

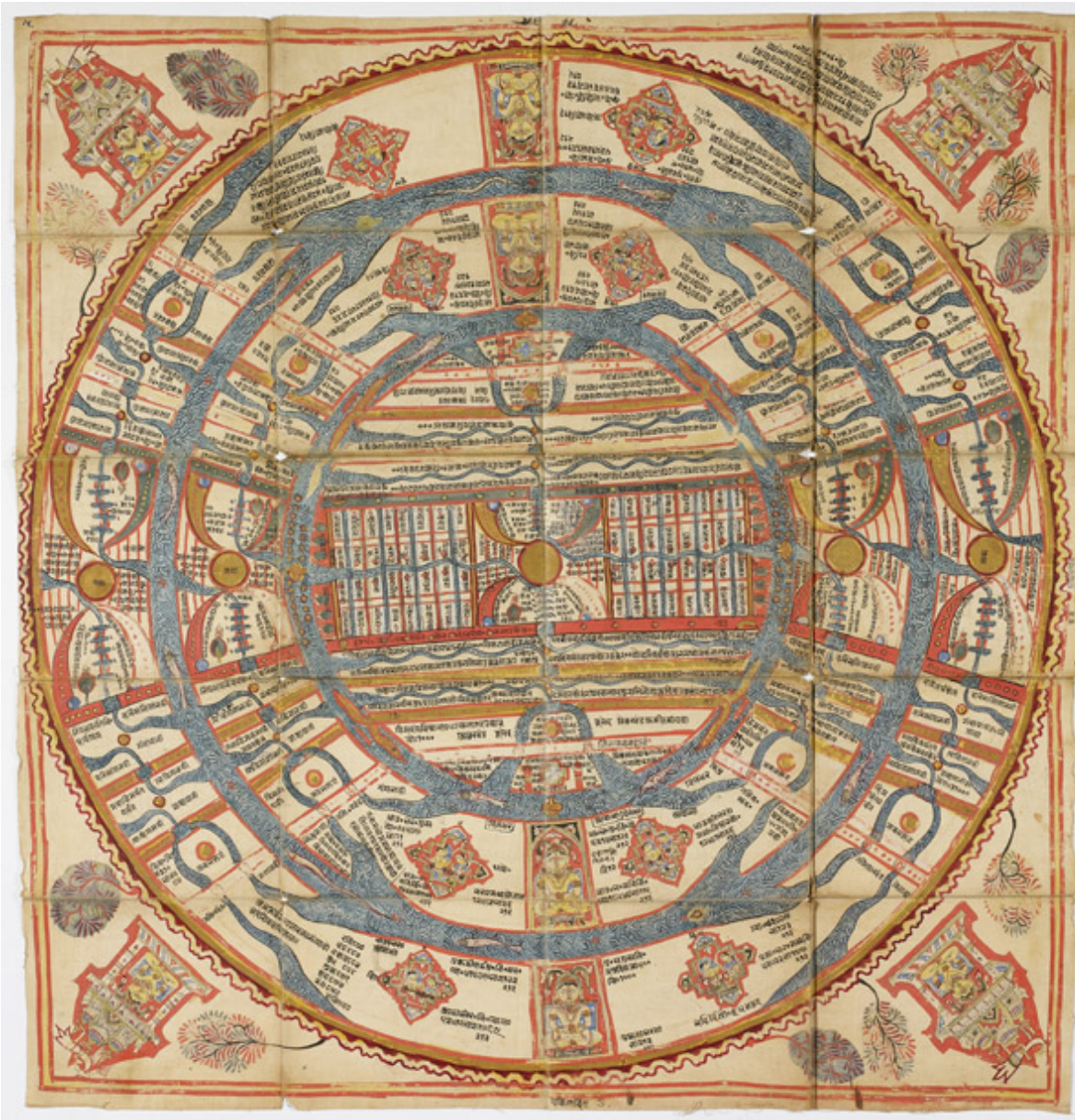
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Members' news



Jain map, part of the 'Talking Maps' exhibition opening at the Bodleian Library in July, among the events and exhibitions in our 2019 highlights list from NMDC museums

Ensemble photographs recreate Derbyshire's political and industrial past

Derby Museum Trust has commissioned three huge photographed tableaux, which will recreate moments from Derbyshire's industrial past and be shown at the new Museum of Making, due to open in 2020. The photographs will be created by Red Saunders, using costumed people who live and work in Derbyshire to capture moments such as the first factory lockout in 1833 – 34 and the advance of technology from the 1880s onwards. Saunders has previously produced similar works capturing the Peasant's Revolt for the Museum of London and the Peterloo Massacre for the City of Manchester. He said *"in my first visits to Derby Silk Mill, I became quickly immersed in the stories of the city's industrial past and its people's history. Derby also holds, for me, an immediate source of inspiration in the form of Enlightenment painter Joseph Wright, whose beautiful exploration of light and dark on canvas brings together my love of history as an artist who loves photography."* [M+H](#), [ITV](#) (Peterloo), [Derby Museums](#)

Antarctic vessel and botanic gardens benefit from 'V&A Dundee effect'

V&A Dundee attracted more than 340,000 people in only three months after it opened in September 2018, but has also helped to grow visitor numbers to other cultural venues across the city. Discovery Point, which is home to the Antarctic exploration ship RSS Discovery alongside a related museum, had a 40% growth in footfall. The McManus Art Gallery & Museum had a 31% increase. Professor John Lennon, Director of the Moffatt Centre which collected the figures said "*there is no doubt visitors are seeing more of the country and the benefits of tourism are being spread across Scotland.*" [ALVA](#)

Highlights from NMDC museums in 2019

This month, we publish two lists of highlights nominated by NMDC member museums from their programmes for 2019. One contains exhibitions and events, the second a sometimes overlapping list of digital work, both in exhibitions, online, in apps and behind the scenes. The highlights are a tiny fraction of the work programmed each year, but give a flavour of the variety of topics and approaches in NMDC museums across the UK. [NMDC](#) (exhibitions and events), [NMDC](#) (digital)

