



NoWrongPath

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#DiscoverCreativeCareers

CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ENVIRONMENT



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Developing the
Young Workforce

creative
& cultural
skills



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CAREER PROFILES: ACTIVITIES

Here are some activities to use the Discover! Creative Careers Profiles pack in the classroom.

1

Task students to select a profile that they are interested in and identify the skills that the individual uses within their role.

2

Encourage students to choose a profile that they have not considered as a career path, ask them to identify something that surprises them about the information and feedback to the class.

3

Thinking about some of the advice these individuals share within their profiles, encourage young people to consider how they would use the advice to develop themselves in future.

4

Ask students to imagine that they have already begun to advance in their career and they have been asked to complete the profile. Encourage them to think creatively about what they would like to have achieved, the skills they wish to develop, and to write their own personal profile.

5

Ask students to select the individual they identify with most from their profile. Ask them to feedback why they feel drawn to this individual's profile. Is it because they are interested in similar subjects and pathways or is it something to do with the personality and characteristics portrayed through their profile?



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CHRIS WARDLE



GARDENS & DESIGNED LANDSCAPE MANAGER,
NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Craft, Design and Technology, anything with my hands or sport, **definitely not history!**

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

As a base level, basic numeracy and language are needed, but above all, a **willingness to learn** and a **healthy curiosity in the world** is really important.

The ability to work hard in all weathers is a must.

People skills are vital as well. You must be able to talk and communicate as best you can.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I fell into it **by accident**. I started my career as a soldier and retrained. I didn't know what to do and did an access course as I had always done people's gardens or cut grass to earn money from a young age. I discovered my passion and found out I was quite good at it.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

Gardening was a second career for me. I did an access course as I wasn't sure exactly what I wanted to do – so I did a broad range of subjects - and then went on to **college to do a specific course**.

I tried as hard as I could to get wide experience and I worked hard and listened to everyone I could. I realised that **I didn't need a degree** and a semi-vocational course was all I needed.

The real learning happened on the job. It was slow and steady and I knew that money wasn't my key driver - I just needed to be happy and fulfilled in my work. I have never been disappointed in my choices. Plants don't talk back!!



DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

When I was a working gardener, each day could be very different. You have to work with the weather and seasons. Sometime the work is repetitive, but I always manage to find a way to be competitive against myself.

When training, I was always fascinated by the different subjects from soil to rocks and plants to weather. It was all so **diverse and interesting**. I still am fascinated by the breadth of subjects that I know about and people are always amazed that we get involved in almost anything and have a knowledge of the historic places we work in. **Every day is different**, some days drag and others fly by, but it's always a rewarding challenge.

I am very lucky as **I work with very talented people** and they are the ones I learn from. I have learnt to listen as much as talk, so people teach me all the time. I research / write / plan and educate all in the same day. Above all, I like to inspire others if I can.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I was never in it for the money. **Working in a team to a shared goal** and producing something beautiful is enough reward for me. I have had lots of opportunities come my way and have sought them out as well.

Fabulous people / amazing locations and history that (now) truly excites me. I have had a blessed career but I have worked hard for my successes and gained many skills in a very varied mass of subjects along the way.



WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB?

There is **always something new to learn** or a skill to develop. **The possibilities seem endless**. There is an incredible array of outlets to work into if you can find your passion.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO GET STARTED AND PROGRESS?

Find your passion or something that excites you! If it's interesting, it never feels like work. There will be bad days – everyone has them – but if nature, beauty and really nice people are around you, there is always a positive.

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CHRISTOPHER
WADDELL

LEARNING MANAGER,
ROBERT BURNS BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM,
NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

Around fifteen years ago. I had been working for many years in the sphere of Natural Heritage, (Biodiversity / Countryside Ranger) when I felt like a change towards the **cultural heritage world**.

It was as a consequence of moving back to Scotland and developing a strong interest in Scots culture (history, music, literature).

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I started working with the Scottish Wildlife Trust as a contracted surveyor around thirty years ago. After this I did my degree (Countryside Management) and then upon graduation I moved to England to work as a Senior Ranger.

I returned to Scotland and worked as a Biodiversity Officer within the ranks of a local authority. After a few years I took a position as a learning officer with **National Museums Scotland**. This was at the **National Museum of Rural Life**, which has a large outdoor element attached. They wanted someone with a background in biodiversity and, in this way, I moved towards museums.

About 9 years ago I took on my current role with the NTS as Learning Manager at the Robert Burns Birthplace Museum.

