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NMDC news



Spain's Field Farm, relocated to Beamish Living Museum of the North. Courtesy of Beamish

2022 Working Internationally Conference: Cynefin – Museum Practice for Future Generations

There is still time to book tickets for the online 2022 Working Internationally Conference taking place on 7th-8th April, which connects pioneering Welsh museum practice with international museums. Themed around 'cynefin' (*ku-nev-in*), the evocative Welsh word which describes our relationship to the environment in which we live, it will explore successful and award-winning museum projects designed to build better for future generations. Session topics include: climate change, protecting cultural heritage in armed conflict, museum practices and refugees, bridging community divides, museums and the new school curriculum of Wales, and programming for people living with dementia. The conference is organised by ICOM UK in partnership with NMDC and the Federation of Museums & Art Galleries of Wales, with support from the British Council and Barker Langham, and is part funded by Welsh Government. [Booking](#) is open via Eventbrite **until 6pm BST on 5th April**. NMDC members receive a 50% discount on individual tickets. There is an unlimited ticket option for institutional members of NMDC, which enables any number of staff to attend the conference for £100. [ICOM](#) (full programme, speakers and booking)

Members' news

National Railway Museum receives largest ever single donation of £2.5m for new Wonderlab

The National Railway Museum in York has received its largest ever single donation – £2.5m from the Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation, to create a Wonderlab at its site. The Wonderlab model, already installed at other Science Museum Group sites, gives children an interactive taste of science. NRM Director Judith McNicol said that the York version will 'celebrate the inventiveness and wonder of engineering, science and the railways.' The new gallery is planned to open in May 2023. [York Press](#)

BCLM 'Forging Ahead' project back on track after £30m local authority investment

The Black Country Living Museum has been able to continue its 'Forging Ahead' development project after West Midlands Combined Authority agreed to find £30m towards costs – which had grown because of the need to clean up a derelict industrial site. The major museum development includes 22 historic buildings and museum structures and is expected to generate 140 new jobs. BCLM's CEO Andrew Lovett said "*Forging Ahead is now more important than ever to the future of the Museum and our region. It provides added momentum to thrive once again for our community following the unprecedented challenge of the pandemic.*" [M + H](#)

NPG acquires five new self-portraits of women, increasing female representation

The National Portrait Gallery has acquired five portraits of women as part of its three year project, supported by the Chanel Culture Fund, to increase the representation of women in its collections. Created between the early 1970s and 2019 the works include the first self-portrait by a black female artist: Evelyn Nicodemus's *Självporträtt, Åkersberga* shows multiple faces representing her roles as an artist, writer, mother and wife. The other newly acquired works are by Chila Burman Susan Hiller, Rose Finn-Kelcey, Celia Paul and Susan Hillier. Curator Dr Flavia Frigeri said "*each of these self-portraits, acquired since the launch of 'Reframing Narratives: Women in Portraiture' in March 2021, challenges traditional notions of female self-representation and identity.*" [Guardian](#)

Images this month: Spain's Field Farm moved brick by brick to Beamish

Spain's Field Farm, which originally stood for centuries in Weardale, has been moved brick by brick to Beamish Living Museum of the North where it opened to the public in late March. It is being used to show life in the 1950s on the region's upland farms. The museum worked closely with the Raine family, who lived on the farm for generations – and many of the objects inside have been donated by the family. [Beamish](#)

Spring Statement

Spring Statement includes a second round of the Levelling Up Fund

The Chancellor's Spring Statement includes a few items of particular relevance to the cultural sector. These include:

- A new round of the Levelling Up Fund, with one strand covering support for heritage assets in order to 'rejuvenate places, leading to positive social and economic outcomes at local level'. As before, this fund will be open to bids from local government, not directly from museum and heritage organisations.
- A further £25.3m for Changing Places toilets for public places and tourist attractions.
- Assuming the reduction in income tax from 20% to 19% goes through from 2024, there will be a three year transition period when Gift Aid is not reduced.
- The Government will be publishing guidance for reviews of Arm's Length Bodies, aiming to deliver savings of at least 5%.
- VAT will be charged at 0% for solar panels and heat pumps – offering some support for venues switching to cleaner energy.

Responding, Creative UK's Caroline Norbury said that creative tax relief should be expanded in the autumn budget to encourage new jobs in the sector, and criticised the lack of support for creative freelancers. [Creative UK](#), [Gov.uk](#) (all Spring Statement documents), [Heritage Alliance](#) (scroll to Spring Statement summary), [Charity Finance Group](#), [Gov.uk](#) (Levelling Up fund, round two)

Ukraine digest

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine enters its second month, huge loss of life has been accompanied by damage to cultural property, displaced museum and heritage workers among millions of refugees, and a widespread end to cultural partnerships with Russia and Belarus. The following gives a digest of some events across the past month, plus signposting to schemes offering practical support created by cultural heritage organisations:

UK withdrawal from cultural events and loan agreements following invasion of Ukraine

- In early March Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries called for cultural organisations to cut ties with the Russian state. [Museums Journal](#)
- Arts Council England (ACE) has issued guidance that cultural organisations should cut ties with state-sponsored Russian and Belarusian institutions – see article below. [ACE](#)
- Various UK museums are stepping back from loans and joint exhibitions. The National Gallery is no longer seeking the loan of a painting from The Hermitage Museum for its upcoming Raphael exhibition; and the National Railway Museum has abandoned its planned exhibition 'Trans-Siberian: The World's Longest Railway', which was due to open in March in partnership with ISC Russian Railways. [Museums Journal](#), [M + H](#), [Art Newspaper](#)
- This is part of a wider cancellation of Russian cultural events, from ballet to Eurovision and inclusion in the Venice Biennale. Some oligarchs who have either been sanctioned or are regarded as close to Putin have departed from museum and gallery boards and fundraising initiatives in the UK and US. [Guardian](#) (art world), [Art Newspaper](#), [Guardian](#)
- Some Russian works were already on loan from oligarchs or the Russian state in Western Europe when sanctions began. These cannot be seized in the UK and France, because of guidance protecting foreign loans. For example, the V&A has existing loans from the foundation of now-sanctioned oligarch Viktor Vekselberg – the museum says it remains in touch with DCMS, and that to date it has had no requests for immediate returns. [Art Newspaper](#) (V&A), [Art Newspaper](#)
- Science Museum Director Sir Ian Blatchford has returned the Pushkin Medal, awarded in 2015 following the success of the exhibition 'Cosmonauts: Birth of the Space Age'. Reiterating his respect for Russian people, he said "I cannot keep a medal that was handed out in the name of the Russian state by Vladimir Putin, who is responsible for this war." [Science Museum](#), [Art Newspaper](#)
- After consulting with Government, Imperial War Museums is retaining a donation made four years ago to its Holocaust Galleries by now-sanctioned Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich. A spokesperson said "this is compliant with all government regulations regarding sanctions."

