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Members' news



Stephenson's Rocket. Courtesy of the Science Museum.

Stephenson's Rocket returns north after 150 years for Great Exhibition

Robert Stephenson's iconic steam engine Rocket is returning to Newcastle from London for the first time in more than 150 years as part of the Great Exhibition of the North. Manufactured in 1829 at Newcastle's Forth Street Works and acquired for the nation in 1862, it has been conserved at the Science Museum ever since. Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums Director Iain Watson said "*Rocket is one of the North's great innovations, heralding the birth of passenger railways. Welcoming Rocket home as part of Great Exhibition of the North will help us tell the inspiring story of the North of England, including how we've shaped today's world and continue to lead its future. We're delighted to be working with the Science Museum Group on this exciting addition to Great Exhibition of the North.*" The Great Exhibition takes place across NewcastleGateshead from June to September 2018. [Science Museum](#), [ITV](#), [Great Exhibition of the North](#)

Rebalancing a representation of the world at the British Museum

The British Museum is laying plans to lessen the crowds around its most popular exhibits by 'luring away' visitors from the mummies and Rosetta Stone with tailor-made digital suggestions about lesser known artefacts. Director Hartwig Fischer also plans to 'rebalance' the museum, as 37% of the world's landmass is currently absent or unrepresented in its gallery space. Australia, Papua New Guinea and Polynesia are among the areas to be fleshed out. The BM has also announced a ten-year plan for several new and refurbished galleries and the reopening of its Reading Room. Its China gallery reopens in the autumn, with a new Albukhary Foundation Galleries of the Islamic World opening to the public in autumn 2018. [Telegraph](#), [Design Week](#), [British Museum](#)

HMS Invincible to give up secrets in interactive underwater archaeology project

There are plans to recover more artefacts from HMS Invincible, a French built Royal Navy warship which sank in the Solent in 1758. Objects such as a cat o' nine tails and a jug were recovered in the 1980s, but since then the wreck has been undisturbed, with most of the contents remaining on board. Now a joint project between the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Marine Archaeology Sea Trust and Bournemouth University intends to recover more artefacts using funding raised from LIBOR fines. There is 'no financial appetite for raising another huge wreck' but the project intends to raise some of the timbers 'to show how unique Invincible's build was'. A programme including museum events during the excavation and volunteering from ex-service people will be included in the work. The findings of the excavation will fill the gap in current knowledge of historic ships after the Mary Rose and before HMS Victory. [Project short film](#), [National Historic Ships](#)

Leeds Art Gallery partners in Sculpture Triennial

Two Museum of the Year winners – the Hepworth Wakefield and Yorkshire Sculpture Park – are partnering with Leeds Art Gallery to create a Sculpture Triennial. The first season will run from July to September 2019, supported by £750k from Arts Council England's 'Ambition for Excellence' programme. Yorkshire has been associated with sculpture since the early 20th century when the landscape inspired Moore and Hepworth, and the three galleries have increasingly worked together on projects from exhibitions to research and collections. In the long term they hope to create an international triennial. [Artlyst](#), [The Art Newspaper](#), [ACE](#)

BBC Civilisations Festival

Call for museums to get involved in BBC 'Civilisations' Festival

The BBC has announced plans for the 'Civilisations Festival' – a partnership between museums and the BBC to coincide with the broadcast of a new TV series 'Civilisations' in Spring 2018. The series, fronted by David Olusoga, Mary Beard and Simon Schama, is inspired by Kenneth Clark's original landmark programme 'Civilisation' half a century ago and aims 'to introduce a new generation to the great masterworks of beauty, ingenuity and illumination created across the continents'.

The Civilisations Festival will take place from 2nd–11th March 2018 and is intended to engage a 'culturally curious audience' and to spark debate, broaden understanding and share ideas about what is meant by the term civilisation. Museums are free to choose the content of their Festival events: a debate, speech, workshop using collections or a performance are among the suggestions.

Opportunities for participating museums include:

- Listing on Culture24's new site Museum Crush. Culture24 is partnering with the BBC for the festival.
- Promotion on BBC local radio, which will be an important element in getting local audiences to events.
- Civilisations branding materials from the BBC.
- Potential opportunities for curators and speakers to be invited onto BBC programmes, or outside broadcast of museum events.
- The chance to use innovative, newly developed digital tools and test them on the BBC's [Taster](#) platform, designed to push new digital boundaries. Other digital opportunities will include interactive 360 video tools, low cost live video broadcasting and personalised content linked to the Festival partnership.
- Use of an augmented reality app being developed by the BBC which will allow visitors to explore museum objects using tablets and smartphones. The BBC is offering museums the chance to capture some of their collections in this way using sector partners and the BBC's own expertise.
- Access to the BBC archive - the BBC wants to open up its enormous archive to partners in the project for use in events or in the stories they want to tell as part of the Festival.

To register interest in taking part in the Festival and to receive updates on plans museums should email the BBC at civilisations@bbc.co.uk. If you are interested in the augmented reality element of the programme, the contact deadline is 30th September.