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Art, English, History



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WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

"I suppose it helps if you come from an arts background, although I have proven you don't have to as I have a degree in Countryside Management.

However there are **many transferable skills** between the spheres of natural and cultural heritage management, which can be just as valuable, if not more so."

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

I tend to work very closely with visitors, imparting knowledge about the collection and **stories behind the site** (Robert Burns, his life, times and works)

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I very much enjoy **meeting our visitors** although, I have to say, the NTS does tend to have quite good wages, terms and conditions etc.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I was surprised how quickly our sector felt the economic bite of the recent pandemic. It was extremely damaging, I hope we are now on the **road to recovery**.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO GET STARTED AND PROGRESS?

"Getting a decent degree is a good start but there are **lots of other ways to study now, you don't have to go to university**. Also, volunteering is a great way to build skills and prospective employers like that!



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LOUISE KELLY



SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER,
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

While getting my degrees was a necessary part of my journey and it opened the door for me **the most essential skills are communication, flexibility and an interest in and ability to continue learning.**

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The **variety of different roles and expertise** there are. While many of these are highly specialised and require specific training there can be a lot of opportunities to learn and move to new roles.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I don't know if I decided really! **I just love history, old things and stories** so was drawn to working somewhere that allowed me to work with that every day and somehow it became a career!

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

After studying English Literature and History then a masters in Medieval History I wanted to pursue a PhD but family circumstances prevented that at that time. I was fortunate to get a temporary job as a guide at **Edinburgh Castle**. There, I was in the right position to apply for and get a series of roles that eventually led me to make the move from Edinburgh Castle to the **Climate Change Team at Historic Environment Scotland.**

As far back as high school, I had advocated for environmental issues in my own community and over the years had become increasingly interested in **sustainability** so my current role allowed me to combine a love of heritage and passion for climate action!

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

History and English

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COUNCIL



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DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

It can be quite varied, at least it was before the pandemic when I would get out and about. Now I'm all desk based but there is still a lot of **variety**. Some of that comes around weekly or monthly and other things are more seasonal or annual.

One thing about working in **climate change** is that a big report or climate story in the media might mean a change in our plans or that our team is asked to contribute to something and that can be quite last minute meaning other things have to be (temporarily dropped).

Typical tasks I do include: **writing articles for our staff on climate change and sustainability**, data analysis for our regular reporting, supporting colleagues in various projects and I also manage our climate change inbox so that brings me a wide variety of questions that I have to figure out the answer to. I also **organise a number of events** including an annual staff conference for people to learn more about climate change and how they can take climate action.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

There are two things that I particularly love. The first is getting to **work with a lot of different people** including our site-based staff, other young people at partner organisations around the world and our trainees as well as senior colleagues who share their expertise. The second is that **I'm constantly learning and I get to visit heritage sites** that I grew up in awe of! At least before Covid I did and I'm very much looking forward to getting away from the desk again soon.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO GET STARTED AND PROGRESS ?

Only pursue this if you love it because there's not much glory. The good news is **there is no conventional route** so study or get a job that you like and learn, ask questions and take opportunities. What looks like failure might turn out to be your next opportunity.

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LOUISE KELLY, SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER, HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

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NICOLE MANLEY



ENVIRONMENTAL ARTIST,
SOIL HYDROLOGIST,
BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Biology, Geography, Geology

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

To do research in science you need to do a PhD. However, in art it is good to do a Masters in something creative, but you don't need a PhD. What you need is to **really enjoy what you do** and do it well.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I never expected that I could actually make art in a science job, but this is what I am doing most days. It is a great feeling, particularly when **my art research does help people to think about the environment differently.**

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

After 20 years of doing science, I simply wanted to write music, do embroidery, make clay sculpture, create things and ideas. **The desire to create** became so intense that I couldn't do my full-time science job anymore. I was lucky that I could change my science job to part-time, so I could pursue my dream to become an environmental artist. I now do both and I'm able to make art within my scientific job.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

As a teenager my education was very limited. My only option was to do science. I knew nothing about art and was never taught art or any humanities subject apart from English and French. I did a degree in Environmental Science. I liked it, but I used to fall asleep in lectures and I didn't study much!

Strangely, I ended up continuing to study doing a PhD about water conservation and ecology in Spain and then doing postdoctoral work all over Europe and China, doing environmental research.

After a while, I felt my life was really missing something. I took a break from science and created my own ecological business. It didn't last long and then got a research science job working on topics like flooding in the British Geological Survey (BGS). I enjoyed the work environment, but still felt empty, until one day I saw a course about **Research in Creative Practice at the Glasgow School of Art**. I never fell asleep in any lectures. **It was the most exciting thing I've ever done.** I still do research in BGS, but now I'm also an Environmental Artist.



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DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

I now do art within my scientific job in the British Geological Survey. I don't really have a typical day of work, because I work on different projects. I always have to **write lots of emails** to organise things and keep in touch with people I work with, but otherwise the rest of the day can be about **making films or doing ceramic sculpture**.

For example, I was doing an installation for COP26, which was about the process of how the weather decays surfaces in the urban environment and how this is changing with climate change. So, I spent time outside taking imprints of surfaces using clay. I have to understand the process of weathering, so I also spent time reading scientific text to then create the context of my artistic installation.

Another day I might be working on a research project about flooding in the Philippines and Vietnam. For this, I might **spend time on Zoom**, discussing people's experiences of flooding, to create an art publication with researchers in Vietnam and the Philippines. This process has many steps, from writing down people's narratives and ensuring that an ethical procedure is followed and then creating collages for an art publication.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I love to be able to think and learn in many different ways and cultures, so I **really enjoy doing research** as long as I can be creative in the way I think and to use my imagination. The pay is average and **working hours are flexible**. I could progress into a managerial position, but this would mean I would do less research and it would be harder to actually do art. I don't earn much in making art, but as I get known more, my art does sell at a higher price.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO GET STARTED AND PROGRESS?

If you really have a strong desire to do something creative, it often requires looking outside what society presents and more towards **finding people and activities that inspire you**. It does require perseverance and keeping an open mind to aspects that are often not what you expected.

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NICOLE MANLEY, ENVIRONMENTAL ARTIST AND SOIL HYDROLOGIST

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PAULA WHITE LAW



SENIOR HERITAGE PLANNER,
NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

A degree in a relevant subject is helpful but more importantly you need good skills in taking on board, questioning and condensing large amounts of often conflicting information (often out with your own knowledge area) and **being able to deal with people.**

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB?

How many roles there are – as a working class girl growing up in Fife I had no idea about the opportunities that existed.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

At university – I didn't really know it was an option before that point as it wasn't something my family engaged with and no guidance was given at my school about more creative or heritage based opportunities.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I started doing voluntary work for a range of organisations after I left university to gain some experience in the real world – including RSPB and NTS - in research and policy based activities. I then worked in admin roles and then short contracts, again research roles or working on long term planning activities for conservation organisations.

My voluntary work helped me develop the contacts and real life skills required to secure these roles. From there I progressed into longer term planning roles before ending up at the Trust and have been here (with a 3 year gap being a stay at home mum) for 20 years – over that time my role has evolved and developed which means **I am continually learning new skills.**

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Geography

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

I don't have a typical day – I deal with properties across the whole of Scotland – ranging from St Kilda out in the Atlantic to a castle in Aberdeenshire and everything in between.

My day can involve **sourcing, understanding, questioning and challenging decisions and information** relating the management of our sites, so I may be involved in meetings with other Trust staff, out on site understanding the challenges of a particular property or dealing with external consultants who we have commissioned to help us shape new ideas or develop our knowledge.

We need to understand the value (significance) of our sites – to us, to our members and to the wider population and make the best, most informed decisions we can on how to manage the places in our care. It is my role to coordinate and guide that activity on behalf of the National Trust for Scotland.

I'm usually involved in around 10 sites at any one time as well as more strategic and high level activities, so juggling tasks is key. It isn't a role for someone who likes to take time to drill down into a huge amount of detail. It is perfect for someone who likes to constantly be challenged and have lots of activities and areas of work on the go at once.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I get to develop understanding and long term management of some of the most iconic and special places in Scotland. I get to work alongside staff who are so incredibly knowledgeable about the site they manage or the specialism they cover and **I get to learn something new every day**. I deal with staff across the Trust and feel part of an enormous team. **Every day is different**, but I hope that at the end of each, I have played a small role in ensuring the long term protection of some of the most special places in Scotland.



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO GET STARTED AND PROGRESS?

Find a role that fits your skills set and makes you happy. We all have different strengths and that's OK. Then be confident and ask questions when something doesn't make sense. The person who makes the biggest impact isn't the one talking for talking sake but the one challenging assumptions and who is willing to ask 'why'.

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