[Guardian](#)

- Museums are also being challenged over labelling that describes collections from Ukraine as being 'Russian', and some are reconsidering the names of works as a result. For example, The National Gallery is renaming the Degas work 'Russian Dancers' as 'Ukrainian Dancers'. [Guardian](#)

Damage to cultural heritage

- Much cultural heritage, from museums to churches, has already been destroyed in targeted cities. For example, Kharkiv's Fine Arts Museum is windowless, and the city's leading architectural historian says damage across the city is extensive: "*our Kharkiv is a new Warsaw, a new Dresden, a new Rotterdam.*" [Economist](#)
- Speaking to *Der Spiegel*, Polish Culture Minister Piotr Gliński says that the cultural damage is deliberate. [Der Spiegel](#)
- Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv is among many that have been emptied of collections as a protective measure. [AP](#), [BBC](#)
- The twitter feed of Cultural Protection Officer Tim LeBerre gives an up to date picture of cultural protection efforts and damage across the war zone. [Twitter](#)
- However, Ukraine's Deputy Minister of Culture Kateryna Chuhuieva asks journalists to be careful in not listing Ukrainian built and cultural heritage that might be a future target, or revealing too much about protection methods and where collections are hidden – in case this provides a hit list to Russian forces. [Hyperallergic](#)

Signposting to resources in cultural heritage - and guidance on sanctions

Cultural sector support for Ukraine has ranged from conservation materials being sent into the country, to resources for work and study for displaced workers. Useful signposting includes:

- A regularly updated list from the Network of European Museum Organisations. [NEMO](#)
- An *Art Newspaper* resource list of funding, shelter and emergency resources for artists and cultural workers. [Art Newspaper](#)
- A list of fundraisers, work and scholarship opportunities. [IIC](#)
- Government guidance for those wishing to offer work to people from Ukraine. [Gov.uk](#)
- The Government also offers an overview of financial sanctions here. [Gov.uk](#)

ACE calls for cultural institutions to end partnerships on Russian or Belarusian state sponsored work

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, ACE has issued guidance to cultural organisations in England, advising them to end state sponsored or state funded work with Russia or Belarus. It notes that its statement does not have formal status, and organisations should seek their own legal advice. However, it suggests cancelling planned events, international tours and international loans of artworks in either direction, where it is state sponsored or state funded by Russia or Belarus. It adds that organisations should assess recent donations from those on the Government's sanctions list. It also emphasises that organisations should continue to support and work with those of Russian or Belarusian heritage where they have no link to the Putin regime, adding that these staff, partners and artists should not be required to issue statements condemning the war in Ukraine, as this might endanger them or their families. It adds "*we do not believe that this invasion is in the name of the Russian people*". The guidance will be updated as events unfold. [ACE](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Gov.uk](#) (UK sanctions list)

Security and money laundering: risks to cultural institutions

DCMS and Home Office Anti Money Laundering Workshop for cultural institutions

DCMS and the Home Office are inviting cultural institutions to attend an anti-money laundering workshop to build confidence and awareness of illicit finance risks in the sector. The prestige of the UK's cultural institutions is attractive to a wide range of donors, the majority of whom are genuine, and bring support that is particularly welcome in the light of the pandemic. However, less legitimate individuals will use donations to clean up their reputation in a way that is concerning to Government and risks the standing of cultural institutions themselves. The workshop will touch on specific risks to the sector, potential mitigations, and how Government can support institutions to minimise the risks. The event takes place at 2.30pm on 7th April. Email harriet.williams@dcms.gov.uk to RSVP and get details of how to attend on Microsoft Teams.

Also: Last year Chatham House published a report 'The UK's kleptocracy problem', which includes a section on how philanthropy can be used for reputation laundering – particularly mentioning gifts to UK universities and political parties. [Chatham House](#)

Guidance for increased digital security threat from the National Cyber Security Centre

The National Cyber Security Centre has issued updated guidance for organisations of all sizes, especially in the light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Although NCSC is not aware of specific threats to UK organisations, past cyber attacks on Ukraine have had consequences which play out internationally, and there has anyway been growth in cyber attacks in the past year: a third of UK businesses and a quarter of charities say they have received a cyber attack or breach. The guidance offers actionable steps to improve defences and reduce risk.

- Critical national infrastructure, large organisations and public sector - [NCSC alert](#)
- Small businesses [NCSC](#)
- Microbusinesses and sole traders Cyber Action Plan [NCSC](#)
- Personal and general public awareness [NCSC](#)

Organisations should also consider adopting [Cyber Essentials](#) to help guard against the most common cyber threats and demonstrate a commitment to cyber security. Contact enquiries@ncsc.gov.uk with any queries. [National Cyber Security Centre](#), [LinkedIn](#) (NCSC) [Twitter](#) (NCSC), [Gov.uk](#) (cyber attacks overview)

Visitor statistics and predictions for 2022

Attraction visits for 2021: big variations in recovery by venue type – with NHM as most visited museum

The Association of Leading Visitor Attractions has published visitor numbers for its 300+ members for 2021, ranging from museums to heritage sites, parks and zoos. The figures show recovery from the first year of the pandemic, with 67.8m visits – an increase of 25% overall. However, this is still 57% below 2019 figures (156.6m) and outdoor venues were more likely to perform strongly. Figures also show that:

- On average, venues were shut for 99 days when they would usually be open, or around 31% of usual visiting time. However, London venues were typically shut for 148 days.
- Gardens are nearly back to pre-pandemic visitor figures, zoos are down only 20%, but heritage sites are down 51% and museums 73% on pre-pandemic figures – often but not always correlating to the extent of outdoor space.
- Windsor Great Park (5.4m), Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (1.96m) and Chester Zoo (1.6m) received the most visitors.
- In fourth place, NHM was the most visited museum in 2021. Compared with 2020, the museum had a 21% rise in attendance with 1.57m visits. NHM figures continue to improve, with 2m visitors already recorded for the 2021-22 financial year. NHM Director Douglas Gurr said *"I couldn't be prouder of these phenomenal figures given the enormous challenges posed by the pandemic – not least the closure of the museum for more than five months."* He also pointed to the draw of three temporary exhibitions, Our Broken Planet, Wildlife Photographer of the Year and Fantastic

Beasts.

- Other museums in the top ten are the British Museum (1.32m, up 4%), Tate Modern (1.15m, down 19%) and the Science Museum (955k, up 11%). Tate's fall is down to the number of opening days in 2021 – it attracted an increase of 60% in visitors on the days when the gallery was open. It is showing recovery in 2022, with 40,000 reportedly in the online queue for its Kusama exhibition at one point in mid March.
- Beamish Museum, which has extensive outdoor space had nearly 594,000 visits – a 95% improvement on 2020.
- By region, attractions in Scotland have recovered most quickly, gaining 45% more visitors than in 2020 – with the National Museum of Scotland the most visited in the country and in 20th place overall, followed by the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. NMS Director Dr Chris Breward said *"we worked hard to make our visitors feel as safe and inspired as possible when we opened our doors after lockdown and it's wonderful to see more and more people back in the museum."*
- Venues that tracked overseas visitors said that only 4% came from abroad in the year, and those with large international audiences have found it harder to recover.
- This is likely to be the main factor in London being the slowest to recover by region – gaining only 17% more visitors than in 2020. Other regions in England averaged a 26% rise.

ALVA's Director Bernard Donoghue does not expect full international tourism return until 2024, and has called on Government to reverse post-Brexit rules meaning that EU school and youth groups needs passports, not ID cards, to visit the UK, saying that this has led this market to 'suffer considerably'. He also said that a decision to end tax-free shopping should be reversed: *"it is making the UK uncompetitive in the highly lucrative retail tourism market, and the reduced level of VAT for accommodation and attractions should be retained for at least the next financial year."* [ALVA](#) (table), [ALVA](#) (overview), [NHM](#), [Guardian](#), [BBC](#), [M + H](#), [Evening Standard](#), [Edinburgh News](#) (NMS)

Global art museum statistics show 72% attracting more visitors in 2021 than previous year

The Art Newspaper has published findings from its annual survey of visits to art museums globally. It found that:

- Among the top 100 institutions, there were 71m visitors in 2021, up from 54m – a 31% increase, although still significantly down on the 230m they attracted in 2019. This does not reflect a decline in the pandemic as such (more people died globally in 2021 than 2020) but that museums were open for a greater number of days.
- The Louvre was the most visited museum, with 2.8m visitors, up 5% on 2020, but a fraction of its 9.6m visits in 2010.
- The State Russian Museum in St Petersburg was the second most visited at 2.3m, up 88% on 2020. However, it is likely to be affected by war sanctions this year.
- There are some major omissions from the list, notably museums in China. Among the 370 museums that did report, there was a combined loss of 31,000 visiting days, or about 86 years, during 2021.
- Not all museums were on an upward trajectory in 2021: while 72% had more visits than the previous year, 28% had fewer. These museums were most likely to be in Europe – including the Netherlands (closed 150 days), UK (139) and Germany (138).
- More than half of UK museums had more visitors in 2021 than 2020, with the Hunterian up 82% and Tate St Ives 43%; however the National Gallery faced a 44% drop which it attributed to especially low London tourism and a lack of major exhibitions.
- New York venues top the social media statistics, with 13.19m follows for MoMA and 10.4m for The Met. Tate appears third with 10.1m, with the British Museum, National Gallery and V&A all in the top ten. However, overall museum accounts lost followers on Twitter and Facebook, and Instagram follows grew less strongly than the previous year. *The Art Newspaper* recommends that more museums join fast growing platforms, especially Tik Tok.

[Art Newspaper](#) (overview), [Art Newspaper](#) (all visitor statistics articles), [Art Newspaper](#) (social media)

NHM seeks long term venue for Dippy – and reports £36m 'Dippy effect' from previous tour

The Natural History Museum is seeking bids from museums, institutes and other sufficiently large public spaces to display its celebrated diplodocus cast, Dippy, on long term loan. The 'Dippy on Tour' programme has already shown that the dinosaur is a huge draw, bringing record-breaking visitor numbers at eight venues in all four UK nations, from museums to Norwich cathedral. The tour also attracted:

- An estimated £36m in economic benefit.
- Over 2.1m visitors, including 65,653 school students.
- A largely new audience – with 70% seeing Dippy for the first time and 80% saying that the visit had inspired their children to think more about science.

NHM Director Dr Douglas Gurr said *"we knew that Dippy was able to draw a crowd but for all venues to break visitor number records and see economic benefits within their regions to this level has exceeded our expectations. Biodiversity is under threat and the planet is facing a crisis. Dippy has the ability to capture people's imagination and spark an interest in the natural world. We hope that, wherever Dippy's next adventure takes place, our dino-star will continue to engage people with nature and inspire them to protect it."* The Natural History Museum will be redisplaying Dippy in the exhibition 'Dippy Returns: the nation's favourite dinosaur' from May to December this year before it relocates from 2023. The deadline for applications is 15th July 2022. [NHM](#) (loan application), [NHM](#) (Dippy Returns), [NHM](#) (successes of Dippy on Tour), [ExperienceUK](#), [Museums Journal](#)

ALVA audience tracker – recovering confidence, but divided reactions to lifting Covid measures

ALVA has published the findings from its latest wave of visitor sentiment tracking, covering the period from 18th-21st February. It shows that:

- Only a minority of people are now so concerned about pandemic risks that they would not visit: for museums and art galleries 61% are comfortable, 28% are anxious but would visit, and 11% would not visit. However, there is significantly more confidence in visiting nature reserves and gardens (84% and 83% respectively have no concerns) and castles and monuments (72%). Theatres and indoor music concerts have the lowest confidence (52% and 47%).
- 40% of those who visit attractions do not want all safety measures removed and a third think they should be mandatory. These reactions are not shaped by demographics such as age or gender, but by personal experiences of the pandemic. Conversely, 15% dislike individual venue decisions to continue Covid measures and say that they would not visit where there are mandatory face masks.
- Once people arrive at venues, interactives cause the greatest concern, followed by audio guides: so visible signalling of their cleanliness may help. Toilets and cafes have become less of a concern to visitors, but still score relatively high.
- Trust in public transport has risen significantly in the last three months, with tubes and buses at 90% of previous ridership, but trains at only 70%.
- There is also a small but significant proportion (3%) who are put off from visiting by fears about expense, often citing the rising cost of living.
- There are signs that post-pandemic, people are prioritising making meaningful memories with loved ones, and finding grounding and reassurance in looking at the past – both incentives to visit museum and heritage sites.

[ALVA](#)

Also: Recent figures from the Audience Agency also track pre- and post-pandemic audience numbers. [Audience Agency](#)

V&A returns to opening seven days per week

Since early April, the V&A has returned to seven day opening, after a period of being closed on Mondays and Tuesdays because of the financial pressure of the pandemic. Visitors will no longer need to book timed tickets, Friday Lates have restarted and the Performance Festival returns to the museum for the first time since 2019. [V&A](#)

Also: MGS has launched a #MuseumsAreGo marketing campaign, with resources to help museums in Scotland encourage back visitors for the Spring. [MGS](#)

First Heritage Pulse survey shows returning confidence – but challenges with recruitment

NLHF has published the first results from Heritage Pulse – its regular panel offering a snapshot of the state of the museums and heritage sector. Covering 4th-27th February and based on just under 300 responses it found that in general confidence is strong, but organisations are not yet ready to take on medium term investment. Only 9% said they were unaffected by the omicron wave over Christmas, and in England only 17% had abandoned all Covid safety measures. Around 40% have faced significant challenges in recruiting both specialist staff and volunteers. [NLHF](#)

Predictions for international audiences – Europe likely to return before the US

In a presentation given at The Heritage Alliance's Heritage Day, ALVA's CEO Bernard Donoghue gave an overview of the likely return dates of overseas audiences, and how that would unevenly affect different kinds of venues:

- Overall, overseas visitors may not be back in full force until later in 2022, or possibly as late as 2024-25. This may be compounded in the short term by the UK's highly vaccinated population deciding to holiday abroad in large numbers, prioritising 'hot and sunny' places.
- Venues most dependent on inbound international visitors will continue to see a hit in 2022. For example, St Paul's Cathedral had 85% paying visitors from overseas in 2019, and has not been able to close that gap with domestic tourists by more than 5%. Consequently, it has lost around 80% of income over two years.
- Tourism from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and the US will recover first. However, previous experience suggests that the invasion of Ukraine and the phrase 'war in Europe' will deter US audiences, despite the UK being on the other side of the continent. The prognosis for Western European travellers is much better – with many expected back within two months.
- There is already very heavy use of Eurostar, which may partly be because of an appetite for no-fly holidays from Europe: one strand of squaring the circle between a reliance on international tourism and the climate emergency.

Meanwhile VisitBritain is offering a variety of training programmes, virtual and in-person, for venues wanting to make a plan to encourage inbound and domestic tourism. [VisitBritain](#)

Advocacy



Bedroom interior of Spain's Field Farm at Beamish, decorated as it would have been in the 1950s. Courtesy of Beamish

Open letter: Museums have huge benefits for children beyond passing exams

A study due to appear in the British Journal of Sociology of Education says that family visits to theatre or a museum do not affect exam grades, although reading activities by parents and children do have a connection. The research is part of work to see how cultural capital affects the life chances of children. The authors said that their findings *“do not lend any support to the view that increasing cultural capital will reduce the size of social class inequalities in school GCSE outcomes.”* However, in a letter to the *Guardian*, leaders of MA, AIM, Art Fund and NMDC disputed the implication that the only benefit to children in museum visits is in helping them to pass exams. Pointing to the crucial role of museums during the pandemic in giving ‘engaging experiences of culture, art, science and history’ which contribute to ‘wider development and understanding of the world’, the letter adds: *“there are numerous other recent studies that demonstrate the broader development and wellbeing benefits that museum visits can bring. Museums are brilliant places for discovering who we are, where we have come from and what we might become. There is no exam for that.”* Previous studies have correlated museum visits with both health and happiness: GEM has blogged on these wider findings, and its Case Studies #29 out later in the Spring will give examples of museums that have worked with schools to improve pupil enjoyment and outcomes. As we [reported in March](#), the Government is also exploring a broader history curriculum in schools, that goes beyond ‘the Tudors and the Second World War’ to make it more interesting to pupils. [Museums Journal](#) (twitter), [Guardian](#) (letter, second down), [Guardian](#), [Happy Museum](#) (Fujiwara), [UCL](#) (museums and longevity), [GEM](#), [NMDC](#) (broadening history curriculum), [Museums Journal](#)

LGA launches Commission into local government and cultural funding – and seeks case studies

The Local Government Association has launched a Commission to investigate how cultural funding can support national recovery and levelling up – and how to better support the role of local councils. Councils are the biggest public funders of culture, spending over £1bn each year in England alone, including supporting 3,000 libraries, 350 museums and numerous heritage sites. However, this is not always recognised nationally, leading to fragmented project based funding and difficulties with sustainability. The Commission, led by Baroness Lola Young and with the Government's Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal Lord Neil Mendoza as its advisor, began in March and will run to December, with the aim of exploring these issues, and developing a vision for the future. Commission Chair Gerald Vernon-Jackson said that with budgets under pressure, central Government 'needs to recognise what we do – and value what we do'. He added that there is also an advocacy role at local government level: *"If I have to look a council leader in the eye and say, 'you might want to spend that money on social services but you need to spend it on the arts', I need to have a really strong base of evidence."* A case study template is available for organisations wishing to contribute. LGA invites those interested in developments to sign up to its Culture, Tourism and Sport newsletter. [Local Government Association](#), [Arts Professional](#), [LGA](#) (newsletter signup), [LGA](#) (scroll to bottom for case study template)

Embracing contentious times – Maria Balshaw on museums as participants in public debate

Tate Director Maria Balshaw has spoken to the *Financial Times* about the place of museums in addressing contentious topics — drawing on issues she raised in a recent series of lectures as Slade Professor at the University of Cambridge. She says that the debates that surround museums, from restitution to donors, climate change to diversity, are to be embraced, and that the sector should be comfortable living with the disagreements widespread in the society which they are part of. She also argues that from their founding, museums have always been ideological projects with a narrative, but that narrative is not fixed and can change over time. *"The past they hold is never self-evident and always reshaped in the present — though this is not the way many of the visiting public perceives it."* She adds that after an expansionist phase, and in the light of the climate emergency, museums should recognise that *"we can't be institutions for the long term if we continue to be so consumptive of the world's resources"* – and instead need to find other ways, including non-traditional spaces to share collections. [FT](#), [University of Cambridge](#)

AIM membership for many military museums after new agreement with National Army Museum

The Association of Independent Museums and National Army Museum have announced a new partnership to allow 100 Regimental and Corps museums to gain the benefit of AIM membership from this month. NAM will cover the cost of membership for these small museums (including those who already have AIM membership). [AIM](#)

Scottish cultural coalition publish a manifesto for culture ahead of May local elections

Ahead of the May local elections, a coalition of ten organisations working in culture and heritage has published a joint manifesto aimed at political parties in Scotland. It urges political parties to support and sustain these sectors so that they can deliver wider social benefit. Support for publicly funded culture is popular with 84% of Scots believing it is a right. The group which includes Museums Galleries Scotland, the Museums Association and the Built Environment Forum Scotland points to four areas where local authority support is crucial:

- Championing and protecting existing cultural infrastructure.
- Creating culture and heritage strategies with enough resources and financial back to succeed.
- Better links between cultural spaces and schools, including museums. It points to evidence that children from disadvantaged areas benefit most from visiting museums.
- Using culture and heritage as a way of engaging the public with climate issues.

The group also encouraged local authorities to engage with the Scottish Government competition for National Towns of Culture (announced in the SNP manifesto in 2021, but with no formal application process yet). It added that culture should be used more broadly for renewal – putting cultural organisations in empty commercial spaces or using them to contribute to the '20 minute neighbourhood.' MA Director Sharon Heal said *"Scotland's culture and heritage sectors are loved by*

the public and have a global reputation – but after two difficult years, it is important that government at all levels supports their recovery. Local government in particular has an important part to play in the delivery of our cultural offer, both as the custodian of many cultural assets and in supporting the wider sector.” [MGS](#) (full manifesto), [M + H](#), [Museums Journal](#)

MA museum manifestos for Wales and Northern Ireland

MA has also created local election museum manifestos in Wales and Northern Ireland. In Wales, the manifesto focuses on support for local museums, in a piece written with the Federation for Museums and Art Galleries in Wales. It calls for “*building strong core museums services, developing a skilled museum workforce, widening participation and cultural democracy, building digital infrastructure and capacity, and supporting culture-led tourism*”. In its piece on the 40 museums in Northern Ireland, it calls for the next administration to set a strategic direction, better support the Northern Ireland Museums Council and support collaboration across a wider range of museums. [Museums Journal](#) (Wales), [Museums Journal](#) (Northern Ireland)

Also: AIM’s Director Lisa Ollerhead is leading a free event on how to advocate for the sector at Westminster at the M+H Show on 11th May. [M+H](#)

Appointments

Tamzyn Smith has been appointed as CEO of Cornwall Museums Partnership, succeeding Emmie Kell. Smith is currently Principal Lead for Culture and Creative Economy at Cornwall Council. [CMP](#)

Gareth Redstone has been appointed new Director of Manchester Jewish Museum, succeeding Max Dunbar who stepped down in December. Redstone was previously the museum’s Head of Programmes. [M + H](#)

Malavika Anderson has been appointed Museum Manager at the Great North Museum Hancock. She was previously Head of Live Programme at the Wellcome Collection. [Great North Museum](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Also: The Government is seeking a new Chair of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA). The deadline for applications is 9th April. [Cabinet Office](#)

Climate and the natural world

Action for Climate Empowerment: a guide for galleries, libraries, archives and museums

Henry McGhie’s museums and environment-focused consultancy, Curating Tomorrow, has published ‘Action for Climate Empowerment: a guide for galleries, libraries, archives and museums’. It looks at how the sector can support the all-of-society and public-facing aspects of existing international climate agreements. It also explains the new Glasgow Work Programme agreed at COP26 in November 2021, which specifically mentions the potential of museums and educational institutions to reach and activate large numbers of people. [Curating Tomorrow](#)

The Great Escape: join Art Fund’s environmentally themed Spring 2023 programme for young people

The Art Fund is planning a major project for Spring 2023, The Great Escape, which will highlight museum collections across the UK to young people, drawing out themes of nature and biodiversity. The programme is being developed alongside artists and naturalists, and children will be invited to contribute to a national artwork. Schools and youth-led organisations will also help museums reach and invite non-visitors. Art Fund is asking museums and historic houses to sign up to express an interest, and to receive more information as the project evolves. [Art Fund](#) (sign up)

Sunlight in the public realm: Garden Museum advocates for less high rise overshadowing of city parks

The Garden Museum has launched a campaign to allow London parks, playgrounds and wildlife reserves to receive at least six hours of sunlight daily, as measured on 21st March each year, and to prevent high rise developments that would overshadow green spaces. Currently Greater London Authority's proposed standard is only two hours, with especially detrimental effects for those who don't have green space at home. The museum's campaign and related publication 'The City That Sold the Sun' comes three years after it collaborated with neighbours to defeat a development that would have overshadowed Old Paradise Gardens – a public park adjacent to the Garden Museum site. The new campaign draws together perspectives from local GP Professor Dr Sam Everington, who highlights widespread local Vitamin D deficiency, psychiatrist Dr Sue Stuart-Smith, London Wildlife Trust's Mathew Frith and Samia Qureshi, the museum's school Science Learning Officer, who discusses how ecosystems are damaged by too much shade. The museum is hoping to combine its in-house specialist knowledge with broad community collaboration to shift policy for its immediate surroundings and the wider city. [Garden Museum](#)

Also: Pontypridd Museum has reopened two years after extensive flooding during Storm Dennis in February 2020, followed by pandemic lockdowns which complicated recovery. [Museums Journal](#)

Podcasts



Kitchen of Spain's Field Farm at Beamish. Courtesy of Beamish.

What role do museums have in addressing the climate crisis?

The latest episode of the Eco Activist podcast talks to museum professional and MLitt student Kate M Wilcox, asking 'What role do museums have in addressing the climate crisis?' with a discussion that ranges from designing climate-themed Escape Rooms in areas of Texas already affected by extreme weather, to takeaways from the recent NMDC/Whitworth conference on the climate and ecological crisis – plus exhibitions to visit from NHM's 'Our Broken Planet' to 'We Are History' at Somerset House. [Twitter](#) (Kate M Wilcox), [Spotify](#)

Season two of 'Reflecting Value' looks at intersect between cultural practice and research

The Centre for Cultural Value has released all five episodes of a new season of the 'Reflecting Value' podcast, looking at the relationships between research and practice in the cultural sector. Subject include the digital (re)volution, who holds power, gaming as culture, learning through crisis and what we will leave behind from the pre-pandemic world, and how to approach being physically distant yet socially connected. [CCV](#), (Episode 1; further episodes in sidebar)

British Podcast Awards now open for entries

The British Podcast Awards is now open for entries from any organisation which has produced a podcast with at least six episodes in the year to February 2022. There are 26 categories to choose from, including best arts and culture podcast, climate award, best new podcast, and best podcast in Welsh. Entry costs £30-£95 +VAT depending on organisation size. The deadline for entries, with clips from your podcast, is 11th April. [British Podcast Awards](#)

Surveys and consultations

Cultural Learning Alliance seeks reactions to Levelling Up shift in ACE funding

The Cultural Learning Alliance is seeking views and reactions from those working in cultural learning on the shift in ACE funding planned in response to the Levelling Up agenda. It says that reactions to date have been mixed (especially to the explicit shift in funds by geography, away from London) and it is seeking a fuller picture so that it can better support the needs of the sector. It also offers a summary of all the dimensions of the Levelling Up White Paper, which it describes as *"complex, complicated, and refreshingly long-term [in its] ambitions to make significant changes to places and placemaking in the UK"*. [CLA](#), [CLA](#) (Levelling Up overview)

Experience UK ten minute survey on the value of cultural exports

Experience UK, the industry body for the experience economy, is inviting museums to take its survey on the costs and value of cultural exports within the sector. It will use the (anonymised) results to raise the profile of experience economy organisations with Government. The survey takes 10 minutes to complete and is open until 15th April. [Experience UK](#)

Creative PEC seeks evidence towards a Good Work road map for the creative industries

Nesta's Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre has issued a call for submissions to its Good Work review. It hopes that the creative industries will be the first sector to create a comprehensive roadmap for better work, echoing the ambitions of the UK Government's Good Work plan. Participants only need to answer the questions they find relevant, and the deadline for contributions is 5pm on 29th April. [Creative PEC](#), [Arts Industry](#)

Events

The Art That Made Us: still time to list your events for BBC museums festival

The Art That Made Us festival has now launched, with events taking place at museums, galleries and other venues, connecting art with the history of the British Isles. The festival is in partnership with the BBC which is simultaneously running a series of the same name beginning on 7th April. Speakers from museums including the Crannog Centre, Ulster Museum and Manx Museum will also be discussing museum objects on Radio 3 breakfast this week. There is still time for museums to add their relevant events to the festival area on Museum Crush and participate in the festival. [Museum Crush](#) (add your events), [BBC](#) (Festival overview), [BBC](#), (TV series), [BBC](#) (series trailer)

Museums + Heritage Show returns to live format at Olympia for its 30th year

For the first time since the pandemic, the Museums + Heritage show is returning to its live format from 11th-12th May at London Olympia. 150 suppliers will be offering their services in the marketplace, accompanied by 40 free talks with 80 speakers. A very wide range of topics includes the Courtauld on Monet, mindfulness and mental health; collecting meaningful visitor data with the Oxford Museum of Natural History; repair, recovery and renewal with ALVA's Bernard Donoghue; and AIM Director Lisa Ollerhead on how Westminster politics affects museums and the best ways to approach advocacy. NMDC's Kathryn Simpson will be leading a session with Dana Andrew from the Touring Exhibitions Group exploring how a partnership approach to lending and borrowing can make collections more accessible, using the 'Lending & Borrowing Principles & Guidelines' published by TEG and NMDC last year as a guide for best practice.

Participants need to register for a free event pass, but there is no need to book individual sessions. [M + H](#), [NMDC](#) (Lending and borrowing guidelines)

Full programme announced for AIM annual conference

AIM has now published the full programme for its annual conference, which is taking place in person for the first time since the pandemic. Talks include:

- Using lockdown and crisis to generate change – Laura Pye, NML.
- Fire and flood - Mike Benson, Crannog Centre and Nick Ralls, Ironbridge talk about coping with disaster.
- Independent museums in an interdependent world – Jenny Cousins of the Food Museum on using museum stories to address environment issues in the community.

