

# National Library of Scotland

## Reflection on the Youngwummin Project

The Youngwummin display was on show at the National Library of Scotland between June and September 2018. It showcased the research of five youth groups, who all investigated the impact of the First World War on young women in Scotland. Each youth group responded creatively to the research that they uncovered, resulting in a rich and varied display.

The Youngwummin project began in September 2017, and the Library offered support and training in two skills development sessions for early career youth workers and youth groups. In December 2017 the youth workers visited the main National Library building in Edinburgh to learn about the Library and to view objects from the collections related to women and the First World War.

In April 2018 the youth groups visited for a morning of activities related to putting on exhibitions at the Library. This is when the exhibitions team were first introduced to the research that the young people had uncovered and developed. We offered some advice about how to prepare this research for the display. It was clear to us that the youth groups had engaged with the theme, they had actively searched for stories about women and the First World War in their local communities, gathering oral histories and artefacts including newspaper clippings, photographs and personal mementoes. The youth groups had also identified resonances between the challenges that young women faced 100 years ago and challenges today, such as the fight for equality.

Four weeks later, in May 2018, all of the research and creative responses arrived at the Library to be prepared for the display. We divided the research into thematic groups, guided by instructions from the young people about their 'top priority' objects for the display. The themes emerged as the young people's knowledge developed and they focussed on topics that interested them the most, including women in work, women in the home, and women's rights; expressed through hand drawn posters and diary entries, recipes, collage, and dance. The Youngwummin display showcased these responses along with Library collection items that inspired them.

It has been great to see how engaged the young people and youth workers were with their research topics. The youth groups interpreted the theme of the impact of the First World War on women's lives with sensitivity and vitality, at the end of the project they were able to say which stories were important to them and why, and all of this was captured in the display.

Project in partnership with:

