

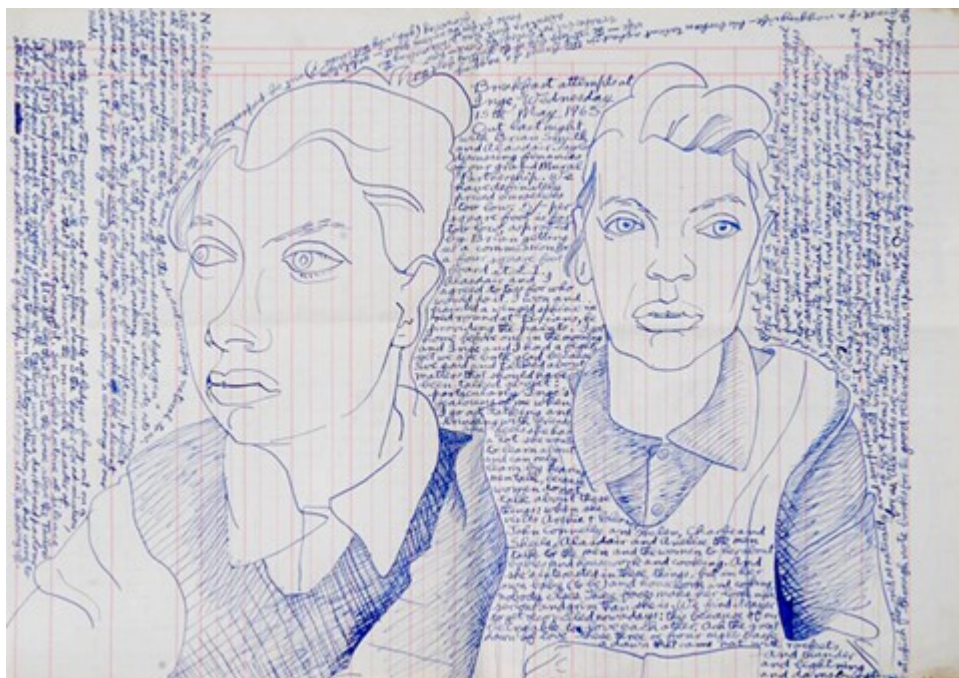
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NMDC news



2015 Working Internationally Conference

ICOM UK, the National Museum Directors' Council and York Museums Trust will host the third Working Internationally Conference on 5th March 2015 at The Hospitium in York.

This is the first time that the Conference has been located outside London, and is an opportunity for those involved in museums' international work to share information and good practice, discover new developments, and network.

The programme for 2015 has five themes:

- International audiences: with a focus on inbound tourists
- International partnerships: working with India and Europe
- Practicalities of international work: managing the risks to objects, people, finances and reputation
- Putting funding packages together: case studies
- Recent developments: Arts Council England and international work

The cost of the one-day conference is £35 per person including morning tea and coffee, lunch and a post conference tour of the newly refurbished York Art Gallery. Tickets and the outline of the programme are available here: <http://2015workinginternationallyconference.eventbrite.co.uk>

Please note that rail travel to York can be much cheaper if booked up to 12 weeks in advance. The Hospitium, part of York Museums Trust, is located just 10 minutes' walk from York Railway Station.

Funding

Autumn Statement

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 3rd December included announcements of funding for various culture and heritage projects, including £1m for a 'Great Exhibition in the north' which will 'celebrate the great art, culture and design of the north'. A £78m contribution towards proposals from Manchester City Council for construction of a new theatre and exhibition space, 'The Factory Manchester' was also announced. Other announcements included:

- Confirmation of the government's offer of £10m to support Glasgow School of Art following the fire earlier this year;
- £3 million for arts projects focussed on northern cities - including Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield and Newcastle - to commemorate the centenary of the First World War;
- £1.6m towards the restoration of the Thiepval Memorial in northern France, as part of commemorations marking the centenary of the Battle of the Somme in 2016;
- £15m for a new 'Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund' for maintenance of church roofs;
- That the government 'will consider the benefits and costs of the relocation of the museum collections currently housed at Blythe House'.

[Gov.uk](#) (full Autumn Statement)

Proportion of charitable giving sustaining DCMS museums increases

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has released statistics showing how its directly supported museums have been funded for 2013/14. Key findings include:

- Overall 32% or £974m of income came from government Grant in Aid; 15% or £455m from donations, sponsorship and membership; and £1,588m or 52% from other sources. 1% came from donated objects.
- Grant in Aid is now the smallest source both in terms of actual money and as a proportion of total funding since 2008/9. In 2012/13 GiA was £1,032m.
- Donations have risen steeply this year to £455m, compared with £293m last year and £204m in 2008/9.

[Gov.uk](#) (charitable giving)

Sajid Javid marks 20 years of cultural National Lottery funding

The National Lottery turned 20 in November, and to mark the occasion Culture Secretary Sajid Javid visited Margate – a town which has been transformed by Lottery investment, and in particular by the Turner Contemporary art gallery. He said: *"the National Lottery...has raised £32 billion for projects across the whole of the UK. Turner Contemporary is a fantastic success story - it has welcomed 1.4 million visitors from home and abroad, bringing in £32 million to the local economy. It is not only helping the ongoing regeneration of Margate but it is also enriching lives by engaging people in the arts."*

ACE gave £4.1m in lottery funding towards the building of the gallery, and has invested a further £1m since it opened in 2011. Other projects, via the Heritage Lottery Fund, include £600k spent on restoring historic buildings in the town and £6.1m towards restoring the Dreamland Amusement Park

– home of the oldest surviving rollercoaster in the UK. It will reopen as a vintage theme park next year. [DCMS](#)

ACE seeks participants in new trial to improve commercial income stream

ACE is trialling a new digital research project called Insight which aims to help optimise the income stream of museums and other cultural attractions. The work is being carried out by Black Radley (who helped Tyne & Wear Museums & Archives improve their income earlier this year), Bath Spa University and the Ryan O'Neill Partnership. Dr Joe Collins who is working on the project said *"Insight isn't about reinventing the wheel, it's about gathering existing data on the factors that impact on commercial performance and combining them to create a market picture that is clearer than it ever has been before."* The more participants, the better the data, and taking part in the trial is free. Applications are open until 31st December. [ACE](#)

Nesta report explores the growth of alternative finance

A new Nesta report gives a comprehensive review of alternative financing models some of which are increasingly used in the cultural sector – from raising capital to crowdsourcing donations, or crowdsourcing with significant rewards. Crowdsourcing is expected to have grown 161% in 2013 – 14. Successful donation crowdfunding projects raised an average of £6,102 in 2014, and provided knock-on benefits including offers of voluntary help. [Nesta](#)

Also: the Art Fund's new crowdsourcing platform is reflecting many of the findings from the Nesta report. Current campaigns include an attempt to raise £25k by December 4th for Ironbridge's Museum of the Gorge. Rewards for donation include tote bags, free admission and limited edition tiles. [ArtFund](#)

Creative Scotland increases funding by 10%

Creative Scotland has announced the recipients of regular funding for the period 2015–18. The total distributed has increased from £90m to £100m since the last round of funding. 119 organisations will now be supported for a three year term, compared to just 45 in 2012–15, and 57 bodies are moving from shorter term arrangements to three year funding. Janet Archer, Chief Executive of Creative Scotland, said *"in direct response to the high number of fundable applications that we received, and by re-profiling our budgets over the next three years, we have been able to increase the overall budget for this round of regular funding...we received 264 applications...of which a significant number could have been supported through this funding route if more resources were available"*. The extra £10m has been found from other areas of Creative Scotland's budget. [Creative Scotland](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Mayor of London warns against less ACE support for London

London Mayor Boris Johnson and Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture Munira Mirza have both criticised the findings of the parliamentary committee which argued that more of ACE's funding should support work outside London. Mirza writes *"successful industries tend to cluster around centres of excellence — think Silicon Valley or Hollywood — but their benefits spread out. If we try to allocate money by measuring geographical "fairness" or in pursuit of extraneous social and economic objectives, we'll probably end up with more disasters such The Public in West Bromwich, built with the best of intentions but lacking creative energy. The arts centre closed after wasting millions of pounds of public money."* Boris Johnson said *"Arts Council England funding represents only one third of the public investment in the arts and more than half of the organisations it regularly funds spend 80 per cent of their time outside the capital."*

However, writing for *Arts Professional*, Liz Hill said that Boris Johnson had misrepresented the Arts Council's statistics, which show only that 80% of *touring* by half of London based companies is outside the capital, rather than 80% of their whole programme. As only 53% of London organisations tour, and only 15% of their total work is toured, the figure for London-based organisations reaching the regions is much smaller than the Mayor's office has assumed. [London.gov](#), [Evening Standard](#), [Arts Professional](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Understanding Gift Aid donor behaviour

HMRC has produced a document exploring the public's behaviour when filling in Gift Aid forms. It gives examples of times when the public claim when they should not, or conversely fail to fill in Gift Aid forms because they misunderstand the potential costs and believe they may pay extra tax. The National Audit Office estimates that £1.3bn in donations could be claimed for Gift Aid but are not. Research found that few people read Gift Aid declarations, and so opportunities to change the public's perceptions are low. HMRC recommended breaking down information into bite sized pieces of information to be ticked, and 'disrupting' the usual Gift Aid process so that people understand their eligibility, and the benefits of the scheme to cultural organisations. The government is simplifying Gift Aid forms from 2015. [NCVO](#), [Gov.uk](#), [Museums Journal](#)

£45m in cultural gifts received through tax exchange schemes

The Arts Council has published its 2013/14 report on the Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts schemes. £45m worth of works of art, manuscripts and archives have entered UK public collections in exchange for tax relief. Acceptance in Lieu accepts cultural items instead of inheritance tax, while the Cultural Gifts Scheme (now in its first full year of operation) encourages donations during the owner's lifetime. Cultural Gifts this year included Vincent Van Gogh's *Tête de Paysanne*, John Walsh's *The Dinner Party*, and Joseph Wright of Derby's *Portrait of Elizabeth Balguy*. Acceptance in Lieu collections ranged from the land attached to a country house to Lucian Freud's £16m collection of works by Frank Auerbach. The report highlights that museums and heritage properties which have not previously benefited from the scheme, such as Red House in Bexleyheath have become recipients, and that objects have frequently been placed in settings which reflect their history. [Arts Council](#), [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#), [BBC](#)

Arts and science education



Fierce debate as Nicky Morgan urges students to study science

Education Secretary Nicky Morgan gave a speech at the Science Museum on 10th November urging students to take more science subjects. She said that the newly launched 'Your Life' campaign would work to persuade girls in particular to study physics and other STEM subjects, emphasising that these should not be a male preserve. In 2011, only 19% of girls currently achieving A* at GCSE went on to study physics at A level. The speech was welcomed by Science Museum Director Ian Blatchford, who announced that a three year exhibition to encourage young people to take science subjects is in the pipeline.

However the speech also provoked a widespread backlash because of the implication that arts subjects are now less useful than the sciences: Morgan said "*the subjects that keep young people's options open and unlock doors to all sorts of careers are the STEM subjects*". Sarah Churchwell at

the University of East Anglia was typical of subsequent commentary in arguing that both arts and sciences are necessary in the modern world: *"what is outmoded is not the study of arts and humanities instead of the sciences: what is outmoded is the idea that educated people need to understand only one subject in a globalised world."* The National Union of Teachers and the University of the Arts, London also criticised Morgan's speech.

The *Telegraph* pointed out that the speech followed stats published last year showing an 80% increase in uptake for humanities, business and arts or design degrees since 2002, but only a 20% increase for sciences, engineering and technology. The Department for Education said that the Education Secretary *"had not meant to advocate one over the other, but wanted to stress the importance of STEM"*. [Gov.uk](#), [Science Museum blog](#), [The Conversation](#) (Sarah Churchwell), [Independent](#), [The Conversation](#) (Rob Kessler), [Your Life](#), [Telegraph](#)

In praise of soufflé: Lords debate on the value of arts education

The Earl of Clancarty called a debate in the House of Lords on 28th November to discuss arts education and advocate for a broad 'soufflé' of subjects. He said that *"the interplay between contrasting subjects.. is the vital heartbeat of an excellent education"* and criticised the Education Secretary, Nicky Morgan for seeing education only *"through the narrow prism of the labour market."* But he added that groups from the CBI to the Royal Bank of Scotland were also explicitly keen to hire those with an arts education: *"The Royal Bank of Scotland said only last week that it now wanted to employ arts graduates because it believed that its economists and mathematicians showed too much so-called linear thinking, which the bank had the temerity to suggest was in part responsible for the financial crisis—and it might be right."*

Overall GCSE arts subjects have fallen by 23% since 2003, 13% since 2010. He praised the Tate on Minecraft and the Public Catalogue Foundation's Art in Schools programme, but said they were 'icing not cake' and could not replace what was missing from the core of education.

Lord Cashman described how going to the theatre transformed his life as a child, and said that government policy now risked making arts remote from people with working class backgrounds, adding *"we do not want the children being educated now to live in silos. We want them to imagine and to connect"*. Baroness Kidron said that as a film director she felt considerable sympathy for Nicky Morgan's speech and for girls seeking work outside traditional gender roles, but thought she was mistaken to pit the sciences against the arts, both of which she argued were crucial to a digital culture.

Lord Nash, speaking for the government, said that he supported the value of an arts education, and that the government had been misrepresented. He said *"under the previous Government, the number of pupils taking a core suite of academic subjects fell from 50% to 22%."* The number of pupils taking academic subjects is *"now back up by 64%"*. He said arts GCSEs had only fallen because more children were taking vocational exams and the number of GCSEs has generally shrunk. He added that the new 'Progress 8 measure' will include up to three arts subjects. [Hansard](#)

Government praised for increasing teacher training places for the arts

The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) has praised the government for listening to the sector as places for new teachers to train in arts subjects significantly increased for 2015/16 compared to this financial year. There will be 24% more design and technology places, 41% more art and design, 4% music, 38% dance and 45% drama.

In a briefing ahead of the House of Lords debate, the CLA also highlighted some statistics that concerned them: in 2012, 21% of schools with a high proportion of free school meals withdrew arts subjects in response to the Ebacc. They added that with 696 ACE-funded arts organisations and 24,347 schools, arts organisations cannot reach every child without the help of schools. [Cultural Learning Alliance](#)

Embracing an age of invention

Creative Industries Federation launches to speak up for a thriving sector

A new body, the Creative Industries Federation, has just launched. Writing in the *Guardian*, its director John Kampfner highlighted the strength of the sector, which grew 10% in 2012, outperforming other UK industries. He also spoke about UK creativity's global reach (with Chinese audiences begging the Prime Minister for more *Sherlock* during a recent visit) but warned that cuts and underinvestment could undermine this advantage:

"The financial, curatorial and jobs benefits of links such as these are potentially enormous. For this to happen, the private sector must look beyond its bottom line and assume its role in developing talent; the public sector must rid itself of any vestiges of 1980s-style entitlement thinking and embrace a more entrepreneurial spirit... We will challenge both ourselves and politicians. If we continue to under-invest in our culture at its grassroots we will choke off the source of our creative industries. If politicians continue to denigrate cultural education, as education secretary, Nicky Morgan, did when she crassly said an arts degree would harm young people's job prospects, we will destroy the talent pool. As we disinvest, others, such as the Chinese, are pouring resources into the next generation of creatives."

The group consists of individuals, trade bodies, universities and arts and cultural organisations. [Guardian](#), [Creative Industries Federation](#)

Black holes and flower lamps: Science Museum's Inventor in Residence speaks

The Science Museum's Inventor in Residence Mark Champkins has been speaking about his work to the *Guardian*. His task is to create objects that draw on the museum's own collection or illustrate scientific phenomena. Some are sold in the museum's shop, others are special commissions or created for an exhibition opening. In 2012 Champkins made a Black Hole Light for Professor Stephen Hawking's 70th birthday – the twisting fluorescent tube represents the path light takes as it falls into a black hole. He has also designed a flower lamp whose petals open and close as the light is switched on and off, and has found ways to make Science Museum pencils, sold to thousands of children, more interesting.