The event takes place at Port Sunlight on 16th-17th June. [AIM](#)

Bursaries for the AMA Conference 2022 – 'A New Adventure'

The Arts Marketing Association is holding its 2022 Conference 'A New Adventure' in Birmingham from 14th-15th July. Tickets are from £395 for members. However, with support from organisations across the cultural sector, there are 31 bursaries available covering the full cost of a delegate place; applications are open until the end of April. Additionally for the first time AMA is offering support to cover travel and accommodation. A full programme will be published shortly. [AMA](#)

Leadership in Arts Fundraising course

Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy in partnership with the University of Leeds is offering its second multi-week course via the Future Learn platform. 'Leadership in Arts Fundraising' became available on 28th March, takes nine hours to complete, and is free if finished within a window time. It offers a chance to analyse your current leadership and relationships, and explore crisis, change and future evolution. [Future Learn](#)

Listening Together: Sound, Memory and Wellbeing Symposium

The British Library and its ten hub partners have been using sound archives – from music and poetry, to birdsong and coastal life – to develop new programmes to enhance wellbeing, working cross-sectorally with artists and health practitioners. This day long event will share findings from the work, including when applied to mental health, dementia and brain injury. The event takes place at the British Library on 25th April, and is free. [British Library](#)

V&A Culture in Crisis series: Heritage and Humanitarian Collaboration in Emergency Response

A timely roundtable event in the V&A's ongoing Culture in Crisis series will look at how heritage and humanitarian actors can collaborate in crisis situations. Speakers include Aparna Tandon, leader of ICCROM's First Aid and Resilience for Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis programme. The event is free and takes place online on 5th April from 2-3pm. [V&A](#)

Digital leadership - digital skills, literacy and capacity

Culture24 continues its online series on digital leadership with an event focused on digital skills, literacy and capacity. It takes place on 26th April at 4pm and is free. A previous event on hybrid working is also available to watch again online. [Culture24](#) (hybrid working), [Culture24](#) (booking)

Climate, Colonial Collections, and Contemporary Collecting

The Museum Ethnographers Group has announced its Conference 'Rethinking Practice, Reimagining the Future: Climate, Colonial Collections, and Contemporary Collecting.' The event asks what the future holds for world culture museums and their collections, and what role they should play in building futures communities aspire to. Topics include co-creation, addressing imperial legacies, climate and sustainable futures and digital. The event takes place on 28th-29th April at National Museums Scotland. Tickets are £45 - £105. [NMS](#)

Platinum Jubilee website – add your events

Museums which are programming events for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee around the time of the extended Bank Holiday from 2nd-5th June can submit them to the dedicated website, where they will also appear on an interactive map. [Platinum Jubilee](#)

Employment

MGS launches new resource and funding criteria to encourage Fair Work in Scottish museums

Museums Galleries Scotland has launched new employment guidance to help the sector embrace the Scottish Government's Fair Work First guidelines. The guidelines for employers include advice to invest in workforce development, refrain from inappropriate zero hours contracts, create a diverse and inclusive workplace and pay the Real Living Wage as a minimum – with salaries rising from there in line with the MA's Salary Guidelines. MGS will also be reviewing its grant conditions, and museums seeking funding towards a role in 2022 will need to meet Fair Work criteria. MGS also offers a recruitment checklist as an easy guide to meeting the standard. In addition, it has launched a new jobs board where Fair Work roles in Scotland can be listed. MGS CEO Lucy Casot said "*a diverse workforce that has a wide range of different experiences and skills brings great benefit to the sector and their communities. Through our conversations with museums and galleries we know that they have faced challenges in this area. As part of our commitment to increasing the diversity of the sector workforce we're pleased to offer more tangible support.*" [MGS](#) (jobs board), [MGS](#) (fair work resource for employers), [Museums Association](#) (pay in museums), [MGS](#) (fair work recruitment checklist)

Digital and VR



Spain's Field Farm, photographed at its original site in Weardale before being moved brick by brick to Beamish. Courtesy of Beamish

'Virtual Veronese' puts National Gallery painting back in its original 16th century setting

A virtual reality installation at the National Gallery has allowed visitors to see Paolo Veronese's altarpiece painting 'The Consecration of Saint Nicholas' in the 16th century Italian chapel for which it was created. Visitors were able to choose from two guides in VR form: former National Gallery curator Dr Rebecca Gill, or the historical figure Abbot Asola, who commissioned the painting. The project was in partnership with StoryFutures, the Government funded project to put storytelling at the heart of immersive technologies, and funded by AHRC. [National Gallery](#) (film), [StoryFutures](#), [National Gallery](#) (press release), [UKRI](#), (R&D background)

Join an IIIF session: for small institutions who want to share digitised collections online

The International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) Outreach Group is inviting small institutions (with few or no paid staff) but with digitised collections that they want to share online to join an online discussion event on working out a way forward. The conversation will look at free or low-cost hosting options, exhibition and display tools, and more. The event also welcomes anyone with an interest in helping very small institutions with these goals. It takes place on April 26th, at 4pm BST with international participants, and is free. Contact group Chair Claire Knowles C.Knowles1@leeds.ac.uk with any queries. [IIIF](#) (overview), [IIIF](#) (community), [IIIF](#) (outreach group) [IIIF](#) (register)

Universal Google Analytics ends next year (act now to save your data)

There will be a step change to Google Analytics in 2023, with Universal Analytics likely to be switched off, meaning that organisations who do not act will lose their data. Options then include moving to Google Analytics 4 – in which case it is advisable to run it in tandem with your existing GA from mid 2022, to retain a year's worth of data ahead of the switch over, or to move to a paid for, non-Google analytics package. A helpful webinar from One Further explains the options for the non-specialist. [One Further](#) (overview), [One Further](#) (webinar on demand), [Digital Culture Network](#) (introduction to GA4)

Funding open for applications

£4m available in new round of DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund

A new round has opened of the DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund, offering £4m for applications from 370 eligible organisations in England. The funding is over two financial years from 2022-24 and will cover work to improve displays, protect collections and make exhibitions more accessible. Individual grants for up to £300k are available, with funding not exceeding 75% of project costs. 2022 also marks the 20th year of the fund, which to date has distributed £48m to over 400 projects. Reyahn King, Chief Executive of York Museums Trust which has received support for a number of projects during that time, said “[the fund] supported us to carry out transformative work to our museums and galleries. At the Yorkshire Museum, the installation of ‘Jurassic Yorkshire’ enabled us to mount a high quality, interactive and technologically creative suite of new permanent galleries that attracted more visitors than at any time since YMT was founded in 2002.” Applications will open on 9th May and close at 5pm on 1st August 2022. Museums should contact dcmswolfsonfund@dcms.gov.uk with any queries. [Gov.uk](#) (guidance), [Gov.uk](#), (press release), [Museums Journal](#)

Digital commissions up to £11k for environment and culture projects in England

Julie’s Bicycle and digital agency The Space are offering a new round of digital commissions open to arts and culture organisations in England with a strong interest in environmentalism, including museums, libraries, community organisations and local councils. Up to £11k each is available for ten projects. To be eligible work can either highlight themes around climate, or be produced in an environmentally responsible way. The deadline for applications is 5pm on 7th April. [Julie’s Bicycle](#)

New support service launched with advice on Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief

ACE has launched a new, free Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief (MGETR) Support Service, which will provide organisations with guidance on making a claim against their exhibition production costs. There are two levels of support:

- Organisations in England can book a 30 minute virtual support session or telephone call provided by RSM, a company of expert tax accountants, offering a free, bespoke helpdesk service.
- There is also a guide with FAQs to support organisations through the process of making a claim, available to everyone in the UK wishing to apply for MGETR. Organisations can register now to receive the guide.