In brief: Brexit roundup

Brexit news relevant to the arts and cultural sector this month:

- The Office for Civil Society has published a roundup of 'five ways civil society organisations can prepare for EU exit' with topics ranging from EU staff and EU funding to personal data. [uk](#)
- *The Stage* offers a long read revisiting the likely difficulties with visas and cross-border collaboration in the arts following Brexit, accompanied by concrete examples of how hits from 'Game of Thrones' to 'The Favourite' were the result of 'pan-European funding and casting'. [The Stage](#)
- *The Guardian* reports that some diplomatic reassurance has been needed to European museums lending works to the UK, as some feared that they would be liable for customs fees when works were returned after Brexit. The EC issued new guidance clarifying the issue a fortnight before the opening of Tate's Van Gogh show which contains many European loans. Ultimately a Tate spokesman said "*no special provisions were needed, as loans to museums would not be subject to commercial tariffs. The relevant authorities simply reassured lenders that this was the case.*"
- A Parliamentary report warns that three million UK citizens will lose 'freedom of movement, housing and social security rights' post Brexit. [Guardian](#)
- The EU has announced that in the event of a No Deal Brexit anyone involved in an Erasmus+ programme which has already begun when the UK leaves the EU, will be permitted to finish their programme. This is likely to affect 21,000 people in the UK and Europe. [Heritage Alliance](#) (scroll)

Visitor numbers



Imaginary Cities, opening at the British Library on 5th April explores how our increasingly digital world could change the future of collections. Image courtesy of BL artist in residence Michael Takeo Magruder.

Exhibitions in the age of Instagram: the most popular art shows of 2018

The Art Newspaper has published its annual list of the most popular museum and gallery art exhibitions in the world, along with a commentary on the trends shaping the sector and the factors that can lead to high visitor numbers. The figures show:

- The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York hosted the top two most popular shows. 'Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination' mixed religious art with haute couture and attracted 10,919 people each day and over 1.6m in total; its Michelangelo show came second.
- Shanghai Museum's five spots in the top ten included 'Masterpieces from Tate Britain 1700 – 1980' which was the world's fourth most visited exhibition. It was also the UK's most visited show, although 5,000 miles from London.
- The Smithsonian's 'Do Ho Suh: Almost Home' was the most visited free exhibition, featuring large-scale fabric sculptures which drew a large Instagram crowd.
- The art museums with the highest overall footfall in 2018 are the Louvre (10.2m), National Museum of China (8.6m) and the Met (6.9m). London has four institutions in the top ten (Tate Modern, British Museum, National Gallery and V&A) - no other world city features more than once.
- The rankings also include 'big ticket' attractions such as festivals and biennales. These are topped by the Dhaka Art Summit, alongside a good representation of Lates, including London's Art Night, the Light to Night Festival at the National Gallery, Singapore. VR features at the National Palace Museum, Taipei's 'Inside Paintings and Calligraphy: VR Art'.
- Stand out successes from individual galleries include the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery which nearly doubled its annual visitors (from 1.3m to 2m) when it showed new portraits of Barack and Michelle Obama and the Royal Academy of Arts, which was top of the London exhibition list in its 250th year with its Grayson Perry curated Summer Exhibition, and also in second place with 'Charles I, King and Collector'. Tate Modern took the next two spots with Picasso and Modigliani exhibitions.

The coverage also notes emerging trends, such as the way that some exhibitions attract audiences because they are 'Instagrammable', noting a watershed moment in 2015 when the room-size site-specific works in 'Wonder' at the Renwick Gallery in Washington became a hit. It describes how *"the curator was dumbstruck; he registered an Instagram account straight afterwards so he could read all the comments"*. Conversely, 'slow art' events are also gaining popularity. These often ask visitors to switch off their technology and structure art viewing away from crowded blockbusters and

the 28.6 second glance at each work, which is the average for museum visitors. A little tongue-in-cheek, *The Art Newspaper* suggests that the best ways to draw an audience in 2018 were fashion, a well-stocked gift shop, offering an 'experience' and celebrity namedropping. But it also points to the solid benefits of free entry – highlighting that in 2017, V&A's free show on plywood outperformed its very well-regarded ticketed exhibition on Pink Floyd. [Art Newspaper](#) (overview), [Art Newspaper](#) (Instagram), [Art Newspaper](#) (slow art), [Art Newspaper](#) (trends for a successful exhibition), [Smithsonian](#) (Do Ho Suh)

Also: London has been named the best-rated destination in the world in the 2019 Trip Advisor Traveller's Choice Awards. [Independent](#)

Numbers 'only part of the complex story' says NPG Director

Also writing for *The Art Newspaper*, NPG Director Nicholas Cullinan brings some perspective to the pages of museum league tables. He says that although a 'crucial metric', footfall is not the only consideration – it is also important to attract visitors from a broad cross-section of society. At NPG programming in the last quarter of 2018 such as 'Black is the New Black', 'Michael Jackson: On The Wall' and the Malala Yousafzai commission attracted a UK audience that was one third BME, 45% under 35 and 25% student or from lower socio-economic groups – all often under-represented among museum visitors. Financially too, museum exhibitions can be successful in different ways: NPG's Howard Hodgkin exhibition outperformed some with higher footfall through the sales of limited-edition prints. He adds that museums increasingly serve large virtual audiences who may be too far away to visit, but can be engaged with genuine depth – 30,000 of NPG's 1.2m social media followers watched a recent Gainsborough-themed Facebook Live. These kinds of 'multifaceted achievements' should be appreciated, with museums offering a mixed programme that does not just focus on producing blockbuster shows. [Art Newspaper](#)

'Everywhere Dippy has gone, visitor numbers have gone through the roof': ALVA figures 2018

The Association of Leading Visitor Attractions has published 2018 annual figures for visits to attractions, including major museums, heritage sites, zoos gardens and cathedrals. The figures show:

- Overall, visits increased by 9% despite a decline in visits to the UK by tourists from abroad.
- All of the top ten attractions are in London and seven of the ten are national museums, with Tate Modern (5.86m) pushing the British Museum (5.82m) into second place, with the National Gallery third (5.73m). ALVA comments that 67.6m people visited London in the year – 'nearly the equivalent of the total population of the UK' – so it is unsurprising that sites in the capital dominate listings.
- For a second year, the most visited attractions outside London were in Scotland, led by the National Museum of Scotland (up 3% to 2.27m), with the Scottish National Gallery also growing visitors by 9% to 1.73m. Four of the seven fastest growing sites in ALVA's statistics were National Trust properties in Scotland.
- The huge success of 'China's First Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors' at the World Museum, Liverpool grew audiences by 11% to 1.4m and made it the most visited museum in England outside London.
- Other major draws in 2018 included 'Dippy on Tour' which helped Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery grow visitors by 38% to 836k and the 'Game of Thrones' tapestry at Ulster Museum, which, combined with the opening of the 'Troubles and Beyond Gallery' and a visit from Dippy, helped grow audiences by 10%.
- Museums with a military theme also drew increased visitors in the final FWW centenary year, including a 36% rise in visitors at IWM North and for the RAF Museum at Colindale (45%) and Cosford (19%).

ALVA's Director Bernard Donoghue told *The Guardian* that most growth in visitor numbers has been domestic tourists visiting regional attractions. He added "visitor numbers are just one barometer of success - the greatest barometer is whether people like it and come back ... All of our museums, galleries and attractions seem to be pushing the envelope, taking new risks, doing creative things and making visitors happier as a result." [ALVA](#) (whole list), [BBC](#), [Guardian](#), [ALVA](#) (commentary) [M+H](#)

Also: London Mayor Sadiq Khan has launched a new campaign to encourage more domestic tourists to visit London. While the number of international visitors to the capital has increased, UK tourists numbers declined by 3%, or 10 million visits during 2017. Khan is investing £600k in

attracting back this visitor group. [ALVA](#)

Events



IWM North's 'Yemen, Inside a Crisis' opens in May and will be the first UK exhibition to address Yemen's ongoing conflict. Photograph - Ahmed Basha.

50 free talks, from escape rooms to income building at the M+H Show 2019

The next Museums + Heritage show will feature stalls from 150 businesses and consultants serving the cultural sector and more than 50 free 40 minute talks. The eclectic talks programme ranges from Sacha Coward's guide to building Escape Rooms to Bristol City Council's Zak Mensah describing how it has shifted model from 'museum service to cultural business. Gareth Clifford describes how working with a YouTube star is helping English Heritage find new audiences. The event takes place at Olympia from 15th – 16th May. The event is free, but visitors are asked to register. [M+H](#), [M+H](#) (dedicated show website)

Philanthropy Impact says UK millionaires are an underused resource as it launches training programme

Philanthropy Impact has announced its latest series of events, aimed principally at those who advise the wealthy, but offering insight for all developing relationships with major donors. Topics include 'Engaging young philanthropists: their needs and how best to address these' and 'The trends, tools, structures and models for philanthropic giving'. Events run from April – October at STEP, London and cost £65 - £80. Philanthropy Impact comments that only 5% of the UK's 360,000 millionaires give at a level that 'could be considered generous' – the median annual amount for this group is just £240 - £500. However, the demographic of the wealthy is shifting to include more women and younger people whose concerns may reshape giving. [Philanthropy Impact](#)

Museum training day: Children, Families and Wellbeing

Kids in Museums is holding an event to explore the question 'what can museums and heritage organisations do to support the wellbeing of children and families in their local communities?' It brings together the expertise of museums including the Fitzwilliam Museum, National Museum Wales and Manchester Museum which will also host the event. Participants will learn how to work with community and health organisations and use the museum environment to support the wellbeing of children. It takes place on 11th June, with tickets at £91.20 or £68 for a limited number of smaller organisations. [Kids in Museums](#), [Kids in Museums](#) (full spring event programme)

Arts Marketing Association announces conference and bursaries

The AMA conference 'Rewire – culture, audiences & you' will offer 50 speakers from organisations including New York Public Library, the Black Ticket Project, Penguin, Tate and Waltham Forest London Borough of Culture over two and a half days. There will also be chances to network with around 400 fellow professionals. There are 35 bursaries available offering a variety of discounts up to 100%, which are available to non-members as well as members of AMA. The event takes place on 9th – 11th July at the Sage Gateshead. Tickets are priced from £310 for small organisations to £729 at full price. [AMA](#) (conference), [AMA](#) (bursaries)

Connecting Culture: Europe – meet UK businesses at the heart of museum design

The DTI and ExperienceUK are hosting a conference bringing together museum professionals with designers and companies that help create museum attractions. The event marks the launch of the publication 'MuseumINSIDER Looking Ahead Europe 2019-2026: Handbook of Future European Museum and Heritage Projects'. This lists 70 museum and heritage capital projects happening across Europe in the next seven years which may offer opportunities for UK talent. They range from the €3.9 million Sigmund Freud Museum in Vienna, to the €650 million renovation and expansion of Berlin's Natural History Museum. The event takes place at the Natural History Museum on 14th May. Tickets are £130 - £150. [Experience UK](#)

Surveys and consultations

Understanding the role of executive support staff in the cultural sector

The Gardens, Libraries and Museums division at the University of Oxford is carrying out new research into the role of executive assistants in supporting cultural sector leadership. It argues that although those carrying out these roles are highly valued, research into their work has been rare. The 'Supporting Leadership' project will interview executive assistants and the leaders they support. The aim is to define best practice, create new resources, identify development needs and create a peer network. The digital consultation will be launched in May and GLAM is particularly keen to hear from staff in relevant roles from NMDC museums and beyond. Contact project leader vanessa.moore@glam.ox.ac.uk or emma.thomas@oum.ox.ac.uk to register your interest. [GLAM](#)

British Council seeks views as it plans the future of the Cultural Protection Fund