Champkins says diversity of experience is essential to being a good inventor *"it goes counter to most professions to diversify your areas of expertise and take on projects in as many different areas as possible, but you should. It's essential in order to be able to learn the perspectives from which an idea needs to be interrogated. It will likely result in a sporadic and unsteady income stream – and an uncertain career – but you will be a better inventor."* [Guardian](#), [Science Museum](#) (Black Hole Light) [Mark Champkins](#) (Open Up Lamp)

Creativity and the future of employment



Be creative, and a robot won't pinch your job, says Nesta

Nesta's recent conference, Future Shock, and subsequent blogs have explored the extent to which creativity will protect workers in creative jobs from being replaced by automated systems, including robots, in the next 20 years. There are currently 1.8 million creative jobs in the UK – representing a growth rate three times greater than other types of jobs according to government classifications. A recent study, *The Future of Employment: how susceptible are jobs to computerisation?* suggests that 47% of US jobs may be replaced by automation in the next 20 years, but only 36% of UK jobs, as a larger fraction are broadly creative and not easily automated. [Nesta](#), [Oxford University](#), [Nesta](#) (Future Shock)

Clore Duffield unveil ten new learning spaces to mark 50th anniversary

The Clore Duffield Foundation will be opening ten new learning spaces, bringing the total to 50, to mark its 50th anniversary. Many of the spaces will be in museums and galleries, including a fourth space on a Tate site, this time at Tate Liverpool. Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft and the Etches Collection, a new museum showing the finest collection of Jurassic fossils, will also both receive a Clore space. Dame Vivien Duffield said “*We never set out to have this many learning spaces, we just funded what we cared about, but when we looked back over the years we realised what had been achieved and what it represented in terms of our arts education investment all over the UK, particularly for children.*” [Clore Duffield](#)

A New Direction offers ‘cultural offers’ website for London schools

The London cultural education charity A New Direction is launching a new website to help schools link up with cultural providers. AND's Steve Woodward introduced #ANDtogether, explaining how easy it is to get into a cultural rut: “*London's cultural landscape is so huge, schools' time and resources stretched, and the temptation to contact or work with the same organisations over and over again because it saves time and 'you know what you're getting' is reinforced by the cultural sector's tendency to market programmes and offers to the same schools... but if the same schools are just presented with the 'off the shelf' offer repeatedly, where are the new ideas, the bespoke, co-constructed projects and partnership, the real learning for children and young people?*” The new website is supported by the Arts Council and is currently running in beta. [Together website](#), [A New Direction](#)

The long, withdrawing roar of government funding?

The privatisation of English Heritage

An article in the *Art Newspaper* by Robert Hewison takes a longer view on the recent changes to English Heritage which will make it a self-sustaining body by 2022, managing properties licensed by Historic England. Chief Executive Simon Thurley is quoted saying that when the Coalition came to power in 2010, it asked whether EH's portfolio "*could be given away, sold or dismembered in some way.*" Thurley says the model he developed is essential in a landscape where cultural spending is going to continue to be "viciously cut". The National Trust is among the bodies who have now welcomed the plan, but the Heritage Alliance is concerned that Historic England will still need funding to carry out its statutory duties. Its grants to private owners to repair heritage properties have halved to £13m since 2010. Thurley argues that the economic model is "fundamentally broken" with cuts to English Heritage at 30% and to Natural England at 50%. HLF money has increased, but the £50m it has offered is dwarfed by £500m in lost funding. Robert Hewison argues that Historic England should merge with Natural England, and take over the funding of local museums, currently run by ACE. He also believes that sustaining local museums should become a statutory obligation. [Art Newspaper](#) (this article subscription only)

Benefactor offers to match donations for Ashmolean's £50m endowment fund

An anonymous benefactor will match fund contributions to the Ashmolean's endowment fund. The fund is intended to raise £50m to support the museum in the long term, and has a first target of £25m by 2020. Alex Sturgis, the museum's new director said "*We are establishing the Ashmolean Fund to help support the future of the museum and we have just received an extraordinary multimillion-pound pledge on the condition that we match it. This means every gift to the Ashmolean Fund for the foreseeable future will be doubled.*" He added "*There's only one way in which public funding is going. The only way we can be sure of our future security is this endowment.*" Other recent gifts include an endowment to fund the Keeper of Antiquities from the Sackler Foundation. [Museums Journal](#), [Ashmolean](#)

Scottish Heritage bodies merge

Scottish MPs have unanimously voted for the merge of two heritage bodies, Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. The new body will be called Historic Environment Scotland. During the debate, Culture Minister Fiona Hyslop drew attention to the value of the heritage sector: "*As well as being central to telling the story of our nation, the historic environment already supports more than 40,000 jobs, contributes well over £2 billion a year to Scotland's economy, and contributes to the wellbeing of our communities. There is no reason why it cannot offer more... The new approach will bring resources, skills and experience together, and it will simplify procedures. That will help create conditions in which our historic environment can flourish.*" [Scottish parliament](#), [Herald Scotland](#)

Arts Council NI chief exec launches public petition against further cuts

Following a major drop in Treasury subsidy to Northern Ireland, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland is likely to face cuts of 10% next year. A consultation by the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCALNI), which remains open until 29th December, airs plans including cuts to hours and book purchases for libraries, and fewer events and exhibitions for museums. The paper warns that "*some organisations involved in the promotion and delivery of arts will cease to receive funding and this may put their viability into question.*" Arts Council Chief Executive Roisin McDonough has launched a public petition asking for no more cuts saying "*we have already shouldered six consecutive cuts in the last three years*". A campaign film features James Nesbitt, who lists leading commercial actors and performers nurtured by publicly funded theatre. [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only), [BBC](#), [DCAL](#), [Arts Council Northern Ireland](#)

IWM seeks to close library and shed staff to save £4m

The Imperial War Museum is planning to close the library on its Lambeth site as part of an attempt to meet the shortfall created by £4m of cuts. The museum is also contemplating 60–80 redundancies and closing the education centre at IWM Duxford. The Prospect Union is opposing the closure of the library. Its negotiator Andy Bye said *"Our next move will be to seek parliamentary scrutiny of the proposal because the cuts are stopping the museum from doing what it should be doing... the fundamental thing is that it is meant to give the public access to its resources."* IWM said that it would not be deaccessioning any objects, and that the library would be accessible by appointment. [Museums Journal](#), [Arts Industry](#)

