

PARTICIPATION PROJECTS – DOWNLOAD FOR 2024 - 2025

As a headline:

- We have enabled **41** young people to attend **65** workshops, holiday courses, skills training programmes and events through our bursary scheme.
- **33** schools and community groups have engaged in **12** participation projects. We have delivered a total of **378** workshop sessions and worked with **6425** participants.
- **415** people have visited the Museum on Dream Tickets, allowing entry at only £1 per head;
- **14** artists have worked on dedicated projects including zine maker Ioana Simions, sound designer Sif Laerke-Hall, Film Oxford, storyteller JC Naila and illustrators Korky Porl and Mini Grey.

For 0-5 year olds and their carers

Start With a Story

Project launched January 2023

Start with a Story is a three-year engagement project for early years children, their families, and carers in areas of disadvantage in Oxfordshire where children are less likely to be able to access early cultural activity.

By providing in-centre opportunities for story-based learning and following up with Story Museum visits we aim to empower children to be the narrator of their own life story and equip them with the tools they need to prepare them for future success.

Our partners for 24-25 are Donnington Doorstep, Growing Minds, Home Start Oxford, Berin Centre, Peep and Botley Bridges.

We just think the programme has been so beneficial for all our families. Its made them feel special and deserving of being apart of a project like start with a story

- Early Years Practitioner at The Berin Centre – February 2025

For 5-11 year olds

Spellbound Schools

July 2024 - July 2025

Spellbound Schools have the opportunity to truly embed an ethos of stories into their school's culture, enabling at least one glorious encounter for every student and teacher. It involves a year-long programme of Museum visits and in-school workshops, a weekly reading club for targeted students, a magical Story Suitcase and teacher CPD in oral storytelling. Our Spellbound Schools for 2024 – 2025 were Barton Park, Bayards Hill, Church Cowley St James, Pegasus, Rose Hill, St. John Fisher Catholic, West Oxford, St Joseph's Catholic School.

"The positive engagement from the museum allowed us to draw in every pupil and enrich learning opportunities across the school."

- 24-25 Spellbound School

Extreme Reading Adventures

Annual project

Now in its ninth iteration, our long-running, much-loved, high-impact project involves 16 nominated students from across our Spellbound Schools to meet at the Story Museum for a series of 6 sessions on a Sunday. Over 6 weeks children are gifted a book per week and an associated adventure linked to the book. This project has been run since 2014 with outstanding impact results on raising students' motivation to read for pleasure.

My child has been excited to take part and has been much keener to read since taking part in the programme. Reading to his sister, talking about the sessions and asking me to buy him specific books to continue his reading journey.

- Parent of participant, 2024

For 11-18 year olds

Kindling

Launched January 2024

Kindling is a 6 week in-school reader engagement programme for targeted students. Each week, the Story Museum Session Leader arrives with a book to be gifted to students, one per student. During the session, the students are led through an 'adventure' linked to the book, harnessing creative play, team challenges, discussion and role play to motivate the students to read the book. In the final session, each student is gifted a book of their own, carefully selected especially for each individual student based on their personal interests. This year we worked with Oxford Spires to deliver this project to their Year 8 students.

The students have above all enjoyed themselves so much. These young people have challenging lives and it is wonderful to see them smile and be enthusiastic and to see their faces lit up. It is a highlight to watch them unwrap their books at the end of the session. They have looked forward to the sessions and were really sad when it all ended. They are much more engaged and focused in the Kindling sessions than in their regular lessons. They learned that learning can be fun.

- Teacher from Kindling 2024

Part of our Story Shapers offer:

Story Curators

September - May

As part of an extensive scheme to create a new generation of story makers, this weekly programme is for 11-16 year olds who get hands-on with the museum's professional Exhibitions and Production Teams to develop skills in curation, design and construction. For its second year, we have 9 young people taking part and they are creating a brand-new Pop up exhibition for our annual Alice's Day celebration in July 2025.

I love being surrounded by other story geeks!

- Participant, July 2024

Story Connectors **April 2024 – July 2025**

A year long series of workshops with 11-16 year olds creating creative responses to our 1001 story collection. Over the course of the year, participants from Rose Hill Junior Youth Group, Barton Community Association and Leys CDI used stories to create Zines, Podcasts and short films. Content created through the programme will be shared online as part of our brand new 1001 Stories website. Over the year, 48 young people have worked with professional artists such as zine maker Ioana Simmions, sound designer Sif Laerke-Hall and Film Oxford.

Digital Dreamers **September 2024 – July 2025**

In partnership with MindJam, we have been working weekly with 18 participants from Greyfriars School and Yellow Submarine to find playable ways we can showcase our 1001 Collection. Each participant has been given the opportunity to create a prototype of their chosen story as a game which will be showcased both in our new gallery The Story Arcade (opening July 2025) and on our new 1001 Stories website.

'I enjoyed visiting the museum and then researching an idea for a game based on a story – that was pretty cool.'

- Student from Greyfriars

For adults

The Story Exchange **July 2023 – July 2025** **Funded by Paul Hamlyn**

2 years of advanced, practice-based CPD for teachers to explore and develop the impact of oracy on socio-emotional literacy in students. 14 teachers involved from 8 partner schools train in oral storytelling techniques. Teachers and Story Leaders then work together to deliver storytelling sessions in the classroom to learn from each other's practises as part of this collaborative project. The Story Leaders have a very active role in the school sessions rather than a passive observation role. Our partner schools for this were St Ebbe's, St Joseph's, St Mary's and St John's, John Henry Newman, St Christopher's, St Francis and Caldecott School.

'[The] last 18 months of working collaboratively and learning together and learning from each other. A wonderful, professional relationship that resulted in many successful classroom sessions. The children loved being part of the project, and their emotional vocabulary tangibly grew each session... There should be so many more words on here, but looking forward to the ending, connections make permanent. Storytelling matters.'

- Jacquie Pinches, Year 3 teacher & PSHE Lead at SSMJ Primary School

Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils founded by Cheltenham Festivals
Annual project, following the academic year
Funded inhouse

RTRP is a reading for pleasure group for teachers which aims to ignite teachers' love of children's literature and so develop reading for pleasure in their pupils. 15 teachers from our Spellbound Schools and beyond have been gifted 5 books over the course of the year, identified by Cheltenham Festivals as representative of the latest in high quality children's literature. Now in it's third year the project has become very popular, with teachers reported how they are now reading more children's fiction for pleasure and that the stigma of being seen reading "kids" books had been removed. Many reported feeling more knowledgeable and confident about children's books.

"I loved these sessions! From both a wellbeing perspective, for us as staff to just enjoy a book and have a lovely chat about it, but also for our own professional development. All the texts have been applied in school and they have had an enormous impact on our Year 6 curriculum."

- Teacher from St John Fisher

For families and community groups

Week of Welcome
August 2023

Our annual Week of Welcome occurs every August and invites families who have recently arrived in the UK to explore the therapeutic and joyous world of story at The Story Museum. We provide translators in Arabic, Pashtu, Farsi and Ukrainian. Families are invited through our partner organisations: Connection Support, Asylum Welcome, Refugee Resource and Multaka Oxford.