The British Council is hoping to secure further funding for the Cultural Protection Fund beyond 2020 and is taking views of its work in a brief survey. The deadline for replies is 10th April. [British Council](#)

Nesta's Digital Culture survey aims to help develop benchmarks for digital maturity

Nesta and ACE are launching their fifth joint survey, tracking the perception, use and impact of digital technology in the cultural sector. The surveys have run since 2013 and the last one in 2017 showed rapid change – with those seeing digital as essential to their business models reaching 53%. However, although many cultural organisations embraced online donations and ticket sales, other digital technologies such as big data were underused. The new survey will inform the forthcoming Digital Code and Maturity Index, run by ACE and NLHF to help organisations benchmark their development. Cultural organisations should already have received a link to the 2019 survey from MTM London – but if your museum has not and would like to take part, email digitalarts@mtmlondon.com. The deadline for responses is 3rd May and the results will be published in September. [Nesta](#)

Tailored reviews for Historic England

DCMS is holding a Tailored Review of Historic England and invites interested parties to submit views through an online survey by 9th May. [Gov.uk](#) (Historic England)

Revisiting the First World War commemoration projects

The DCMS Select committee has held an evidence session reviewing the outcomes of a four-year programme to commemorate the First World War. Participants agreed that it had been overwhelmingly successful, with events such as 14 – 18 NOW attracting a new generation and those unlikely to be drawn to a Cenotaph event. It also managed potentially difficult topics such as poppy projects in Belfast, through strong local partnerships as well as working internationally with countries with a wide range of perspectives on the conflict. IWM Director Diane Lees said *"one of the things that we set out to do was to surprise people with the narrative. Rather than it just being, 'And tanks appeared at this day on that battle,' it had that rounded people story. If you look at the underpinning messaging around all the success of our participation programmes, they have been about telling stories about real people and not about grand narratives."* However, *The Guardian* reports regret among some members of the government's advisory board on the FWW that the programme did not continue to cover 1919 and address difficult topics, ranging from the Jallianwala Bagh massacre (shortly to be the subject of a Manchester Museum exhibition) to the consequences of the Versailles Treaty as well as mutinies in the armed forces throughout 1919 and race riots in Cardiff. Advisory board member Deian Hopkins said *"thinking of what's going on at the moment we must not forget events such as these. It all reminds us that there is nothing new in history and we still have many lessons to learn."* A DCMS spokesperson said that the commemoration had always been planned to end with Armistice Day 1918. However, there is some ongoing activity: the HLF-funded public digital collecting project 'Lest We Forget: Keeping Their Stories Alive' project has recently launched, with 20 roadshows across the country including one just opening in Glasgow. [Guardian](#), [Manchester Museum](#), [University of Oxford](#), [Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#), [Parliament.uk](#) (transcript), [Lest We Forget](#) (Glasgow collecting event) [Parliament.uk](#)

Funding - and ethics



Tourism Ireland's immensely popular 'Game of Thrones' tapestry is on display at Ulster Museum and will receive new additions this year after the broadcast of season 8 of the TV series.

Sackler suspends UK funding as controversy about opioids gathers pace

In the last month, museums in the UK and US have either declined philanthropic funding from the Sackler family or have said they have no plans to seek it in future as controversy continues about the opioid crisis and the extent to which it was caused by Purdue Pharma – the major source of income for many branches of the Sackler Family. Purdue Pharma face dozens of major lawsuits in the US relating to addiction to OxyContin and protests about cultural institutions receiving Sackler money have been spearheaded by photographer Nan Goldin, who was herself addicted to the drug for some years. A number of museums have considered their position in the light of this:

- The National Portrait Gallery has announced that it will not proceed with a £1m gift first promised by the Sackler Trust in 2016. NPG's decision was reached by mutual consent with the Sackler Trust, following a meeting of the gallery's Ethics Committee in February. In a statement, the Trust said "*recent reporting of allegations made against Sackler family members may cause this new donation to deflect the National Portrait Gallery from its important work*".
- In March, Tate also announced that it will not accept further Sackler funds following consideration by its Ethics Committee. It has previously received around £4m but a spokesperson said "*in the present circumstances we do not think it right to seek or accept further donations from the Sacklers*".
- It has also recently emerged that South London Gallery returned an £125k grant in 2018, after it had been banked.
- The Guggenheim Museum in New York has also announced that it will not accept further Sackler funds, having previously received \$9 million between 1995 and 2015.
- The Royal Court has suspended a Sackler-funded trainee scheme, due to run to 2022 and the climate charity 10:10 also lost a substantial slice of its income after rejecting Sackler funds.

The Sackler Trust has donated £60m to a wide range of UK arts and science institutions, theatres and universities since 2010. The name is associated with infrastructure at the recently unveiled Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, as well as at the British Museum, V&A, Shakespeare's Globe and dozens of other institutions. It has now announced that it will suspend any new giving in the UK. Chairwoman Dame Theresa Sackler said "*I remain fully committed to all the causes the Sackler Trust supports, but at this moment it is the better course for the Trust to halt all new giving until we can be confident that it will not be a distraction for institutions that are applying for grants.*" Meanwhile, Nan Goldin is hoping that a 'domino effect' will lead to more institutions withdrawing from funding partnerships. The outcome of the court cases in the US may be crucial in shaping events. In Oklahoma, Purdue Pharma settled out of court for \$270m, including contributions from family members, although this does not reflect any admission of wrongdoing. New York State is currently pursuing a court case naming eight Sacklers, including Dame Theresa. [Art Newspaper](#) (NPG), [Art Newspaper](#) (Tate), [Guardian](#), [Slate](#), [Guardian](#) (Guggenheim), [Guardian](#) (South London Gallery), [Guardian](#) (Goldin NPG show) [BBC Radio 4](#) (Nan Goldin), [Wall Street Journal](#), [The Art Newspaper](#) (South London Gallery), [Telegraph](#), [New York Times](#) (Guggenheim), [Guardian](#) (Old Naval College), [Washington Post](#), [Telegraph](#), [The Stage](#), [Guardian](#) (Oklahoma court case), [New York Times](#) (NYT court case)