Royal Armouries retreats from Kentucky outpost

A decade long loan of 250 significant objects from the Royal Armouries Museum to the Frazier Historical Arms Museum in Kentucky has ended, and the Frazier Museum will no longer be listed as a branch of Royal Armouries. Royal Armouries had hoped that the loan might help evolve donations and an American Friends branch, but neither of these materialised. Director Edward Impey said that the experiment was not a failure, as the US public had been able to see the collection, but added *"you have to go in with your eyes open and not expect the world"*. [Art Newspaper](#) (this article subscription only), [Frazier Museum](#)

Measuring heritage and happiness

John Major and others champion the cultural sector in Arts Council's *Create*

Arts Council England has published *Create*, 'a journal of perspectives on the value of art and culture'. It brings together writers, doctors, economists and elder statesmen to make the case that the arts are essential.

Economist Howard Davies writes *"foreign visitors pour into the Tate, the National Gallery and the British Museum before and after their pints and pasties. The World Economic Forum produces a league table of tourism competitiveness, an important component of which is a factor known as 'cultural resources', which its analysis shows are an important influence on tourist revenues. The UK is in third position."* John Ashton, President of the Faculty of Public Health, argues that culture is a vital component in providing societal wellbeing. Former Prime Minister John Major says that arts bodies should tell the Treasury that the arts are "not an optional extra" citing their 'soft power' capacity for making friends with other countries, and in shaping rounded personalities.

In his foreword, ACE Chair Peter Bazalgette says *"we can't afford not to fund the arts"* and describes how its political, economic and social power has been harnessed by everyone from Renaissance Princes to the Victorians creating the Great Exhibition. Simultaneously the Arts Council has overhauled their advocacy toolkit; they hope that used alongside *Create* it will be valuable to everyone advocating for culture. [Arts Council](#) (*Create*), [Arts Council](#) (advocacy toolkit)

Heritage Counts 2014 published

English Heritage has published its annual survey of statistics and an overview of the state of the historic environment. This year the focus is on the value of heritage – particularly individual, economic and community wellbeing. Research into willingness to pay (exploring the total economic value of heritage) and wellbeing were included for the first time. Findings included:

- There were 58.6m visits to historic sites in England during 2013.
- Economist Daniel Fujiwara and others have calculated the amount of money you would have to take away from someone to return them to the level of wellbeing they would have experienced if they did not visit heritage sites. Fujiwara calculates that heritage overall is worth £1,646 per annum, assuming 3.4 visits per year (using the same parameters, sport is worth £993 per year).
- Seven out of ten adults believe that heritage sites are important to their local community and adults living near heritage sites have a stronger sense of place.
- Heritage projects are good for community, with 92% of participants saying they met new people this way and 35% sustaining the friendship outside of the project. 445,000 people volunteered in the sector in 2014.
- Participants in heritage projects reported levels of good mental health and wellbeing much higher than the general population, and 35% reported an increase in self-esteem.

- In 2011 54% of overseas tourists visited historic buildings. On the National Brand Index, Britain came 5th out of 50 for an environment rich in historic buildings and monuments.

The report also describes community-led work to save the Ivy House in Southwark and to turn Hartley's Village (once a centre for jam production) from a quasi-derelict place into a conservation area. In both cases, they were able to create community prosperity from the projects. [English Heritage](#)

Also: English Heritage has just published *Children and Place*, which explores how teachers and heritage specialists can work together to unlock the history of historic places. [English Heritage](#)

Happy Museum project evolves parallel group in Scotland

The Cantie Museum project, which is developing many of the same ideas as the Happy Museum for audiences in Scotland is gathering force, and initial pilot projects are being planned. Formal structures are still evolving, but you can find relevant materials here: [Happy Museum](#)

Survey: tell King's College about your cultural partnerships

The Cultural Partnerships team at King's College London is inviting organisations to tell them about the good and bad outcomes of working in partnership in the cultural sector in 2014. The snapshot will be used towards creating case studies, in-depth interviewing, and deciding on themes for their subsequent work. [King's College](#)

Behind Closed Doors: opening stores to visitors

The Marches Network has produced a succinct guide to opening museum stores to the public. It highlights a list of museums who give public access to stores including RAMM, MShed, Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Walsall Museum Service with links to details of their projects and events. [Marches Network](#)

Awards



Nesta cultural open data challenge offers prize of up to £50k

Nesta and the Open Data Institute are seeking entries to answer the question "how can we use open data to engage more people, and more diverse people, in UK heritage and culture?" Applicants must use at least one open dataset published by a UK public body. Nesta has already done some groundwork to identify relevant datasets, and is interested in proposals that will benefit groups who are not well served by the current cultural and heritage offer. Applications close on 9th February – promising applications will then be further developed at a Creation Weekend at the British Museum. A first prize of up to £50k will be awarded in May 2015. [Nesta](#)

Prizes for Museum education volunteers announced

Winners of the annual British Museum / Marsh Christian Trust prize for museum volunteers in education have been announced. Nine winners received £500 each. Overall winners were the Herb Garden volunteers at Bede's World in Jarrow and the family learning volunteers at the Museum of London Archaeological Archive in Hackney. [Museums Journal](#), [Bede's World](#), [Marsh Christian Trust](#)

Conservation awards open for nominations

The annual conservation awards are now open for applications. Six awards include conservation in the community, student conservator, innovation and industrial heritage. The closing date is 15th May 2015. [Conservation Awards](#)

Sustainability grants for smaller museums

The Association of Independent Museums (AIM), supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, is offering the next round of the AIM Sustainability Grant Scheme. It is open to museums with an annual turnover of less than £300k or less than 50,000 visitors a year. The scheme has distributed £617k since 2006 and helps with business planning, hiring consultants to support revenue streams and helping with succession planning. [AIM](#)

