

pARTicipate application form

Please complete this form (front and back - use extra sheets if necessary) and return to debra.booler@nottingham.ac.uk

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School/Department	School of English
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Project title	Vikings For Schools
Start and finish dates	Ongoing
Project cost - total figure and breakdown (if applicable)	£744.82 (including delivery)

Who have you consulted about your applications (e.g. School Director of Teaching, other academic, administrator)	Nathan Waddell (School Director of Teaching)/ Judith Jesch (Professor of Viking Studies)/ Mari Hughes (School Manager)
Date of application	20/03/2014

Project description (maximum 200 words)

Vikings for Schools is a primary school-based project aimed at improving the transferable skills and professional development of undergraduate and postgraduate students in the School of English. Although initiated by the *Centre for the Study of the Viking Age* in 2010, the project is now completely student led, with students overseeing every aspect of the scheme from liaising with schools to presenting the activities they devise.

Student volunteers organise Viking-themed workshops, which they deliver in the schools themselves or during school visits to campus. Making use of a modest selection of resources (we currently have several replica artefacts including rune stones, a spindle and several figurines, as well as a few craft items, such as paper and lollipop sticks) the volunteers create fun and engaging workshops which have an underlying commitment to academic credibility. Our volunteers' ability to transmit accurate knowledge of the Viking Age, backed by their university studies (every volunteer admitted onto the programme has taken at least one Viking-based module), sets our scheme apart from similar initiatives and is a popular feature of the programme which commends us to local schools.

Action plan (maximum 500 words)

Last term we organised three successful workshops with the aid of a third year Viking Studies student who lent us a selection of Viking re-enactment equipment (principally an axe, swords, a shield, and an array of furs). The children were able to handle these items for themselves and were encouraged to think critically about their use and significance. Several of our students also dressed as Vikings and adopted Viking personas using borrowed costumes. Such visual aids allowed the children to explore the subject in an engaging and hands-on way, meaning that activities were accessible to a variety of learning styles and that the children received greater enjoyment and educational gratification from workshops. Volunteers also benefitted from this equipment, as it enabled them to devise more creative and exciting activities than those they were previously able to produce.

This term we hope to build upon these successes by investing in new equipment, since the volunteer who lent us his things is now studying in Norway. This will allow workshops to continue to evolve, encouraging volunteers to develop as effective project leaders and presenters. We also plan to alter the format of workshops in the coming term, and acquiring new equipment is integral to this. In place of the four separate workstations usually employed in each session, we hope to create an overall theme to bind the four activities together. This will give greater continuity to activities, making it easier to hold the attention of the children and giving the workshops a more professional feel. We plan to achieve this by presenting each workshop as a metaphorical journey through time, back to the Viking Age. On this journey, each child will discover what it was like to live as a Viking. The four activities will take the form of four aspects of Viking life: the Viking homestead (where the children will learn about domestic life, including cooking, weaving, and personal hygiene); the Viking warrior (which will teach children how Viking warriors lived and fought); the Viking long-ship (which will discuss Viking trade and exploration, demonstrating the objects traded, the routes travelled, and the extent of Viking exploration – to North America and Central Asia); and finally the Viking storyteller (which will cover the methods of communication employed by Viking peoples, including the oral tradition, Viking runes, and manuscript transmission). Costumes and visual aids will make this journey to the Viking Age more tangible and engaging.

Each workshop will be hosted by 8 volunteers, with each activity manned by 2 volunteers. Since we have 16 volunteers in total, this structure will ensure that every volunteer gets the opportunity to present at least once over the 3 workshops we will host this term. Volunteers will also organise a day of workshops for this year's Mayfest celebrations. Mayfest activities will be more expansive than those devised for school workshops, giving the volunteers greater scope to coordinate ambitious projects. Plans are currently underway for a craft activity involving the creation of a replica long-ship.

What do you anticipate the outcome(s) might be? (maximum 200 words)

e.g. report with proposal and costing; video; guide; booklet

Acquiring this equipment will lend greater professionalism to workshops, generating increased interest amongst local schools and giving more students the opportunity to participate in this valuable skills development opportunity.

The items required will be used in workshops for years to come, as the project is intended to become a permanent fixture. In a recent email, Professor Jesch stated that 'the School of English is committed to the sustainability of this student-run project' and 'will continue each year to recruit a suitable postgraduate student to run the project, normally from among those who have participated in the previous year'.