[ACE](#)

Funding received

60 cultural organisations share £48m from Government’s Cultural Investment Fund

60 cultural organisations in England including museums and galleries will receive a share of £48m in Cultural Investment Funding, from a pot first launched in 2019:

- Seven organisations will receive money from the Cultural Development Fund, including almost £4m for Barnsley Museums to transform Elsecar Heritage Centre into a cultural and creative industries hub. Middlesbrough Council Cultural Services will receive £4.2m for work including a gallery at the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, a printmaking facility and a new studio and a gallery space at The Auxiliary warehouse.
- 31 museums will receive support from the Museum Estate Development Fund for infrastructure and urgent maintenance projects. Recipients include Bristol Museum & Art Gallery (£653k), Leicester Museum & Art Gallery (£766k) and Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (£5m for public access and structural work). Among smaller venues, True’s Yard Fisherfolk Museum in King’s Lynn will receive £50k to deal with flooding issues which threaten the safety of the collection.
- 25 libraries also receive support through the Libraries Improvement Fund.

AIM members received 65% of MEND funds and Director Lisa Ollerhead said *"it is great to see this significant investment in independent museums for desperately needed estates improvements... £18m is a fraction of the need however, and AIM will continue talking to sector stakeholders about supporting maintenance, including how to ensure small museums with lower but still significant needs benefit from future MEND rounds."* [Gov.uk](#), [M + H](#), [AIM](#)

Individual £300k donation to Worcester Art Gallery is aimed to 'put Worcester on the map'

An individual donor, Professor Rolf Olsen, has given £300k to Worcester Art Gallery and Museum to help it purchase more works of art and to lay the foundations for a new gallery. He is also helping to form a new charitable trust to support further fundraising. Professor Olsen said *"my wish is to see the city's art collection become regionally significant, and hopefully in turn encourage development of the Art Gallery and Museum to enable the collection to be on display all year round... I encourage others to come forward to support this exciting initiative and help to put Worcester on the map."* [BBC](#)

Ipsos Mori findings on experience of MGETR tax relief in museums

HMRC have published Ipsos Mori qualitative research into the experience of 35 museums in accessing Museum and Gallery Exhibition Tax Relief. It outlines both the positive benefits of the relief, and barriers to claiming. Overall, it has been hugely beneficial, increasing the number, quality and accessibility of exhibitions, as well as allowing organisations to upgrade infrastructure, hire more staff, and develop community engagement. The report adds *"it is valuable as one of very few sources of unrestricted income, enabling claimants a greater degree of financial freedom."* [Gov.uk](#)

Ethics in fundraising

'Do you really need that new building?' – fundraising in an age of consuming less

In the light of negative publicity about how the Captain Tom Foundation spent a large proportion of funds raised on administration, Michelle Wright, CEO of Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy, has written on the importance of good value for money in fundraising. This includes looking at whether partnership work could make using funds more efficient – whether that's sharing a building rather than creating a new one, with benefits for the environment – plus avoiding creating new charities unless absolutely necessary. [Arts Professional](#)

Proposed \$6bn settlement would allow for removal of Sackler name from museums 'without consequence'

US court action against the Sackler family brought by victims of the opioid epidemic seems likely to settle with the family paying \$6bn to affected communities. As part of the settlement, museums in the US will be able to remove the Sackler name without consequence. However, Sackler branding has been withdrawn by mutual agreement at various museums in the US and UK for some time, with both Tate and the British Museum removing the Sackler name from infrastructure in the past couple of months. A British Museum spokesperson said *"as early development work begins on the museum's new masterplan, both partners believe it's a timely opportunity to take this step."* *The Art Newspaper* also highlights that 'morals clauses' are becoming more common, which 'allow an institution to protect themselves in the event of a donor falling from grace', and that in art museums, artists are more likely to want a seat at the table in shaping donor policy. [Art Newspaper](#), [Telegraph](#), [Evening Standard](#)

Awards

M + H announces Awards shortlist

Museums + Heritage has announced the shortlist for its annual Awards, celebrating the best in the sector, with 17 categories covering topics from exhibitions and shops to conservation, partnership, learning and front of house. The list includes:

- The Visitor Welcome Award where Derby Museums' Museum of Making, the History of Science Museum at the University of Oxford, Beamish, London Transport Museum and Bristol Culture and Creative Industries are shortlisted.

- Community Engagement programme's six finalists include York Archaeology Trust for Archaeology on Prescription, English Heritage for its youth engagement programme, and Leeds Museums for its wellbeing, belonging and creativity programme.
- Learning Programme of the Year includes the Foundling Museum's Tracing Our Tales, Novium Museum's Virtual Field Trips and National Museums Liverpool's lockdown learning virtual classrooms.
- The Restoration or Conservation shortlist includes The Wallace Collection for conserving Fragonard's 'The Swing' and Wright & Wright Architects for work on the Museum of the Home.
- Permanent Exhibition of the Year features the Museum of Making, Manchester Jewish Museum, IWM's Second World War and Holocaust Galleries, The David Livingstone Museum, Story Museum and Wordsworth Trust – all of which have seen major openings or makeovers in the past year.
- NLHF is again sponsoring a category on Excellence in Environmental Sustainability, this year with a shortlist of four: the Wright & Wright Museum of the Home renovation, which included a green roof and retrofitting existing buildings; the Reimagining Reality exhibition in Cornwall, built from waste products and addressing the connection between waste and climate change; Dundee Museum of Transport's COP26 exhibition; and Wakefield Museums & Castles: A World of Good exhibition, aimed to encourage people to take 'immediate and meaningful action' on climate.