Nominations open for businesses which sponsor the arts

The Arts category of the Sponsorship Awards are now open for applications. The awards are run annually in partnership with Arts&Business. Earlybird applications close on 12th December, with a final deadline of 16th January. [Arts&Business](#)

Bus station inspired art planned, as Preston Harris Museum wins Contemporary Art Prize

The Contemporary Art Society has awarded £40k to the Preston Harris Museum & Art Gallery and the artist Nathaniel Mellors to create an original artwork, which will then become a permanent part of the museum's collections. Mellors will be creating "a hybrid work of fiction, sculpture, performance and film" in celebration of the brutalist architecture of Preston Bus Station. Director of the Contemporary Art Society Caroline Douglas said the piece had won against a strong field, adding "Nathaniel Mellors' work connects with a tradition of absurdist and satirical film making in Britain that includes such figures as Lindsay Anderson and Derek Jarman." [Museums Journal](#), [Contemporary Art Society](#)

Events

ACE offers Digital Utopias in Hull

Arts Council England are hosting Digital Utopias, a one day conference exploring how digital can develop creativity in the arts. There will be speakers from organisations including Google Cultural Institute, the Photographers Gallery, V&A, RSC and the The Space. There will be demonstrations of digital sculpture, motion tracking in dance and theatre and new publishing and distribution methods. The event takes place at Hull Truck Theatre on 20th January as a 'trailblazer' for Hull City of Culture 2017. Tickets are just £6. [Eventbrite](#), [Arts Council](#)

Good Enough to Eat: developing museum catering opportunities

Good Enough to Eat is a one day course run by Oxford Aspire on January 28th, exploring how to create a good museum café or restaurant, and how they can be turned into valuable revenue streams. Case studies will be provided by speakers from the Garden Museum, Ashmolean Dining Room, Compton Verney and Oxford University Museum of Natural History. Tickets are £25. [Oxford Aspire](#)

Digital Past 2015

The annual two day conference Digital Past is taking place in Swansea on 11th–12th February in Swansea. It explores technologies for disseminating the heritage of Wales and the UK. Topics already confirmed include history on Minecraft, the SCAPE project which crowdsources information on coastal erosion by mobile phone, and the Llan Archaeology and History Society's work to track local archaeology. Tickets are £69. [Digital Past](#)

Everyday Muslim symposium explores cultural heritage

The Khizra Foundation is holding its first 'Everyday Muslim' symposium on the representation of British Muslim identities in museums, archives, media and arts in Britain. Speakers include Humayun Ansari (Professor of History of Islam and Culture at the University of London), Navid Akhtar (Executive Director of Gazelle Media) and Sarah Pickthall who will discuss ancestor Marmaduke Pickthall, one of the earliest British translators of the Quran. Museum collecting policies and creating and using Muslim archives will also be discussed. The event takes place at Bishopsgate Institute on 31st January from 10.30am. Free, but booking essential. [Everyday Muslim](#)

Prime Minister announces Gallipoli commemorations

David Cameron has announced events to mark the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign on 24th–25th April 2015. They include a ceremony at the Helles memorial in Turkey and at the Cenotaph in London. There will also be an event at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth on 5th August centred around HMS M33, the last surviving ship from the campaign. [DCMS](#)

Major renovations

Weald and Downland museum receives £4m in HLF funding

The Heritage Lottery Fund has invested £4m in new facilities at the Weald and Downland Museum. The museum consists of traditional buildings in a rural landscape, which tell the story of rural life over 600 years. Now a café, schools area, new ticketing and a shop, built around a gateway area, will help make the museum sustainable into the future, as well as more attractive to visitors. [HLF](#), [Weald and Downland Museum](#)

Shining Pavilions: Brighton gets £5m makeover

The HLF has earmarked £5m towards an overhaul of the Brighton Pavilion estate, giving £176k now for the further development of plans. This follows £5.8m from the Arts Council lottery last month. The major work includes cafes, viewing galleries and a 'creation space', but will also open hidden heritage spaces to the public for the first time. The project will make the gardens, museum and performance space into a major cultural hub for Brighton, more prominent and central to its life. [The Stage](#), [Brighton Dome](#)

SNP calls for Aberdeen Art Gallery renovation to be abandoned

The Scottish National Party has called for the £30m renovation of Aberdeen Art Gallery to be abandoned. Most of the funding is already in place, but SNP councillors said the costs of the project had soared, especially storage of collections, now doubled to £6m. Others have been unhappy about the detail of the work, including removing the gallery's marble staircase. [ALVA](#)

RAF museum sees London visitor figures rise by 69%

The RAF museum's visitor figures have greatly increased for the first half of the 2013/14 financial year. Visitors are up 69% in London and 20% at the Cosford site. The museum said the increase came from a decision by trustees "*to invest more in the marketing of the museum's London and Cosford sites to key audiences; to create engaging temporary exhibitions & events promoting them through social media; and to invest in a new, technology-based counting system for visitor numbers as recognised throughout the Museum and Visitor Attraction sectors.*" [RAF museum](#)

Local Council cuts



Museums Association finds one in ten museums considering selling off collections to raise funds

The Museums Association's Annual cuts survey reveals that one in ten museums have considered selling objects from their collections in order to make up financial shortfalls. Other figures include:

- 52% of museums saw their overall income fall in the last year;
- 21% have shortened opening hours and 9% have closed a part of their museum or its branches;
- 36% say school visits have declined since 2013;
- 53% of museums say that full time staff numbers have been cut, the highest figure since the MA survey began.

[Museums Journal](#)

Assessing the impact of cuts to local authorities

A number of reports and letters have explored the impact of cuts to local authorities over the past month. A report from the National Audit Office finds that arts and cultural spending accounts for 7% of all local authority budgets, but they will averagely have to absorb 16% of the savings Councils must achieve by 2015. Average cuts to arts budgets are 28.9% across the country. Welsh local authorities are warning of “*comprehensive service failures*” in the face of cuts, with non-statutory spending on the arts currently reduced by 5–30%, with estimates of 10–20% further cuts. In a letter to the *Observer* signed by councils of all parties, local authorities have told the government ahead of the Autumn Statement that they are unable to deal with another round of cuts. [Arts Professional](#) (NAO reports), [WGLA](#), [Arts Professional](#) (Welsh local government), [Guardian](#)

Neath Port Talbot Council seeks to sell artworks and reduce museum funding

Neath Port Talbot Council has become the latest to contemplate selling 617 artworks as it seeks to balance its budget for 2015–16. It had aimed to raise £1m through a plan to “*dispose of a limited number of paintings and artefacts plus Twyn yr Hydd House [a conference and wedding venue]*”. It later emerged that two of the four artworks were on loan from National Museum Wales and cannot be sold. The Council is additionally considering a £20k (25%) reduction in its grant to Cefn Coed Colliery Museum. [Museums Journal](#), [South Wales Evening Post](#)

19 Highland museums fear closure as council makes cuts

Highland Council is proposing cuts to 19 independent Highland museums which currently receive grants – beginning with a 10% cut next year, and subsequently moving to a cut of £714k while asking museums to bid against each other for support. The Highland Museums Forum says the grants are essential to open the museum doors, and that many would otherwise close, with an effect on tourism and local businesses. [Museums Journal](#), [Highland Museums Forum](#)

SAGE, TWAM and Baltic prepare for cuts

Gateshead Council became the latest to announce cultural funding cuts as it seeks to save £46m over two years. Tyne & Wear Archives & Museum Service will receive 10% cuts, while the Sage Gateshead and BALTIC art gallery will both receive 15% cuts. The council hopes to save £200k while avoiding redundancies at cultural venues. Other council plans include a reduction in road maintenance, a review of library and children's services and removal of a free support service for elderly people. [Chronicle Live](#)

Fire, looting and theft

Arson attack destroys reconstructed Roman house

Arsonists have burned down a reconstructed Roman house at Upton Country Park in Poole. Created in the 80s using oak, thatch, wattle and daub, and restored by volunteers in recent years, it was the only authentic reconstruction of a Roman artisan dwelling. Dorset police are seeking the arsonists who struck at around 8pm on November 10th. [Museums Journal](#), [Bournemouth Echo](#) (film), [Culture24](#)

Also: St Fagan's Natural History Museum is to reconstruct the medieval court of the Princes of Gwynedd. The building will be stone with a thatched roof, and nine metres high. School groups will be able to stay overnight in the completed building. [BBC](#)

Islamic State 'funded by archaeological looting'

It has emerged that black market sales of looted archaeological objects are the second largest source of funding for the Islamic State after oil. IS now controls more than a third of ancient sites in Iraq, raising 'hundreds of millions of dollars' through the sale of portable goods like tablets, manuscripts and cuneiform. A new bill in the US seeks to prevent Syrian loot from entering the country, and Germany's cultural minister has suggested that all cultural goods should have an official export licence from their country of origin in order to cross its borders. [The Art Newspaper](#), [Newsweek](#)

Chinese porcelain and rhino horn thieves appear in court

Twelve men appeared at Birmingham Crown Court on December 1st, accused of being involved in the spate of museum robberies in 2012 in which Chinese porcelain and rhino horn were particularly targeted. £20m of goods were stolen, and while some were recovered many are still missing. Eight people have already been jailed for the thefts. Jade from the Fitzwilliam Museum and Chinese ornaments from Durham University were among the objects stolen. At the December hearing, 11 were bailed until March 20th next year, while a twelfth man is being held in custody. [Museums Journal](#), [Daily Mail](#)

Tech

Nesta reports on digital culture in 2014

Nesta and Arts Council England have produced the second of three reports tracking the adoption of digital in the cultural sector 2013-15. The 2014 report showed that fewer organisations were new adopters, and that instead consolidation and profit from digital were marked trends. Statistics include:

- 51% said digital was essential to their business models, compared with 34% last year.
- Those organisations were much more likely to engage in revenue gathering activities compared with arts and cultural groups in general - 63% vs 38%.

- In the last 12 months, data has been used more frequently to identify the most 'valuable' audience members and supporters.
- 88% are using platforms like YouTube and Facebook compared with 83% in 2013.

[Arts Digital R&D](#)

Museums and libraries to be superfast wifi hotspots

DCMS has announced that by March 2015, 1,000 public buildings across the UK will be offering free public superfast broadband. Locations will include museums and galleries as well as civic centres, transport hubs and sports complexes. Culture Minister Ed Vaizey said *"these free hotspots will be instrumental in making UK cities even more appealing as places to not only do business, but to visit as well."* [DCMS](#)

Video game archive opens in Nottingham

An archive space telling the history of computer games is opening in Nottingham next spring. The National Videogame Archive will show 12,000 items belonging to the Science Museum and Nottingham Trent University Archive. The project is driven by Iain Simons, also director of GameCity, an annual video game culture festival which has taken place in Nottingham for nine years. The project is being supported for the first three year's by the city council and Nottingham funding bodies. [Museums Journal](#)

National Heritage Science Forum celebrates first birthday

The National Heritage Science Forum celebrated its first birthday at the British Museum. There are now 17 members including universities, professional bodies and heritage institutions, collaborating to offer a single voice for heritage science. [Heritage Science Forum](#)