Debating cultural institutions and funding

The unfolding drama around Sackler funding has led to a wider debate in the media about what funding cultural institutions could and should take – and how they can be sustained as grant in aid declines. In a speech in the House of Lords, the Earl of Clancarty called for 'some form of public vetting' for donors as well as calling for 'proper public funding of our museums'. Lord Ashton of Hyde (Parliamentary Under-Secretary for DCMS) replied that Government should not interfere in these decisions and that a diversified funding stream is a strength of the sector. Cultural commentator Mark Lawson argues that there is a risk that a majority of large donors will be ruled out, asking "*what would count as an acceptable way of having become rich enough to have some spare to dish out to the arts? Sponsorship by BP and Nestlé has been questioned because of environmental or ethical concerns about the nature of the patrons' business. Airlines, which have consistently been generous to the arts, are now on the wrong side of history, as, in a post-crash era queasy about capitalism, are most makers of money.*" Commentary in the *Washington Post*, which overall suggests that institutions should become more responsive to ethical issues raised by the public also adds "*[moral] hazard isn't a finely calibrated tool. It involves a lot of chance and inconsistency in how it works. That has only increased in the age of viral twitter campaigns and rapid conflagrations of public anger fueled by social media tools...that seeming randomness is built into the way we now police our billionaires.*" After reviewing the rise of protest on museum premises, *Artnet* flips the argument and asks whether 'neutrality might also be costing museums significant private money precisely when they need it most'. It points to how fashion businesses such as Nike, Gucci and Levi's have moved towards 'woke as a business strategy' as they reflect the values that shape the buying practices of younger generations, adding that 'an increasingly large proportion of the well-off occupy the political left.' [Guardian](#), [They Work For You](#) (House of Lords debate transcript), [Guardian](#) (Mark Lawson), [Washington Post](#), [Artnet](#)

JustGiving removes the 5% charge for using its service

In late March, JustGiving permanently removed the 5% charge levied on those using its platform. Instead, it will cover its costs through a voluntary donation made by those making gifts. Its General Manager Keith Williams said "*this change means lower costs for charities, transparency and choice for their supporters, and a sustainable future for the UK's biggest and best platform for giving.*" [JustGiving](#)

ACE launches £11.3m Capital Small Grants Fund for 2019 - 20

ACE will shortly open its Capital Small Grants Fund for 2019 - 20 and will accept expressions of interest between April 11th – 3rd May. The total fund is £11.3m – applicants can seek £100k - £499k and must provide at least 15% of total funding from other sources. ACE has also published two related documents – 'Building Access', which gives guidance on removing physical barriers in cultural buildings and 'Capital Works!', a retrospective evaluation of ACE's capital projects from 2012 – 18. The latter has five in-depth case studies including Derby's forthcoming Museum of Making. [ACE](#) (building access), [ACE](#) (Capital Works! report) [ACE](#) (Capital Small Grants Fund)

Also: *Dezeen* considers architecture in a time of climate change and points to how few new buildings take this into account: both in terms of the future of whole regions likely to flood or face drought and smaller fixes. It comments: "*just 10 per cent of projects use permeable paving, even though the alternative contributes to both flooding and drought. Paving over dirt increases run-off to sewers, which stops rainwater from replenishing the water table. This means even rainy England can be flooded one month and ban watering lawns the next.*" [Dezeen](#)

Cuts

LGA says underfunding for adult social care in 2019 puts leisure and other services at risk

The Local Government Association has warned that for many local authorities, rises in council tax for 2019 – 20 will not be enough to prevent cutbacks to social care services for older and disabled people, with a funding gap of £1bn to maintain current standards. It warns that to protect these “councils will have to divert funding from other cherished local services - such as bus services, parks, filling potholes, libraries and leisure centres”. This is likely to mean continued pressure on the budgets of local authority museums. Steve Miller, Director of Norfolk Museums Service has shaped its offer to these growing realities over the past few years and has developed a health and wellbeing programme aligned with the local authority’s needs. He said “we had to knock very loudly and repeatedly on the door because our colleagues in other departments have challenges of their own. We had to be polite and persistent in offering affordable ways to help.” He added that in a landscape of changing funding “it doesn’t mean we have to sell our souls to chase funding. But we have to make ourselves indispensable.” [LGA](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Bringing in an admission charge: the experience in Brighton and Bath

Museums Journal has interviewed staff from two museums which have reverted to charging admission in the last few years in the face of financial necessity. At Brighton Museum the choice was driven by local government funding cuts. Director Janita Bagshaw describes initial queues and front desk bureaucratic difficulties, because local residents entitled to free entry did not necessarily carry around proof of residence. Visitor figures fell, but the museum was able to get to know its audience better, afford improved programming, avoid the closure of a site and meet planned fundraising targets. At the Holbourne Museum in Bath, Director and former Tate employee Chris Stephens was strongly in favour of free entry. But he said ‘I’ve realised, that’s what public subsidy buys, and we had no subsidy.’ Here, the museum managed the transition to payment by being upfront with the public about its financial situation, and offering free opening one afternoon a week, which has been popular with local people. The MA’s Alistair Brown cautioned against assuming that charging would work everywhere. He said “it’s notable that the places that have introduced charges for non-residents tend to be those with quite high tourist numbers, so they can count on a certain number of tourists to cough up”. The MA hopes that in general that the ‘real achievement’ of creating a wide swathe of free museums will continue to find support. [Museums Journal](#)

Sustaining curators



The Museum of London's 'Beasts of London' opens on 5th April and is an interactive digital installation using video projection mapping. It tells the story of animals connected with London's history, voiced by famous names from Kate Moss to Brian Blessed.