The BBC are holding a conference to outline the Civilisations Festival at Manchester Museum on 5th September 2017. Attendees will hear more about BBC plans for the Festival and how to get involved, as well as having an opportunity to look at the digital technology tools on offer in a hands-on demonstration. Spaces will be limited; to register please contact civilisations@bbc.co.uk. A series of additional workshops for museums to gain a better hands-on understanding of the digital tools on offer are also being planned by the BBC's Research & Development team. They will take place in Bristol, Birmingham, London and York in September and further details will be available shortly.

[BBC](#) (NB: this link is intended for interested museums. The BBC request it is not posted to social media or visitor-facing websites). [Museums Journal](#)

Surveys and consultations



This month's photos come from the Cornwall Museums Partnership. An event at Wheal Martyn, photographed by James Stuart.

Archive dreaming and painting robots: seeking sector responses to CulturelsDigital

DCMS is consulting arts and museum professionals and technology specialists on digital provision in the cultural sector, under the banner #CulturelsDigital. Museums are encouraged to join the conversation taking place on the DCMS website. Some contributions so far include:

- Collections Trust calls on DCMS to 'futureproof the way museums share their collections online'. It points out that nearly all of the 1,700 museums in the UK have digitised collection databases, and that the sector is now reaching the point where it is possible to aggregate collections across all institutions into a data set searchable by regions and specialisms. CT advocates 'persistent identifiers' for data, so a collection will stay linked to a central database regardless of changing URLs and home websites. It suggests that government funds one of its sponsored national bodies to take the project forward, and offers up its preliminary work on CultureGrid as a basis for designing such a system. [Collections Trust](#)
- Most museums collecting archaeological archives have data stored on CDs and floppy discs which will be obsolete within five years. David Dawson at the Wiltshire Museum is among those championing the ACE 'Seeing the Light of Day' project, championing a joined up approach to digital storage. [DCMS](#)
- 3D digitisation is the next step in making collections more accessible to the public; it is 'relatively cheap and easy' but few museum professionals have the skills, although courses are becoming more available. [DCMS](#)
- Lucy Sollitt, who leads on the Cultural Content and Technology strand of the conversation for DCMS, has published a number of short pieces written for the British Council looking at subjects such as cultural organisations mixing reality with VR and how we all increasingly collaborate with intelligent robots. [British Council](#)
- One developer comments that with the exception of the ACE/Nesta Digital R&D Fund, very few funds explicitly encourage cutting edge technology with the arts.
- Sheffield's Site Gallery created a summer of arts-led interdisciplinary talks on digital, science and the arts. The organisers comment that where the two mix, it is comparatively rare to see these led from an arts perspective. [DCMS](#)

NMDC urges museum professionals to join the conversation at #CulturelsDigital – and to invite developers and tech suppliers working with the sector to add their thoughts. Existing projects and case studies are encouraged as well as new ideas for the future. Please also vote up the ideas you find the most useful. [Gov.uk](#), [#CulturelsDigital](#)

Scottish cultural strategy survey

The Scottish government is consulting widely to create a cultural strategy for Scotland and invites comment on the effect of the arts and museums for individuals and in communities. The deadline for responses is 27th October. [Scottish government](#)

Proposed changes to Taking Part statistics

DCMS is proposing changes to its Taking Part statistical releases and seeks feedback from the sector on a nine-page proposal document. Changes relevant to the cultural sector include:

- Discontinuing publishing quarter 2 statistics on culture and sport and producing only an annual report.
- Ceasing to publish statistics on the Export of Objects of Cultural Interest, although the data will still remain in the public sphere as it is contained in a report given to parliament by the Secretary of State.
- The consultation also asks which statistical releases are being used by respondents, and in what format.

Responses should be sent to DCMS by 7th August. NMDC has given its own views. [Gov.uk](#)

Funding



MPM Older people project at the Telegraph Museum, Porthcurno. Photo: James Stuart

Museums and galleries tax relief in Autumn Finance Bill

The government intends to introduce a new Finance Bill in the Autumn containing provisions withdrawn before the election, including the new museums and galleries tax relief. The relief will also be backdated to 1st April, the date the relief was originally due to be introduced before the election was announced. Arts Council England has published guidance on the parameters of the relief:

- There will be 20% relief for non-touring exhibitions and 25% for touring exhibitions, with expenditure of up to £500k eligible for the rebate. The relief is available on up to 80% of costs.
- To qualify as a touring exhibition, at least 25% of the exhibits must be the same across multiple venues. Multiple venues on the tour can claim the relief.
- Exhibitions must be created by a museum, gallery, library, archive or outdoor cultural venue such as a sculpture park.
- The exhibitions must be open to the public, with or without an exhibition fee, and the works on display must not be for sale or otherwise for a largely commercial purpose. However, a gift shop or café associated with the exhibition will not prevent organisations from claiming.
- Organisations must be companies to apply; it may be possible to set up as a company in order to receive the rebate. However, it is not essential to pay corporation tax: where none is paid, HMRC will reimburse the company with the relief.
- The 'core expenditure' for an exhibition is eligible for relief, such as curator costs, and the costs of deinstalling. Development expenditure preceding production is eligible, but only if the exhibition goes ahead.
- Indirect costs are not eligible: these include marketing, raising finance, general legal services and running costs from the day of opening such as invigilation.