Winners will be announced at an in-person event at Northumberland Avenue on 11th May. (The awards coincide with the M + H show – see 'events' for details) [M + H](#), [NLHF](#) (Sustainable Project shortlist)

Family Friendly Museum Awards 2022

Nominations have opened for the Family Friendly Museum Awards 2022, seeking venues which are the most welcoming, fun and accessible to families. As well as best small, medium, large and accessible museum, there is a new category of Best Family Engagement Team. The deadline for nominations is 5pm on 6th June. [Kids in Museums](#)

Call for applications to Children in Museums Award 2022

The European Museum Academy and Hands On! International have opened applications for this year's Children in Museums Award, which highlights outstanding exhibition projects and experiences for children aged up to 14 internationally. There is an application fee of €295, and shortlisted entries will receive a review visit. The winner will receive a €5k cash prize and the deadline for entries is 15th April. This is one of half a dozen awards offered by the European Museum Academy with various partners, all with an entry fee and closing dates in mid April. Topics include art museums, learning in museums and science and environmental issues in museums. [Hands On](#), [European Museum Academy](#)

Planning major events

Shortlist announced for City of Culture 2025

A shortlist of four areas has been announced for City of Culture 2025 with Bradford, County Durham, Southampton and Wrexham County Borough making the final round. This means that bids from Cornwall, Derby, Stirling and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon have been excluded in this round, although the Cornwall bid group says it will continue with a £1m investment programme. Music star Craig David who was ambassador for the Southampton bid said *"this golden opportunity must not be wasted. I want the world to know that Southampton is worthy of this title and that I wholeheartedly back the city to realise its dream"*. Although those bidding in this round received £40k to develop their case, there is no further funding for the winner. However, previous cities of culture have attracted significant funding: DCMS says Coventry has received £172m to fund music concerts and the UK's first immersive digital gallery as well as £500m for wider city regeneration. The winner will be announced in May. [Gov.uk](#), [Independent](#), [Guardian](#), [ITV](#), [Sky](#), [BBC](#), [Museums Journal](#)

DCMS committee gives recommendations on major UK events – and discusses 'Unboxed'

The DCMS committee has given recommendations to Government on how major UK cultural and sporting events are developed – including festivals and the City of Culture programme. Welcoming the Government's commitment to delivering major events, which are a source of international soft power, it argued for a more strategic approach to planning. It added that the 'instrumentalist economic argument' is overplayed, and the promise of major economic impact is not backed up by research – although major happenings may help create 'buzz' and local confidence. It also argued that winning City of Culture bids should receive financial support from Government from the outset, to help with their wider fundraising work. The committee explored how far divisive issues could be discussed at major events: something achieved by 14–18 NOW and in Linz, Austria, which put on an exhibition about Hitler's aim to make it a cultural capital of the Third Reich as part of its 2009 year as European Capital of Culture. The DCMS Committee comments that those involved in 2022 major events seemed more reluctant to address contentious areas – for example colonialism and the Commonwealth. It was also sceptical that the £120m 'Unboxed: Creativity in the UK' festival would deliver a return on investment (although this was prior to its full programme being announced). The event has repeatedly been tagged as a 'Festival of Brexit' in the press, despite a programme that does not reflect that label – its actual contents have received less attention and it has so far been relatively low profile. The *FT* describes it as 'something much weirder' than initial perceptions, including a "harvest festival for the 21st century' in Scotland; a 10km sculpture map of the solar system starting in Northern Ireland; and a decommissioned North Sea oil platform relocated to Weston-super-Mare." Festival Chief Creative Officer Martin Green defended its work saying "Unboxed opened in Paisley on 1st March with an overwhelmingly positive public response, underpinning a commitment to bring large-scale cultural programming to places often underserved". The festival will take place across all four UK nations and has plans for a large scale schools programme. [UK Parliament](#), [Art Newspaper](#), [FT](#), [Unboxed](#)

Collections

Statue of slave trader Robert Milligan to be contextualised in Museum of London collections

A statue of slave trader Robert Milligan has been acquired by the Museum of London, after being gifted by the Canal & River Trust. The statue stood outside the Museum of London Docklands from its opening in 1997 until June 2020 when it was taken down following a 4,000 signature petition during the Black Lives Matter protests. The museum's decision follows a public consultation, in partnership with the Tower Hamlets Council and landowners Canal & River Trust, which concluded that the statue should be housed in a museum where it can be fully contextualised. 76% of those consulted were in favour of an exhibition; 15% thought it should be permanently removed from public view. A Museum of London spokesperson said "over the last 15 years, the museum has been working with academics, community leaders and activists to tell the story of London's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade, and give voice to its legacy. The West India Docks, championed by Milligan using wealth from the slave trade, are a visible reminder of how this history has shaped our city. It is right and important that we acknowledge this in the statue's story." [Evening Standard](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Ivory Act – digital ivory service opens for exempted items

Under the Ivory Act 2018 it will be illegal from June to deal in items made of elephant ivory except with proof that they are registered or certified as exempt, as is the case with some museum objects, or those being accessioned by museums. A new digital ivory service is opening handling certification, sale, hire, import and export of exempt ivory items. [Gov.uk](#)

£50m Portrait of Omai, a 'signal work' of colonialism empire and exploration, receives export bar

An export bar has been placed on Sir Joshua Reynolds' Portrait of Omai, a full length, life sized painting of a Pacific Islander who travelled to London with Captain Cook on HMS Adventure in 1774. The Export Reviewing Committee describe it as "a signal work in the study of colonialism and empire, scientific exploration and the history of the Pacific". However, with an asking price of £50m, it is the most expensive work ever to receive an export bar, and *The Art Newspaper* suggests that interested museums would find it especially hard to find funds in the post-pandemic era. Tate previously attempted to buy the work in 2001, when a donor offered to cover the then asking price of £12.5m, but the owner refused to sell and it remained in the UK. The export bar runs to 10th July with potential for an extension to 10th March 2023. [Gov.uk](#), [Art Newspaper](#)

In brief: export bars for lute music, Kaufmann portraits and a Cézanne landscape

- An export bar has also been placed on a manuscript of lute music, important in illustrating how music was shared in the 17th century. The asking price is £214k and the bar runs to 13th June, with a possible extension to September. [Gov.uk](#)
- An export bar has been placed on a pair of group portraits of Mr and Mrs Joseph May and their Children'. Painted by Angelica Kaufmann in 1780, it shows the family separated by gender, an approach unknown in her other extant 800 works. Kaufmann herself was one of only two female founding members of the Royal Academy. The asking price for the works is £1.5m, with the bar in place until 24th July with a possible extension of four months. [Gov.uk](#)
- Paul Cézanne's 'Ferme Normande, Été (Hattenville)', painted in 1882 has received an export bar with an asking price of £10m. [Gov.uk](#)

Export bars annual report lists Romano-British mosaic among three items saved for the nation

A Romano-British mosaic uncovered in Devon, contemporary drawings of the Spanish Armada and H Triqueti's sculpture 'The Death of Cleopatra' were all retained in the UK during 2020-21 as a result of export bars. The Annual report from the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest says that ten cases were considered across the year, nine of which received an export bar. Although a third of cases remained in the UK, collectively they were worth £1.032m or only 2.7% in terms of value, while £34.65m of cultural objects left the country, including two Roman figures of Celtic hounds, a Mughal Durbar set and a St Christopher Reliquary. Among the saves, Dorset County Museum acquired the Romano-British mosaic, the National Museum of the Royal Navy acquired the Astor Armada drawings, while V&A acquired the Triqueti sculpture. The RCEWA annual report has other practical uses – a back issue was recently used to spot an illegal export. [Gov.uk](#)

Jobs

Posts being advertised on the NMDC jobs board this month include:

- [V&A East Project Co-ordinator - V&A](#)
- [Design Manager - South West Energy Centre - The British Museum](#)
- [Formal Learning Lead Producer \(part time\) - The Wallace Collection](#)
- [Head of Visitor Experience and Operations - Sir John Soane's Museum](#)
- [Fire Fighter - IWM Duxford](#)
- [Curator/Senior Curator Technology - National Museums Scotland](#)
- [Digital Content Producer, Maths Week Scotland - National Museums Scotland](#)

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

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