Council approves plan to cut all Leicester Museums curatorial staff

Leicester City Council has made cuts to its cultural budget of £320k for the financial year 2019 – 20, and has made all four curator posts redundant at Leicester Museums. A new audience development and engagement team will be hired. This choice has been controversial in the sector, with Horniman Director Nick Merriman pointing to the 'hollowing out of this expertise across the UK, which will lead to a long term decline.' Matthew Parkes, chair of the Geological Curators' Group told *The Guardian* that Leicester's choices followed a pattern in regional museums. He said "*we keep coming up against reorganisations and redundancies happening in museums and it always seems to be at the expense of the specialist curators.*" However, Jo Jones, who is head of Leicester's museums said that there would be one person with a curatorial background in the new team, an experienced collections manager and that the museum would 'bring in specialist curatorial knowledge as and when required.' [Museums Journal](#), [Taitmail](#), [Leicester Mercury](#), [Guardian](#)

John Ellerman Foundation and curatorial core funding

Arts Industry has interviewed Nicola Pocock, Director of the John Ellerman Foundation on the body's unusual decision, since 2014, to offer core rather than project funding to museums, particularly to fund curatorial posts. She said "*it used to be that core funding came from the relevant statutory body (central government, local authorities for instance), but that's been completely turned on its head... The focus on curatorial skills had been neglected, posts lost, people thinking it wasn't important, so it was consistent with our wish to fund the costs of things we believe in*" A recent report commissioned by the Foundation suggests that the outcome has been 'stronger relations between institutions and local communities and volunteers' as well as high quality exhibitions. [Arts Industry](#)

Art Fund announces recipients in first year of the Headley Fellowships scheme

The Art Fund has announced the first group of seven curators who will shared £200k to carry out in depth research into collections in their care. The funding backfills posts for either six months full time or part time spread over a year. The recipients are:

- Bryan Sitch, deputy head of collections at Manchester Museum who will research creating a new gallery of Chinese culture.
- Karen Logan will research curating the Troubles and community history in Northern Ireland at the Ulster Museum, Belfast.
- Dan Hicks will research untold colonial histories at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
- Subhadra Das will explore decolonising university science collections at UCL culture.
- Margaret Maitland will explore Scottish archaeologist Alexander Henry Rind at National Museums Scotland
- Adam Smith will explore Nottingham City Council's nationally significant herbarium collection
- Joanne Hancock will research the Great North Museum: Hancock's collection of Native North American art.

Art Fund Director Stephen Deuchar said "*we know that most curators meanwhile brim with ideas around their collections and would dearly love more opportunity to deepen and extend their knowledge about the art and objects in their care; so we are truly delighted to be working with The Headley Trust to make these ambitions a reality.*" There will be two more rounds of the fund over the next two years. [Art Fund](#)

Awards



Brighton Museum opened the new Elaine Evans Archaeology Gallery in 2019, including facial reconstructions of seven people who lived in the Brighton area in prehistory. Photo: c. The Argus.

From the sewers to space: M+H announces an eclectic shortlist for its annual awards

Museums + Heritage has announced the shortlist for its annual awards, with over 100 nominations encompassing museums, volunteers, retail and projects in 14 categories. Judge and IWM Director Diane Lees said *"it's been another year of amazing creativity despite the challenges of our sector"*. The shortlist includes:

- Permanent Exhibition of the Year. The contenders are the Scottish Design Galleries at V&A Dundee, the Horniman's World Gallery, Bolton's Egypt, the D-Day Story at Portsmouth Museums, National Maritime Museum's Endeavour Galleries, RAF Museum's Centenary programme and the Being Brunel attraction.
- The shortlist for Restoration or Conservation Project includes both the Great Pagoda and Temperate House at Kew Gardens, the Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College and the 'Saving Samson' project for Norfolk Museums Service.
- The shortlist for Temporary or Touring exhibition includes Science Museum Group's national tour of Tim Peake's spacecraft, Fatberg! at the Museum of London and Terracotta Warriors at National Museums Liverpool.

The Museum of London's Fatberg also resurfaces, Cthulu-like, in the partnerships category, after Cranfield University and Thames Water collaborated to explore its nappy-flavoured minutiae in 'Finding Fatberg: Investigation and analysis of the Whitechapel Monster'. M+H will announce whether the winning projects are from the sewers, the skies or somewhere in between at an event in central London on 15th May. [M+H](#)

Nominations open for Family Friendly Museum Awards

Kids in Museums Family Friendly Museum Awards 2019 has opened for nominations. Anyone can suggest a museum for an award, including children, adults and museums themselves. For the first time there will be three categories of small, medium and large museums as well as an overall winner. Nominations run to 31st May. [M+H](#), [Kids in Museums](#)

Association for Cultural Enterprises chooses best museum and heritage products

As part of its annual conference, the Association for Cultural Enterprises has chosen some of the best products produced by museums and tourism sites. The Hepworth Wakefield won Best Overall Product for its Lee Miller and Surrealism in Britain range – including pictures and china sets, praised as 'thoughtful and ethically conscious'. Other winners included the RAF museum's 100th anniversary t-shirt with a 3D design and scarves from Sir John Soane's Museum 'nicely inspired by the Museum's architectural features and collection'. [Association for Cultural Enterprises](#), [RAF museum](#)

VisitEngland revamps categories for its tourism awards as it marks 30th anniversary

In the 30th year of its tourism awards, VisitEngland has overhauled its categories to reflect new trends, including the growing use of digital technology and the rise of tailored products for international visitors and experience-based tourism. Awards for 2019 – 20 include Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism and Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award. First stage regional competitions are gradually opening over the next few months. [VisitEngland](#), [VisitEngland](#) (list of regional heats)

Collections and restorations

Lie back and think of England – Painted Hall reopens with daybeds so visitors can admire the ceiling

The Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich has reopened its Painted Hall, described as 'one of the most spectacular rooms in Britain' after a £8.5m restoration. The two-year process was also open to the public, with 85,000 people paying to climb a scaffold and watch the work of conservation. It was painted by James Thornhill in 1707 – 26 and features a ceiling adorned with kings, queens, cherubs and allegorical figures. Conservation Director Will Palin said that the College wants people to enjoy the work without 'cricking their necks' and has therefore provided daybeds for visitors. He said 'they will be welcome to sit down, or even lie down, and marvel in comfort'. The Painted Hall is now on the shortlist for an M+H award. [Art Newspaper](#), [Old Royal Naval College](#), [ORNC](#) (M+H shortlist) [NLHF](#) (some close ups from the mural), [M+H](#),