HLF helps *Your Paintings* to go 3D

The HLF has awarded £2.84m for a new project to catalogue and digitise pictures of all the sculpture in public ownership in the UK. The work will be carried out by the Public Catalogue Foundation, the organisation behind the successful *Your Paintings* project. The work will begin in 2016 and take four years to complete, covering an estimated 85,000 sculptures from collections and 15,000 outdoors. An education project will also bring pieces of original sculpture into schools. [HLF](#), [Public Catalogue Foundation](#)

AIM energy action group helps museums save £114k

AIM is inviting museums across the UK to join its energy action group and save money on power bills. The group has already helped 36 museums make £114k in savings, just by spotting VAT and Climate Change Levy overpayments. Museums and heritage attractions of all sizes are invited to register. [AIM energy action group](#)

Copyright

Proposed changes to copyright law will allow museums to use

The Government is consulting on more changes to copyright legislation which could have a beneficial impact on museums. The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has drawn up proposals to reduce the term of copyright in unpublished works, including sound recordings, to be in line with published works (the author's lifetime plus 70 years). Presently, all unpublished works created before 1989 remain in copyright until 2039 and this means some very old works remain in copyright or that an artist's letters and diaries may remain in copyright long after the term of copyright in their artwork expired. The Government consultation on the proposed changes closes on 12th December, and organisations are encouraged to submit responses by email. [IPO](#)

A group called Free Our History, which includes the Imperial War Museum and CILIP, is leading a campaign to support the proposed reduction in the period of time before unpublished orphan works are no longer in copyright. IWM Director General Diane Lees said, *"During the First World War centenary commemorations, many organisations want to make original unpublished works such as diaries and letters accessible to the public. Because they are still under copyright protection, they cannot do so without seeking permission from the rights holder. This is even more problematic if the rights holders are untraceable."* [Museums Journal](#), [CILIP](#)

Government issues cultural statistics including exports and treasure finds

DCMS has released a number of statistics relating to cultural finds and exports. Significant figures include:

- There were 990 pieces of treasure discovered in 2012, and 993 in 2013. The vast majority were discovered through metal detecting.
- From 2013 – 14, there were 12,925 applications for export licences for cultural items, covering a total of 59,478 items. 22 objects were subject to a temporary export bar, eight of which were subsequently acquired by UK institutions. Their value at export deferral was £13.85m. They represent 17% of the total receiving an export bar. They included Jane Austen's ring, a bronze age mirror and some William Morris wall hangings.

[Gov.uk](#) (cultural exports), [Museums Journal](#), [Gov.uk](#) (treasure finds)

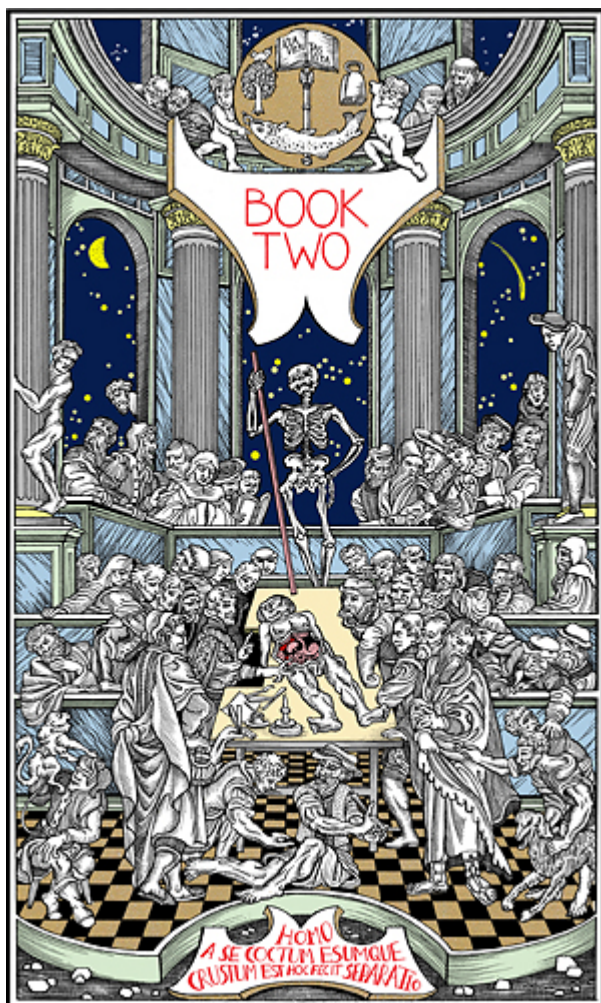
Jobs

Current vacancies on the NMDC jobs website include:

- [Metals Conservator - The Wallace Collection](#)
- [Patrons Administrator - Tate](#)
- [Web Content Developer - Shakespeare - The British Library](#)
- [Studio Design Manager - National Museums Scotland](#)
- [Archive Collections Manager - Science Museum \(Wroughton\)](#)

See the full selection of current jobs at NMDC members' organisations [here](#).

Images this month



Images this month come from *Alasdair Gray Spheres of Influence 1*, which is taking place at the [Gallery of Modern Art](#) (GoMA), Glasgow until 25 May 2015. It is part of the Alasdair Gray Season, which has further exhibitions at other venues across Glasgow until February, including Glasgow School of Art and Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum. As well as displaying the work of the author and artist himself, who turns 80 on December 28th, the exhibition also displays work from William Blake, Beardsley and others who influenced his practice.

Credits: Glasgow Museums/Installation shot of Alasdair Gray Season: Spheres of Influence I, GoMA, Glasgow Courtesy Glasgow Museums, Photo (c) Alan Dimmick

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