ACE encourages organisations to seek specialist advice and says that they should expect to use some additional cost and resources on applying the new tax relief, but experience with similar schemes for theatres and orchestras shows that 'complications are quickly overcome and the benefits are worthwhile'. Parliament.uk, ACE, Museums Journal

Also: The Heritage Alliance has met with the Office of Tax Simplification to advocate for VAT of 5% on the repair and maintenance of buildings. It says that an Experian report shows that this would produce a huge economic stimulus, creating 42,000 construction jobs. Experian

Also: The government calculates that the creative industries including film production and theatres have benefited from £700m in tax relief in the past year. [Gov.uk](#)

Weston Loan programme offers strategic collections loans for regional museums

The Art Fund has announced the three-year Weston Loan Programme, which will support the costs of loans of works of art from national to regional museums. The programme is supported by the Garfield Weston Foundation. The Art Fund is seeking applications which will enhance exhibitions that have already been planned; will enable 'quick fire/quick win' loan requests and support long term relationships. The majority of grants will be £5k–£25k, but requests for more or less will be considered. The deadline for the current round of applications is 14th September. [Art Fund](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Also: The remaining Touring Exhibitions Group's 'Preparing To Borrow' workshops are running on 14th September at the National Museum of Scotland and 9th October at Islington Museum. [TEG](#)

Biffa Award offers £1m over three years for its 'History Makers' programme

AIM is working with Biffa Award for a second time on a new three-year programme 'History Makers – people who shape our world' which will give funds of up to £75k to museums for new exhibitions. £1m is available in total. Projects must be about historical figures who have had a significant effect on industrial, commercial, scientific or social history. To apply, museums must be members of AIM, located within 25 miles of a Biffa operations site, and within 10 miles of a landfill site. AIM offers maps, resources and advice for museums trying to work out if they qualify. The deadline for a first 200-word expression of interest form is 2nd October; successful projects are expected to begin in April 2018. A panel of senior museum staff will judge the bids. [AIM](#), [Biffa Award](#)

Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund new round opens

The 14th round of the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, has now opened offering grants from £20k - £200k for projects lasting up to three years. Successful applications will need to work with an existing collection to improve understanding or increase their use, reach local communities or non-typical museum visitors, be developmental for the sector and give some thought to legacy. The deadline for the current round is 6th September; successful applicants will be announced in early December. [Museums Journal](#)

Catalyst small grants

Arts Council England grants of £10k–£30k are available through the latest round of the Catalyst scheme to support organisations to build their fundraising capacity. Museums receiving less than £250k ACE investment each year may apply. The deadline is 10th August. [ACE](#)

IWM receives £5m towards second phase of transformation of London museum

IWM London has received £5m from the Garfield Weston Foundation towards the second phase of its renovation, which will transform its Holocaust and Second World War Galleries and create a new learning centre. The whole project is expected to cost £33.5m. IWM has currently raised 41% of the funds it needs. [Museums Journal](#)

Second round of the Celebrating Age Fund opens

ACE has opened the second round of its Celebrating Age Fund which supports cultural spaces to be welcoming and positive place for older people. It also funds projects to take work beyond the walls of institutions to spaces older people find easier to access. Grants are £50k - £100k with a whole fund of £1.5m, and applicants must be working in a consortium. The deadline for applications is noon on 31st August. [ACE](#)

Local council's 'risk too high' for £26m Blackpool museum

Blackpool has abandoned plans, in their current form, for a £26m museum telling the story of the town as a seaside resort. The initial plan, which attracted £1.24m exploratory HLF funding in 2014, was for a museum in the Pavilion Theatre. However, due to an £8m funding gap, the council decided the risk was too high to proceed. It will continue to explore other options for opening a museum in Blackpool. Local MP Gordon Marsden said items donated by the public should appear in pop-up displays to keep enthusiasm for the project going. [Museums Journal](#), [Blackpool Gazette](#), [BBC](#)

Museums Galleries Scotland invests £600k in 15 museums

Museums Galleries Scotland has announced the recipients of £600k from its Museum Development Fund. Several awards fund new posts in museums; others improve the way collections are stored and cared for. The 15 recipients include Dunollie Castle, which receives £40k for a more robustly covered outdoor café area, Almond Valley Heritage Trust which receives £50k for website redevelopment and Glasgow Life, which receives £41k towards the reintroduction of three years of assistant curator posts within Glasgow Museums. [MGS](#)

Small charity fundraising training

The government is offering fundraising training to small charities through five providers with specialist knowledge in the area. Much of the training will be tailored, including face to face training and one to one advice sessions as well as skilled volunteering matches and webinars. Topics will include developing a fundraising strategy and approaching trusts and foundations. Costs are nominal: the next full day of training is in Brighton on 6th September and will cost £15. [Gov.uk](#), [FSI](#)

Events

Pulling together: Collections Trust 2017 conference

The theme of this year's conference is how the management of collections should be a matter for all museum workers, not just specialists, from Board members to welcome staff. Talks cover topics from how to mobilise an organisation to tackle a backlog, collections management at the National Trust, and a description of how York Archaeological Trust saved collections following the severe floods at Jorvik Viking Centre. The event takes place at the Hospitium, Museum Gardens, York on 21st September. There is a pre-conference evening meet up on 20th. [Collections Trust](#)

Creative Industries Federation run Brexit event series

The Creative Industries Federation is running a series of talks and roundtables in the autumn on some of the most substantial issues around Brexit, including immigration and its economic impact, the legal situation, and securing public and political consent. Events are around 90 minutes long, free to CIF members and £250+VAT to non-members. [CIF](#)

Open heart surgery – the value of museum collections

The Network of European Museum Organisations is holding its 25th annual conference in Ghent, Belgium on 9th–12th November, particularly focusing on museum collections, including how they connect to the rest of the 'body' of the museum, and where they fit as museums change in socially and politically shifting times. Tate Director Maria Balshaw is among the speakers. Tickets are ■€150. [NEMO](#)

UMG conference 2017: Stuff and Knowledge

The University Museums Group has announced its 2017 conference 'Stuff and Knowledge: the future of teaching and learning in University Museums'. It will explore how collections are useful as the focus shifts from knowledge-based learning to skills and analysis. Speakers include Ellen McAdam from Birmingham Museums Trust, and Professor Bill Sherman from the V&A who will invert Neil MacGregor's famous formula to talk about 'A History of an Object in 100 Worlds'. There will also be tours and learning sessions at cultural venues including the Museum of the Year-shortlisted Lapworth Museum of Geology. The conference takes place on 11th–12th September at the University of Birmingham. Tickets are £120 or £60 for students: bookings close on 21st August. [UMG](#)

Museums Association conference 2017

The MA conference will bring together around 1,500 museum sector workers alongside suppliers and consultants. Themes for 2017 are centred around audiences, collections and workforce. Keynote speakers include writer and broadcaster Lemn Sissay, comedian and writer Francesca Martinez, Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller, and Jenny Waldman, director of 14-18 NOW.

There will be social and networking events at The Whitworth, Museum of Science and Industry and People's History Museum. Transformers, the workforce initiative to encourage radical change in museums, will be offering a playful 'Festival of Change' throughout the conference. The third day will

consist of special events, exhibitions and behind the scenes tours at nearby museums and galleries. The conference takes place in Manchester on 16th–18th November. Early bird tickets are available until 16th August. Ticket prices range from £380 for MA members for the whole conference (£475 after 16th August), to £140 (£175) for student, retired or unwaged attendees. [Museums Journal](#)

GEM conference, 'facing the future, forging ahead'

The Group for Education in Museums' annual conference will focus on resilience and how museum educators can help secure a museum's long term future. A full programme has just been published. There will be speakers from Hull City of Culture and Culture24, as well as Jane Avison from Heritage Learning discussing 'bringing learning to life – and making it self-funding'. The event take place at the Guildhall in Hull from 5–7th September. Tickets range from £95 for members attending for a single day to £460 for non-members attending the whole conference. [GEM](#)

Also: Oxford University Museums Partnership has published film of much of its recent event on digital learning on its website. [OUMP](#)

engage annual conference: Rethinking Diversity

The visual arts education body, engage is centring its annual conference on 'Rethinking Diversity', asking if conversations about diversity are too often focused outwards instead of looking at internal customs. Baroness Kay Andrews will give the keynote address, with breakout sessions covering topics including the social model of disability, white allyship, and LGBT and mental health issues. It takes place in Hull on 29th–30th November. Early bird rates are from £145 for Engage personal members to £360 for non-members. [engage](#)

Get what you give? The value and benefits of proactively lending collections

The British Museum's free National Programmes conference is open to anyone working in or with UK museums. It explores how museums of every size, as well as non-museum spaces with collections, can be encouraged and supported to proactively lend to each other and to borrow from wider sources. Confirmed speakers include Arts Council England, the Art Fund and Touring Exhibitions Group, with keynotes from Museums Sheffield and Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums. The event takes place on 31st August. [British Museum](#)

Employment and career development



At the Telegraph Museum, Porthcurno. Photo: James Stuart.

Substantial increase in BAME employment in the creative industries

New government employment figures show that the creative industries continue to flourish, growing at four times the rate of the workforce as a whole. Two million more people now work in the sector, up 5% on the previous year. 15% more people from BAME backgrounds work in the sector compared to 2015: this includes a jump of 40% in film and 50% in fashion. However, only 1.5% of British TV programmes were made by a BAME Director. Culture Secretary Matt Hancock said *"whilst there's still more to do before diversity in the creative industries mirrors that of our society as a whole, I'm encouraged to see that this area is improving at more than twice the rate of the wider workplace."* [Gov.uk](#) (TV stats), [Gov.uk](#)

Art Fund career development courses

Art Fund and Whitechapel Art Gallery are once again partnering to offer one-day career development courses, which will run in October and November and include topics such as 'how to curate talks and events' and 'how to write about art'. Tickets are £195, but there are 34 free places available to successful applicants. The deadline for applications is midday on 25th August. [Art Fund](#)

MGS new investment includes Vocational Skills Fund

Museums Galleries Scotland has received £100k to create a new Vocational Skills Fund. Currently 88% of the museum workforce has a degree and 59% a postgraduate qualification. MGS aims to create new paths to the sector based around work earned qualifications including SVQs. [M+H](#)

Consultation on modern working practices, including internships

The government has published 'Good Work – the Taylor Review of modern working practices' and is now seeking responses to the report's proposals. It devotes a strongly worded section to internships, arguing that 'unpaid internships are an abuse of power by employers and extremely damaging to social mobility'. It particularly draws attention to the costs for those who want to take up internships in London but who cannot stay with relatives. It recommends that *"if a person is obtaining something of value from an internship, they are most likely to be a worker and entitled to the National Minimum or Living Wage."* The Heritage Alliance has indicated that it will respond to the review arguing that *"any reforms the Government makes must not jeopardise volunteering which is key to supporting the heritage sector."* The Taylor review also encourages the government to further promote 'genuine' flexible working, which has become more common over the last decade. It also considers how sick or disabled people can be supported in the workplace, and notes the growing number of freelancers. There is no given deadline for responses, but comment should be sent to modernemploymentreview@beis.gov.uk. [Gov.uk](#)

Also: The Creative Industries Federation has published a report on Freelancers in its sector, who make up 47% of the workforce, compared to only 15% of the working population as a whole. The report highlights areas where government could make a difference, such as affordable workspaces. [Creative Industries Federation](#)

Good governance

Fundraising rules change next May

AIM has produced detailed advice on the changing responsibilities of charities regarding data protection and how these apply to the museum sector - particularly new rules coming into force next May. Organisations holding databases of names and contacts, but without specific consent, will have to recheck that the people concerned are happy to remain on databases. [AIM](#)

Guide to governance and the arts

The Clore Leadership Programme has published 'Governance in the arts and museums: a practical guide' based on the bespoke board development training it has been offering since 2007. The guide offers clear and simple advice on governance structures, the board's roles and responsibilities, board recruitment and running an effective meeting. There are also many links to in depth resources. The authors seek responses and comments to the pilot publication, which should be sent to boarddevelopment@cloreleadership.org. [Clore Leadership](#)

Business Rates appeals deadline

As reported in last month's newsletter, the ruling in favour of York Museums Trust after a ten-year dispute over its rateable value means that many other museums can appeal against the level of their rates. However, there is a deadline of 1st October to appeal against the 2010 Rating List in England or the 2017 Scottish Rating List. AIM says *"if your museum is facing large increases in liability or small decreases, the 2010 Rateable Value is still affecting your bills, even if you received 100% rates relief in previous years."* Its advisor Colin Hunter can offer 15 minutes of free advice to AIM museums on whether to appeal. [AIM](#)

Long careers and the long view

NMDC member Janet Vitmayer has announced she will retire as Chief Executive of the Horniman Museum and Gardens in March 2018 after 20 years in post. During her time at the Horniman Janet has led a series of successful capital developments and fundraising campaigns, resulting in the transformation of its galleries, buildings and gardens and leading to a 300% increase in visitor numbers. [Horniman](#)

Helen Ghosh is leaving her post as Director General of the National Trust, also in March 2018. The Trust will be seeking a replacement in the autumn. [National Trust](#)

AIM at 40: 'Who is this future person offering me resilience, and why would I want that?'

AIM has published the keynote speech from its recent 40th birthday conference given by Michael Day CVO, who recently retired as CEO of Historic Royal Palaces after 43 years in the museum sector. The talk takes the long view of how the sector has changed from a frequently 'moribund' state in the early 70s, but with signs of change including the rise of independent museums driven by personal passions such as Ironbridge in 1968 and Beamish in 1970. The British Museum's 1972 Tutankhamun exhibition seemed remarkable for creating 'a museum in the public eye and popular'. Museum design also changed for the first time since the Victorian period in the 70s. But he recalls instructions that 'warders will *not* engage in conversation with visitors or each other whilst on duty ...', little interest in visitor demographics and complaints of museum curators in psychological flight from the present. Some things stay the same: apart from a burst of investment post-1997, museums have always been short of money, but the resilience and innovation programmes in response are new. He concludes: *"museums, naturally, have ridden on the wave. We are what we are today because society is changed out of all recognition – and, of course doing our job, we have charted all this."* [AIM](#) (whole text of speech)

Places to be: creating new cultural destinations

Museum of London among five organisations creating 'Culture Mile'

The Museum of London is among five organisations partnering to create a 'culture mile' from Farringdon to Moorgate, with a busy programme of outdoor work and visual arts installations in the 'gaps between the buildings'. The Barbican Centre, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London Symphony Orchestra and City of London Corporation are also participating. The scheme will run for 10 to 15 years during a transformative period for the area. Major change will begin in December 2018, when the opening of the Crossrail Elizabeth Line will make central London accessible within 45 minutes for a further 1.5 million people. The new Museum of London will open in West Smithfield early in the period, and there are ongoing ambitions for a £200m concert hall for London Symphony Orchestra. Despite the density of cultural organisations in the district, they currently leave little footprint at street level. MoL Director Sharon Ament said outdoor events seven days a week are crucial to the plan's success: *"If you've walked through some parts of this area at the weekend, you will realise that it is not throbbing and bustling ... we want to change that"*. The Culture Mile programme itself begins this month with pop-up temporary installations. The five founding bodies hope to create a wider network of arts and cultural organisations working within the programme. [Arts Professional](#), [Museum of London](#), [The Stage](#), [Guardian](#)

City of Culture 2021 shortlist announced

The government has announced the five cities shortlisted for the 2021 City of Culture as Coventry, Paisley, Stoke on Trent, Sunderland and Swansea. Representatives of the shortlisted cities expressed excitement and determination – in Paisley (which is a large town rather than a small city, but which qualifies for the award) 30,000 people, or around half the population, were involved in the bid. Swansea Council leader Rob Stewart said 'we want every single person in Swansea to be a part of this process and to gain from it.' The winner will be announced in December. [Gov.uk](#), [BBC](#), [WalesOnline](#), [Guardian](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Hockney Gallery opens in Bradford to mark artist's 80th birthday

The City of Bradford has opened a gallery dedicated to David Hockney a couple of days before the artist's 80th birthday on 9th July. It is based in the Cartwright Hall and includes early works and sketchbooks as well as family photograph albums. [The Art Newspaper](#)

Wanted: great idea to unite the country

The arts and environment group Julie's Bicycle is running a programme of events in 2018 to highlight climate change. Over 150 arts groups, museums and galleries will be involved. It is now seeking ideas for an inspiring national project which will happen on a single day in autumn 2018. It should be 'creative, playful and stimulate conversations about our environment'. The idea should be easy to implement on a local level, and have resonance when played out over many locations nationally. Julie's Bicycle have artists on hand who can work to realise the project. The deadline for brilliant ideas is August 14th. [Julie's Bicycle](#)

RA to become centre for architecture

The Royal Academy of Arts is undergoing a £50m renovation project which will include a new architecture centre and awards scheme. The Dorfman Foundation has contributed an undisclosed seven figure sum to strengthen the RA's investment in architecture. [Dezeen](#)

Awards

Hepworth Wakefield is Museum of the Year

Hepworth Wakefield is the winner of the £100k Museum of the Year Award given by the Art Fund. For the first time, each of the four runners up received prizes of £10k. Art Fund Director Stephen Deuchar praised 'a breathtaking sequence of special exhibitions' since the venue opened six years ago adding "*The Hepworth serves its local community with unfailing flair and dedication and contributes centrally to regional tourism too. 2016 also saw the launch of The Hepworth Prize for Sculpture, which earned instant national status, and there are plans on the horizon for an ambitious garden project in the year ahead. It's the museum everyone would dream of having on their doorstep.*" Its architect David Chipperfield said the museum was initially rejected for £35m capital funding after resisting characterising itself as a regeneration project. He argues: "*don't aim for regeneration, if you build the best possible museum you can, and you put the right people in place, regeneration will come*". [Art Fund](#), [BBC](#), [BBC](#), [FT](#), [Art Newspaper](#), [BBC](#) (programme available until 7th August)

2017 Jodi Award winners announced

The winners of the biennial Jodi Awards, which celebrate accessible digital culture, have been announced for 2017. The overall winner is the Signly app at the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre in Buckinghamshire, which inserts relevant information into a deaf person's digital device, including BSL. Runners up were the House of Memories app from National Museums Liverpool's dementia awareness and training project, and a Manchester Museum project to increase access to objects for visually impaired people through 3D technology. [Signly](#), [Jodi Awards](#)

Collections Trust Awards

The Collections Trust Award recognises the work of people who manage museum collections. The theme this year is 'pulling together' – collections work which involves the whole museum from board to front of house. The 2017 winner will receive £2k and free entry to the Trust's annual conference in York on 21st September. The deadline for entries is 4th September. [Collections Trust](#)

Marsh Awards for gallery education

The 2017 Marsh Awards for excellence in gallery education is open for nominations until 14th August. There are £500 prizes for staff, freelancers and volunteers who have shown innovation or dedication in their work. Prizes have allowed gallery workers to develop professionally by attending courses and conferences. [engage](#)

Council attempts to force out former Museum of the Year from Bodelwyddan Castle

A museum which won Museum of the Year in 1989 is in conflict with Denbighshire County Council which is keen for it to leave its home at Bodelwyddan Castle. From next March the County Council will remove its £144k annual grant, and this has already resulted in long term loans from the National Portrait Gallery being returned to London (because it can no longer cover indemnity insurance) and the redundancy of seven staff including the Director. NPG was among several bodies to unsuccessfully lobby the Council on behalf of the Trust. After the cuts, institutions stepped in to help reshape Bodelwyddan Castle Trust's offer, including support from the Welsh government for a rehang with the Trust's own collections, and a £38k transition grant from HLF. Now however a resolution in a recent council meeting has assumed that the Trust will give up its 125 year lease, which runs to 2119, so that a hotel run in another part of the castle can take over the whole venue. The Castle Trust say it *"has no plans to [relinquish the lease] despite the considerable pressure that has been placed upon it."* The Council said it is unable to comment while negotiations are ongoing. [BBC](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Rhyll Journal](#)

Research and reports: culture and the civic space



Community arts project at Wheal Martyn, Cornwall. Photo: James Stuart.

'Live Well Make Art': Parliamentary group reports on arts and wellbeing

For the past two years, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing has been conducting an Inquiry into practice and research in arts in social care, and has produced a report 'Creative Health: the Arts for Wellbeing and Health'. Partners in the project include medical policy bodies such as the Royal Society for Public Health as well as the National Alliance for Arts, Health and Wellbeing and King's College London. AHRC was among the funding bodies. The report says there is substantial evidence that the arts can help in a healthcare setting, and measures the extent of existing work. Significant figures include:

- Of 2,500 museums and galleries in the UK, 600 have programmes targeting wellbeing.
- 10 million working days are lost in the NHS through illness, costing £2.4bn. Arts engagement helps health and care staff improve their own wellbeing and that of their patients.
- Every £1 spent on maintaining parks gives £34 in community benefits.
- The report says that poorer communities have less good health and are less likely to be involved in the arts. After engaging in participatory arts programmes 79% of people in deprived communities ate more healthily and 77% engaged in more physical activity.
- There are an estimated 49,000 amateur arts groups in England engaging in activities like painting, pottery and music, involving 9.4m people, or 17% of the population.

Case studies in the report include Greater Manchester where health and social care budgets of more than £6bn meet the needs of 2.8 million people, many of whom have a lower life expectancy than the England average. The population health plan specifically encourages using arts for health under the banner 'Live Well Make Art' and arts and culture partnerships are being created with the health service. Gloucestershire is funding the charity Artlift to prescribe patients eight week sessions with a professional artist. One person referred to the service writes "*I find that as long as I can paint I can cope. It doesn't mean that depression has gone but I no longer have to keep going back to my GP for more anti-depressants*".

Introducing the report the Chair of the Parliamentary Group, Lord Howarth of Newport said "*we offer a challenge to habitual thinking and ask for new collaborations to be formed across conventional boundaries... Culture change cannot be imposed by government and we are not asking for legislation...or more public spending. Government can, however, support the process of change.*"

[Arts Health and Wellbeing](#)

Gulbenkian inquiry into civic role of the arts

The Gulbenkian Foundation has published its phase one report 'Rethinking relationships' in its three-year inquiry into the civic role of the arts. The report explores the position of cultural organisations to become 'colleges (places of learning), town halls (where difficult issues can be debated), parks (a shared space open to all), temples (places of enlightenment and solace) and home (a place creating a sense of belonging). Many organisations involved in the project speak about democratisation and everyday creativity, and the barriers to becoming a multifaceted civic space. The project will be running sector events in the autumn, and offers a newsletter for those who would like to follow the progress of the project or contribute to the next phases. [Gulbenkian](#), [ADUK](#)

AHRC celebrates a decade of working with museums, libraries and universities

A decade ago, a number of galleries, libraries, museums, archives and heritage bodies were designated Independent Research Organisations (IROs) thus allowing the Arts and Humanities Research Council to support projects led by bodies outside universities for the first time. AHRC has now published a report celebrating that work. AHRC has invested £8.4m in IROs over the decade, which leveraged over £6m in additional funding. Case studies include:

- When the National Galleries of Scotland toured the painting exhibition 'Romantic Scotland' to China, an accompanying research project tracked Chinese reactions to landscapes captured in a medium very different from the Chinese tradition. By understanding the views of visitors, the project aimed to ultimately attract more tourists to Scotland.
- The Science Museum returned a 1925 manual telephone switchboard to its former home in Enfield, and collected oral histories from those who had used it up to 1960. Reinstalled in the museum, it attracted 110,000 visitors, despite being in a quiet corner of the building. The museum's Dr Tim Boon said 'research helps us create an atmosphere where people feel comfortable with science'.

- AHRC funding also brought a depth of research to the British Museum's very popular Hokusai exhibition, as well as supporting its digital legacy: a website bringing together his later works in one place.

[AHRC](#) (report), [AHRC](#) (more detail of IRO funding)

Internationalism and soft power

Harnessing soft power internationally

The thinktank ResPublica has produced a report recommending making better use of the UK's cultural assets abroad to maintain influence post-Brexit. It was produced in partnership with the British Council and Science Museum Group. 'Britain's Global Future: Harnessing the soft power capital of UK institutions' says government should have its own strategy but also tap into institutions such as the BBC, museums and the British Council. It argues that *"genuine soft power is derived from consistently upholding British ideals admired abroad – such as the transparency and accountability of our major political and cultural institutions"* but that in a time of declining faith in states and governments, civil society is better placed than governments to carry forward a soft power programme. The report assesses the reputation of the largest geopolitical forces such as China and the US, and how a good reputation internationally can have a strong effect on 'hard power': *"cultivating Britain's soft power in countries like China, India and Brazil has the potential to reap long term benefits if this can be used to persuade them to help to lead the effort to promote global stability."* It also defines the UK approach to soft power as more lively than some other nations with long cultural histories. One senior professional in the sector told ResPublica *"France and Italy are great cultures with a classical approach to their soft power. But British cultural exchange is rock and roll"*. The report also calls for fewer cuts to the sector so it is able to 'maximise its potential outreach'.

