

Case Study:

Dunkirk Mill Museum: SWMD Recovery Grant to commission a film & promotional support

Dunkirk Mill Museum received a [Recovery Grant from us at South West Museum Development](#) in Autumn 2020 to commission a film and a social media specialist to help with the strategic promotion of the film.

This case study is a Q&A with the museum about the funding process, managing the project and the things they have learned along the way. [You can view the final video here on their website.](#)



Funding overview

Funding awarded: £5400 Recovery Grant, supported by Art Fund

Key outputs: Promotional video and an externally advised strategic approach to promotion

Additional funding conditions: to work with the Digital Engagement Officer, Rachel Cartwright, to support the incorporation of the social media element of the project.

Timeline:

- Round 1 submitted: August 2020
- Round 2 revised application: 16th September
- Funding awarded: 25th September
- Project started: 9th October
- Project completed (and report submitted): 1st February 2021

Art Fund_



Be flexible with your vision and work with the film makers / producer on sequencing shots. i.e. film things that are geographically close together even if they are later in the story. Shooting the script is different from the storyboard - that's in the editing.

Jane, Dunkirk Mill Museum

The below Q&A is between Rachel Cartwright, Digital Engagement Officer, asking Jane Ford at Dunkirk Mill Museum (part of Stroud Textile Trust) about the process and her experience. Jane led the bid writing and the successful South West Museum Development Recovery Grant funded project for Dunkirk Mill.

What were your initial plans for the video and how did they change to what you have as the final piece?

Jane, Dunkirk Mill: Initially we were thinking that the video would be a virtual tour of the mill for people unable to visit but also to encourage visitors when that would again be possible. We expanded the vision (after our first grant meeting with South West Museum Development) to include more context and show a family interacting on site. Our vision was that it should be entertaining, not boring nor too long and we settled on something no more than 5 to 7 minutes and opening with an animation. The narrative developed as short episodes giving a flavour of our story and our volunteers' personal involvement. This fitted well into the second part of the project, carrying through into social media.

Tell us about the additional support from South West Museum Development and if you think this helped the progression of your project?

The support from South West Museum Development was invaluable as we are a small organisation and all volunteers. This was quite a complicated project for us and we were advised to put through a revised application in their second funding round. This was to clarify our desired outcomes and to work more strategically on a focused project: commissioning a video and obtaining additional external support for the promotion of the video online.

Throughout the project we met on Zoom meetings with South West Museum Development's Digital Engagement Officer and Museum Development Officer who helped with the processes and any queries. The funding we were successful with required that we commissioned two project roles: Filmmaker and Social Media Consultant. We created a brief for this work and circulated them (with the help of South West Museum Development), had an introductory conversation with those selected and then contracted them for the work. Luckily South West Museum Development steered us through these administrative hurdles, which were new to us.

What did the pre-filming planning and on-set filming look like?

We supplied a lot of background images, archive footage, photos, and quotes from the visitors' book. Although very little of this appeared in the final cut it gave the film makers an all-round vision of our museum and formed a useful mood board for them to work from.

Because of lockdown there were no pre-filming meetings it was all done remotely, and the actual filming was done within a small window of time when all the participants were available and the weather was favourable. The filming on site was completed in one day, with half a day extra for the drone footage.

Did you come across any complications during the planning and filming? Any considerations which you think are essential when planning this type of work.

- Timings can be the most difficult thing with filming - prepare your timetable and ensure that it has some flexibility.
- When filming prepare your 'actors' for a lot of hanging about especially when there is more than one location.
- Thank goodness for mobile phones - have everyone's number.
- Be flexible with your vision and work with the film makers on sequencing shots. E.g. film things that are geographically close together even if they are later in the story. Shooting the script is different from the story board - that's in the editing (and we'll leave that to the professionals!)

Top tips for from Dunkirk Mill for museums planning to commission an external filmmaker



Research similar content: Look at as many museum films as you can as this will give you a good idea as to what you want or more specifically what you don't want. Share with your filmmaker those you like and why.



Who will feature in your film: At one of the first meetings with SWMD we were advised to consider who would appear in our video and to make sure that it was one of our key target audiences: in this case families.



Keep notes: it sounds obvious but keeping track of the conversations and subsequent actions you or the commissioned party will take is so useful to stay on top of everything.



Define responsibilities: our film company acted as Producer and Film-maker. *If they just do the film then will you want a Producer to lead on this work?*



Things to include in a film commissioning contract (that we came across during this process)

- Filming permissions and who will secure them
- A timeline: when the work will take place
- A clear budget (also how and when payments will be made),
- Deliverables: clear outputs and logistics related to this: how images will be transferred, and whether short clips are also required, subtitles and whether any static images are required (these are good to have for promotional work!)

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