Tony Benn, acquired for the nation

The archive of Tony Benn has been acquired for the nation as part of the Acceptance in Lieu scheme. The material begins with his first diary, begun when he was nine and continues for the rest of his life, encompassing the Wilson and Callaghan administrations and late life activism. The archive, which also includes a large amount of audio-visual material, will be held by The British Library. Arts Minister Michael Ellis said "*Tony Benn's diaries provide a fascinating political and personal insight into a significant period of British and Parliamentary history. Irrespective of political views, these first-hand accounts, spanning more than 80 years, are a valuable resource for historians, students and the public.*" [ACE](#)

British Museum curators give rare African textiles to the museum under the Cultural Gifts scheme

The British Museum has received a collection of 438 African textiles under the Cultural Gifts scheme, given by Antony Griffiths and Judy Rudoie, who are respectively former and current British Museum staff. Judy Rudoie said "*it gives me enormous pleasure to have helped the Museum to fill in some of the gaps in its representation of the rich textile traditions of North and West Africa, and to put something back into the institution which I have served for forty-five years and from which I have learned and gained so much.*" [ACE](#)

ACE announces new National Partners to display the Arts Council Collection

ACE has announced the three regional museums and galleries which will draw from the Arts Council Collection over the next three years to create exhibitions tailored to local audiences. The winning institutions are:

- Firstsite, an art gallery and cultural centre in Colchester, Essex

- Sunderland Culture, which runs galleries, museums and arts centres across the city
- Newlyn Art Gallery and the Exchange in Cornwall

Keith Merrin, Chief Executive of Sunderland Culture described the programme as 'the latest instalment in the resurgence of the city as a centre for arts and culture' after its Tall Ships programme and gallery reopening attracted one million visitors in 2018. Sally Shaw, Director of Firstsite said that *"with the process no longer hidden behind closed doors, we can give members of local community groups the opportunity to develop powerful connections to incredible artworks through the making of an exhibition, which will then be seen by thousands of people."* [M+H](#), [Firstsite](#)

Correction: Art UK sculpture project

Last month, we said that the objects currently being photographed for ArtUK's sculpture project were a mix of 150,00 outdoor pieces and 20,000 from indoor collections. In fact, the balance is the other way around: the 150,000 majority of works are held indoors, including at many museums. This error crept in from an assertion in *The Art Newspaper*, which has also now corrected its copy. [ArtUK](#)

American Museum of Natural History critiques rather than conceals questionable historic diorama

Since 1939, the American Museum of Natural History has hosted a diorama, showing a 17th century meeting between Dutch settlers and the Lenape indigenous tribe on the site of what is now New York City. However, with changing times, its inaccuracies and clichés about Lenape people have become evident – from issues of dress and status to the position of women. The museum considered removing or 'covering up' the problematic display, but instead it decided to critique the scene using large new labels on the glass. In doing so, it 'offers a lesson in the changing nature of history itself.' The reinterpretation also addresses the continuing effects of colonisation, describing how Lenape were repeatedly forced to move out of their old territories. Bradley Pecore, a historian of indigenous descent who helped the museum arrive at its reinterpretation said *"I've walked through different museums, and when you see Native people, they're in the corner playing with stones. We never arrive to be fully modern humans."* [New York Times](#)

Towns, cities and culture

Missing from the national picture? New research into creativity in towns

ACE and the Centre for Towns are partnering on new research into creativity in towns, with a report due in the autumn. ACE's Paul Bristow says that while there has been extensive research into cities, towns have sometimes been overlooked. He adds *"how we think about towns is something that is often fluid and uncertain... How do towns in former mining and industrial areas forge their future and on what terms? What is the future of market towns as their importance to retail declines? How can our Garden Cities and post-war New Towns renew their vision of being a good place for all?"* The research will discover what infrastructure exists, what works and consider how to fund creativity from a variety of sources. [ACE](#), [Arts Professional](#), [Centre for Towns](#)

Also: The Mayor of London's office has created a cultural infrastructure map for the whole city, showing its evolving infrastructure, from museums and theatres to community centres and creative desk space. [Mayor of London](#)

Staff and training opportunities

National Gallery seeks partners for its Curatorial Traineeship Programme 2019 – 21

The National Gallery is running a Curatorial Traineeship Programme for 22 months from autumn 2019 and is seeking regional museums and galleries in the UK as partners. The programme is fully funded with the support of the Art Fund and Vivmar Foundation and aims to create new pathways into a curatorial career for those currently underrepresented in the museum workforce. Museum and gallery applicants should propose a project based around European paintings before 1900 in their collections. Projects must have one or more clearly defined public outcomes, ranging from new interpretation to (re-)display or exhibition, a publication, digital content, a public programme, a new event, a workshop with a particular community group, or a combination of some or all of these activities. Proposals linking historic and contemporary art are also welcome. The National Gallery is open to working closely with partners to develop outcomes together. The deadline for applications is 7th May at 5pm. [National Gallery](#), [European Paintings pre-1900 SSN](#)

British Museum seeks seven partner museums to collaborate on Museum Futures training

The British Museum is leading a training programme for a new generation of museum staff, 'Museum Futures'. Funded by NLHF, it will run over three years from 2020, training a cohort of nine each year with skills including digital data management, preservation and access practices. In 2020, it is seeking seven partner museums to host a trainee each (a further two trainees will be based at the BM and another London museum). The British Museum will pay bursaries to the trainees, support recruitment and co-ordinate a Level 3 Cultural Heritage diploma. Host museums will need to provide a good supervisor for the new recruit. The deadline for expressions of interest is 17th May; full details are available on the dedicated website and the contact for any queries is NSalinas-Burton@britishmuseum.org. [Museum Futures](#)