[ResPublica](#)

UK remains second in Soft Power 30

The UK remains in second place in the Soft Power 30, the annual report by strategic consultancy Portland and the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy. The report argues that although it is beyond its scope to look at the whole effect of Brexit or the Trump Presidency, both are likely to have negative effects in purely soft power terms. These shifts are having an effect across many other states and *"in this more complex and volatile context, soft power will be all the more critical to reshaping and mobilising fluid networks in pursuit of stability, prosperity, security."* Using objective data and specially commissioned polling over 25 countries, the survey found France had moved up to first place, and the US down two to third, while the UK remains second. The report notes that 'France's greatest strength lies in its vast diplomatic network' and that terrorism has not deterred tourists. The UK continues to flourish on the back of the GREAT campaign, and attracting more foreign students than any country except the US. Its reputation has fallen in Europe post Brexit, but not in the rest of the world. The US's even greater soft power decline has kept the UK in second place, but that decline 'is more in line with global sentiment than with fact' as its domination of academic research, film and tech still outstrips the rest of the world. [Soft Power 30](#)

Register significant documentary material with UNESCO's Memory of the World

UNESCO's Memory of the World programme encourages preservation of and access to documentary and audiovisual material. It is inviting applications to add material to its database during 2018. The main criterion is that material must be of outstanding significance to the UK. Material already registered includes the Magna Carta and a 1916 film about the Battle of the Somme. [UNESCO](#)

Also: The Eden Project in Cornwall is planning to create spin-off projects on every continent except for Antarctica, although founder Sir Tim Smit says it will not duplicate domes but create new projects to fit each space. *"We're not in the business of building theme parks, we're in the business of building hope, inspiration and leadership"*. [Guardian](#)

Act to facilitate return of Nazi-looted art extended post 2019

The government has renewed the Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act 2009, which allowed 17 national museums to return objects in their collections which had been looted in the Second World War. The Act expires on 11th November 2019 and the government plans to extend it indefinitely. The government is also holding a spoliation conference in London in September and has called for stronger efforts from the international community to return Nazi-looted art. Meanwhile, designs for the planned Holocaust Memorial and Education Centre are on display at the V&A until 22nd August. [Museums Journal](#), [Gov.uk](#)

Views from the Creative Industries Federation conference

The Creative Industries Federation held a wide-ranging conference exploring the national and international scene for UK arts and creative industries. DCMS Minister Matt Hancock, ACE Chair Nicholas Serota and V&A Director Tristram Hunt were among the speakers, as well as a Barclays representative offering longer term forecasting and Turkish writer Elif Shafak, discussing lessons from diminishing democracy in Turkey.

- Tristram Hunt said that there is a disaffection in the UK beyond cities, and that it is the 'responsibility of national museums to reconnect with the hinterland'.
- Museums must also engage with diaspora communities, who can be partly addressed by showing international work.
- Nicholas Serota echoed the importance of international work and exchange in strengthening the national culture, and said that artists, exhibitions and creative work must continue to move in and out of the UK whatever the result of the Brexit negotiations. He added "*cultures that cut themselves off may become exquisite, like a rare breed of animal; but ultimately they stagnate and are irrelevant to a changing world.*"
- He also announced plans for an ACE Creative Practitioners Fund to focus on research and development, preparatory work and international travel.
- Matt Hancock said the work of persuading government of the usefulness of the Creative Industries has been done, and that the joint tasks now centre around generating the right talent through education, employing a diverse workforce to make use of all the UK's talent and creating content for the market.

[Guardian](#)

Also: Academics at British universities continue to chart a 14% decline in applications from overseas students to UK universities over 13 months, while some universities worry about retaining vital staff. Oxford University is planning an 'inventive approach' to keeping EU talent and has raised 'a couple of million pounds' to this end. [El Pais](#)

'See the steeple pine, the hills as old as time'

Culture Minister John Glen has placed an export bar on a drawing of the Schmadribach Waterfall by the Austrian Romantic artist Joseph Anton Koch. Koch, who was important in popularising Alpine scenery among artists, drew the picture around 1793. Only seven of his works now remain in UK public collections. The asking price is £68,750 and the export bar runs to 27th September, with a possible extension to 27th December. [Gov.uk](#)

Jobs

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

- [Porter Messenger, part time - Royal Museums Greenwich](#)
- [Server Infrastructure Analyst - V&A](#)
- [Schools and Families Officer - Sir John Soane's Museum](#)
- [Trainee Registrar - Royal Armouries](#)
- [Customer Service Team Leader - IWM Duxford](#)

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

And finally...

Written on running water

In 1900 two friends set up an artistic printing press in London and invented Doves Type. Inspired by the innovations of William Morris, it was considered by many to be the most beautiful typography ever invented. However, the friends fell out and in a fit of revenge, one threw the punches, matrices and type itself into the Thames at Hammersmith Bridge in 1916. A century later, haunted by the beauty of work printed in Doves, graphic designer Robert Green hired three ex-Marine divers to search the riverbed for the lost letters. They found 151 pieces, which had drifted less than 20 yards in a century. Today Green has made a digital version, and Doves Type is once again a going concern, available online to romantics, creatives and printers. [Buzzfeed](#), [Doves Type](#)

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