Main Costs:

- **Viking man's costume** (<http://www.theknightshop.co.uk> – free delivery over £200): **£243.82**
 - Tunic: **£57.46**; trousers: **£32.98**; tunic belt: **£25.00**; shoes: **£63.72**; cape (optional): **£64.66**
- **Woman's costume: £178.80**
 - Dress: **£61.92**; woven belt: **£6.88** (both from <http://www.wulflund.com>); brooch: **£15x2** (<http://www.asgardcrafts.co.uk/Pins-and-Brooches/Disc-Brooches.html>); shoes (optional): **£80** (http://www.jelldragon.com/viking_shoes.htm)
- **Sword: £95** (<http://www.theknightshop.co.uk/catalog/lobe-viking-sword-p-3548.html?osCsid=5d8fad604a147c2468593a3d0e6aea56>)
- **Shield: £50** (<http://www.theknightshop.co.uk/catalog/reenactmenttheatre-blank-viking-shield-p-3928.html>)
- **Axe: £55.68** (<http://www.theknightshop.co.uk/catalog/short-viking-antiqued-p-852.html>)
- **Drinking horn: £12.04** (<http://www.wulflund.com/horn-products/drinking-horns/viking-drinking-horn---02-l.html/>)
- **Flint and steel striker: £18** (http://www.jelldragon.com/fire_starter.htm)
- **Fake fur: £10** (market)
- **Wooden crockery: £3.54** (bowls x2: <http://www.mbswholesale.co.uk/cgi-bin/sh000001.pl?WD=bowl%20wooden&PN=DPS-CB2007-Wooden-Round-Bowl-13cm-28400%2ehtml#SID=1097>, spoons x2: <http://www.wilko.com/baking-utensils+gadgets/wilko-wood-spoon-waxed-beech-12in/invnt/0285940>)
- **Storage boxes: £2.25x2** (<http://www.wilko.com/plastic-storage/wilko-storage-box-with-lid-clear-65l/invnt/0202198?VBMST=storage>)

Craft Items: approx. **£50** total

- Card
- Pens/ pencils
- Glue
- Drinking straws
- Pebbles
- Craft wire
- Mayfest long-ship—poster-paint, cardboard, broom handle, fabric

Why do you want to do this project (maximum 500 words)

As an undergraduate student, I always wished that there were more extra-curricular activities available related to my subject interests. Like me, many of the student volunteers participating in the project absolutely love their subject (Viking and Anglo-Saxon Studies) and revel in any opportunity to explore it further outside of academic study. *Vikings for Schools* provides just such an opportunity in a fun and academically and professionally advantageous way.

The project enables students to apply their interest in the Viking Age to the outside world and to explore it from a hands-on perspective. By devising workshops, volunteers are given the opportunity to consider how their subject might relate to a future career. The project also gives volunteers the opportunity to pass on their enthusiasm to others, which is extremely inspiring and motivating.

Although the scheme is often challenging, it is also very rewarding. It allows volunteers to coordinate activities of their own design which they can really get stuck into and take responsibility for. This engenders a strong sense of achievement which, as the overseer of the scheme, is gratifying to witness. As well as building confidence, the project encourages volunteers to take charge of their own futures and to develop into responsible adults. By enabling them to recognise their strongest skills, it inspires students with ideas for future ambitions. For those planning to enter into a teaching career it also provides invaluable experience of the classroom environment.

As well as encouraging volunteers to develop individually, it also builds relationships between undergraduate and postgraduate students from a range of disciplines. This strengthens the student community within the School of English and enriches the student experience. It is an opportunity for volunteers to make friends and learn from their peers. Younger volunteers are able to ask older students for advice on their studies, and so the project benefits volunteers' university education as well as their professional skills.

However, the project does not just benefit volunteers. It aims to inspire primary school children with a lasting interest in the Viking Age and a positive impression of university, encouraging future generations to pursue higher education. Since many of the local schools we work with operate under challenging circumstances, this is something they highly value.

Above all, the project is extremely fun and exciting for children and volunteers alike and is an invaluable asset to the School of English and the university as a whole. I hope to establish it as a lasting feature and a model for future outreach programmes. We are in the process of creating an example 'workshop lesson plan' which we aim to upload to the Resources section of the 'Arts in the Community' webpage (<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/arts/arts-in-the-community/advice-staff/resources-and-case-studies.aspx>). This will emphasise

the professionalism of the project whilst encouraging other staff and students to establish similar schemes. With the backing of Judith Jesch, Nathan Waddell and Mari Hughes (who have all shown commitment to the scheme), and the support of the Widening Participation team, I feel the project is sure to flourish.

What skills do you expect to gain? (maximum 200 words)

The scheme develops numerous skills of benefit to volunteers in their current studies and future careers (particularly for those planning a career in teaching). Devising engaging and educational activities develops volunteers' ability to effectively time-manage, take responsibility for the learning of others, undertake research in order to present knowledgeably on their chosen topics, and to communicate their ideas and opinions effectively. It also develops better presenting skills as well as confidence and the ability to interact with a range of people.

Since the project requires volunteers to be extremely responsible when working with children, it teaches them to exercise commitment and accountability. Such traits are essential in any career but are also invaluable to students seeking to achieve their full potential whilst still at university. Finally, the project fosters a sense of community and cooperation within the School of English by encouraging students from all years to work together, developing networking skills and the ability to work successfully with others.

Please submit your completed document to debra.booler@nottingham.ac.uk