Tate appoints UK's youngest trustee to a national museum Board

Tate has appointed Anna Lowe to its Board as trustee for youth engagement. Lowe, a digital strategist and arts educator, who co-founded the art app Smartify, is at 28 the youngest appointment to the Board of a national museum or gallery. Tate Director Maria Balshaw said "*last year we said we would appoint a new Trustee to place the views of younger generations at the heart of Tate and I'm delighted to welcome Anna to Tate's Board of Trustees.*" [M+H](#)

International

A 'pile up of flying saucers': the National Museum of Qatar opens

The National Museum of Qatar has opened, 18 years after work began on the spectacular architecture consisting of interlocking discs, with an interior containing a mile of galleries. Objects on show include the Baroda Pearl Carpet, embedded with 1.5m pearls and precious stones and artwork reflecting the country's relationship to oil. The museum will also use the aromas of gunpowder, coffee and oil to evoke significant parts of Qatar's history. *Guardian* arts critic Oliver Wainwright is impressed by the building, comparing it to, among other things "*a spectacular accident with a giant crockery cupboard...barely anything about the museum is legible as a conventional building*". The construction speaks to the power and wealth of Qatar in recent years, but Wainwright argues that the collections are not extensive enough for the building, at least at the moment, and "*unlike at the city's eye-opening slavery museum nearby, the sensitive territory of human rights is left well alone.*" [Guardian](#), [Experience UK](#)

Culture, work and education in a digital world

Huge Time Machine project uses archival Big Data to recreate European cities of the past

A large new pan-European project, Time Machine, is harnessing the digitisation of archives and machine learning to recreate whole cities as they were over the past two millennia, both inside buildings and on the street. Supported by Horizon 2020, the €1m project involves 200 research teams, among them six UK institutions, including London Metropolitan Archives, the universities of London and Oxford and Digirati. Together these will develop new technologies for the scanning, analysing, accessing, preserving and communicating of cultural heritage at a massive scale. The ultimate aim is to for users to be able to experience their local neighbourhoods through time, while creating a shared sense of European identity, from Venice to Bruges. Students will also be able to experience landmark European events in VR such as the storming of the Bastille. Antwerp will be one of the first cities to be completed. Ilija Van Damme of the University of Antwerp's Centre for Urban History said "we're going to link all possible historical sources, ranging from old maps and manuscripts to archives and visual material, based on location." [The Bulletin](#), [Time Machine](#)

RSA publishes 'four futures of work' report, imagining the possibilities in 2035

The RSA's new report 'Four Futures of Work' imagines what the workplace will look like depending on how current technological trends play out. The possibilities include a high tech world of driverless cars and cheap products sitting beside unemployment and the concentration of power in giant companies, to an AI driven surveillance society - or more positively a realignment which frees up human attention to invest in the 'empathy sectors'. The RSA argues that current debates about the future of work are alarmist and thin, with very few MPs grappling with the challenges. It says that thought and attention now will create a society able to manage technology as a positive good. [RSA](#)

Planning education for the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The House of Commons Education Committee is continuing to hear evidence about how UK education should be reshaped to acclimatise to the fourth industrial revolution. Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills for OECD compared the UK system to countries performing the most effectively, including Finland and Japan. He argued that the UK's approach is comparatively 'wide but shallow' and that rote learning should be avoided and analytical thinking more strongly encouraged: "when you look at the type of tasks that British students are doing better, they are more associated with the past than the future. The kinds of things that are easy to teach and easy to test are precisely those things that are easy to digitise. That is basically what we are losing. Labour markets see a decline in the demand for routine cognitive skills and an increase in the demand for non-routine analytic skills." He added that the gap between those skilled up for the digital age and those not was likely to widen even further, so those countries that are already succeeding in skilling up whole cohorts, rather than having a proportion of students facing failure, are likely to do better overall. [Parliament.uk](#) (transcript), [Parliament.uk](#) (video), [Cultural Learning Alliance](#)

The real world: a luxury for the elite?

By contrast, *The New York Times* argues that while society at large rushes to embrace the possibilities of digital – from robot companionship for housebound people to VR and education – offline life is becoming a luxury good. At least one elementary school in Silicon Valley is offering 'nearly screen free' education, as the wealthy including digital entrepreneurs seek to limit its influence in their children's lives. Some recent studies have linked large amounts of time spent online with altered brain structures and depression. For the cultural sector, the lesson may be to offer a mix of programming: on the one hand, the excitement of digital innovation, on the other opportunities for human contact and the chance to interact with real objects. [New York Times](#)

Jobs

A selection of jobs from across the NMDC membership this month:

- [Director of Development - British Museum](#)
- [Garden Shop Retail Assistant - Royal Botanic Gardens Kew](#)
- [Senior Prospect Development Manager - Science Museum Group](#)

- [Programme Manager - Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove](#)
- [STFC Astronomer \(Part Time\) - Royal Museums Greenwich](#)
- [Interpretation Manager - Royal Armouries](#)

A complete list is available on our website [here](#).

Also: our friends at NLHF are seeking a new [Director of Strategy and Innovation](#) (closing date soon, on 7th April)

And finally...

Italian town outwits art gang with fake Brueghel painting

In early March, it seemed that an art gang had stolen a €3m painting of the crucifixion by Pieter Brueghel the Younger from a church in the Italian church of Castelnuovo Magra. Hours after the theft, the town mayor Daniele Montebello was telling journalists that the loss was a 'hard blow for the community'. In fact, both the police and the mayor had become aware in advance that the painting was being sized up by thieves and had switched it for a fake. In a later, rather more candid press interview the mayor said "*rumours were circulating that someone could steal the work, and so the police decided to put it in a safe place, replacing it with a copy and installing some cameras.*" Art thefts in Italy have fallen in recent years, but it is still a major market for stolen art and half of the 449 thefts in 2016 were of artworks kept in churches. [Guardian](#)

This newsletter can also be read online at <http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/news/newsletters/>