke with the Ashmolean Museum who were incredibly helpful and answered a lot of the questions I had around the logistics of touring. It was interesting to hear that they've found that they have a lot of demand for smaller exhibitions.

Seven Stories mentioned that they've had a lot of demand for their facsimile exhibition based around the book 'The Tiger who Came to Tea'. It just goes to show that it's worth thinking outside the box especially if you have issues in terms of environmental conditions.

I enjoyed listening to Hannah Belcher from Historic Royal Palaces talk about the project management logistics of touring Leonardo 500 to 12 different venues. One of the things which they did was to hold an event at each venue 6 months before the exhibition launch in order to build local interest and support. This isn't something I've heard being done routinely but it's a great idea and from their experience made a significant difference, so something definitely worth considering.

With 12 different venues you have to think about 12 different sets of practicalities, 12 contracts, 12 sets of queries, concerns and actions, 12 day visits and so on. In order to manage so many conflicting priorities she collated questions from and for each stakeholder and tried to answer them in one go rather than responding immediately to each email. Her other top tip was to make it a priority to get a list of staff from each venue right from the start.

Stephanie Martinez, Policy and Technical Advisor, Creative Industry Tax relief gave an extremely helpful run through of the Museums and Galleries Tax Relief scheme. For example, she mentioned that tax relief can be claimed at 25% on the cost of producing and de-installing an exhibition if it tours at another venue. Museums have 2 years to claim costs, but make sure that you have a detailed breakdown of expenditure as HMRC will want to see this. If you don't already claim this money back it's really worth doing. You can drop them an email on creative.industries@hmrc.gov.uk There is a quick guide here: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/museum-gallery-exhibitions-tax-relief>

For me, one of the highlights of the day was the opportunity to get a sneak peak at Think Tank's MiniBrum Gallery. This is a specially designed space co-produced with children which has a variety of different areas where children can explore science, nature and their world. It's an immersive experience and includes a slide and various themed activity areas. I'm looking forward to visiting again once it's open to the public.



Thanks to SHARE Museums East for providing me with a bursary to attend TEG Marketplace, it was one of the most valuable bits of CPD I've done in recent years. I cannot overestimate how useful it is when you are developing a project in an area where you don't have much experience to be able to network, build contacts and find practical solutions and answers to questions in one day!