

In this month's edition:

- [Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales rejoins NMDC](#)
- [Museum pricing research and guidance published](#)
- [2024 ICOM UK Conference opens for booking](#)
- [Reaction to the Autumn Statement 2023](#)
- [Global call to put cultural heritage, arts and creative sectors at the heart of climate action](#)
- [Climate change is the single biggest threat to UK heritage say National Trust](#)
- [The Audience Agency announce merger with Culture24](#)
- [Creative and Cultural Skills to close](#)
- [English Heritage publishes annual Heritage Counts report](#)
- [New Museum Data Service Launched](#)
- [All In – a new UK-wide access scheme from Arts Council](#)

...and much more.

Section headings | [NMDC news](#) | [Members' news](#) | [Government news](#) | [Climate crisis and COP28](#) | [Sector news](#) | [Rising costs, funding pressures and organisation closures](#) | [Heritage](#) | [Collections](#) | [Digital](#) | [Accessibility and inclusion](#) | [Funding opportunities](#) | [Awards](#) | [Conferences and events](#) | [Appointments and resignations](#) | [Catch up](#) | [International news](#) | [Jobs](#)

NMDC news



Stanhope Forbes, Sheffield - River and Smoking Chimneys, 1915. Image © Sheffield Museums

Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales rejoins NMDC

Amgueddfa Cymru, represented by their new Chief Executive Jane Richardson, has rejoined the NMDC. The organisation left NMDC's membership in 2016. NMDC Chair Maria Balshaw said "I know I speak on behalf of all NMDC members in saying we are absolutely delighted to have Amgueddfa Cymru back within our membership, and to be representing museums across all four UK nations once again".

Jane Richardson was previously Chair of Cadw, supporting Wales's national heritage organisation through the pandemic and with the post-Covid recovery process, and Director of Economy and Place at Conwy County Borough Council, leading on major infrastructure projects including the creation of a new culture centre in Conwy. She has over 20 years' experience of leadership roles within the public, private and third sectors in Wales, including Visit Wales and the National Trust. [NMDC](#)

Museum pricing research and guidance published

A partnership between the Association of Independent Museums, Arts Council England, Museums Galleries Scotland, the Welsh Government, Art Fund and the National Museum Directors' Council has commissioned new research by DC Research and Durnin Research to explore current museum admissions pricing policies and their impact. The data provides a comprehensive and detailed overview of current charging approaches, useful benchmarking data and a range of case studies. There is also a Success Guide that includes how to communicate to your audiences. Highlights of the research include:

- A higher proportion of museums now charge for general admission – 51% in 2023 compared with 42% in 2016.
- Local authority museums are less likely to charge than independent museums or ex-local authority museums – 71% of local authority museums do not charge.
- There is a clear link to the importance of the visitor economy and the current admissions pricing policy with 81% of museums who self-report as a key attraction in their local area charging for admissions.

There will be an online session from AIM by the authors of the report on Thursday 14 December 11-12pm on [Zoom](#) and a session on 25 January 11-12.30pm to explore how museums decide on an admissions pricing policy [Zoom](#). [AIM](#) (website), [AIM](#) (full report, pdf, 83pgs), [AIM](#) (executive summary, pdf, 13 pgs) [AIM](#) (success guide, pdf, 24pgs)

2024 ICOM UK Conference opens for booking

Hosted by Ulster Museum in Belfast on 12 April 2024 the ICOM UK Conference will focus on division and discord within communities and the impact museums can have. 'Common ground: the role of museums in divided communities' will explore museums as important shared spaces. The conference is a collaboration between ICOM UK, NMDC and National Museums Northern Ireland. There are £70 discounted tickets for NMDC members, Early Bird tickets are £75 for non-members until 31 January and student tickets £40. [Eventbrite](#)

Coverage of UK Museum COP

Following the UK Museum COP event which took place on 31 October, the consensus and collective action made by National Museum Directors' Council members and other museum sector attendees has been reported in a number of publications. [NMDC](#) (press release), [Guardian](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [Blooloop](#), [ICOM](#)

Also: Hedley Swain, CEO of Brighton & Hove Museums and Chair of the UK Museum COP subgroup on Heritage Buildings, Planning and Adaption has written a blog about addressing the climate emergency and decisions that came out of the COP event. It includes a call for changes to planning recommendations and guidance so that carbon reduction and climate change mitigation will be made as important as heritage concerns. [Brighton & Hove Museums](#)

Members' news

British Museum debate over Parthenon Sculptures continues

Following comments from British Museum Chair, George Osbourne, at the annual dinner for trustees that he remained committed to a resolving the issue with Greece, the complex debate over the future of the Parthenon Sculptures was reignited after the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, cancelled a meeting with the Greek prime minister. [Museums Association](#) (Trustee dinner), [BBC](#), [Times](#), [FT](#), [Guardian](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Telegraph](#)

Also: V&A director says national museums 'hidebound' by legislation, 30 Nov, [M+H Advisor](#)

British Library continues to experience impact of cyber-attack

The British Library has faced on-going major technology outage as the result of a ransomware cyber-attack. The incident, which happened on the 31 October, is continuing to affect its website, online systems and some onsite services. In a statement on the 27 November the British Library acknowledged that some user data had been copied and was available on the dark web. They are continuing to be supported by the National Cyber Security Centre and are working with the Metropolitan Police and cyber security experts to confirm what material has been taken. [British Library update](#) (X/Twitter), [British Library](#) (current services available), [BBC](#), [Guardian](#), [FT](#)

Dominic Tweddle steps down after 15 years at the helm of the National Museum of the Royal Navy

Appointed in 2009 as the first Director-General on the creation of the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Tweddle brought together four museums – the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth, the Royal Naval Submarine Museum in Gosport, the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovil and the Royal Marines Museum in Eastney – in a complicated process of mergers. During his tenure he also negotiated with the Ministry of Defence for the transfer of HMS Victory into the NMRN group, and most recently secured £7.5m for the restoration of a Landing Craft for Tanks used during the D-Day Landings. Matthew Sheldon, Executive Director of Museum Operations, will assume the role of Director-General on a temporary basis until a successor is appointed. [NMRN](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Cornwall Museums Partnership to close following loss of NPO funding

The Cornwall Museums Partnership, set up in 2015, has made the decision to commence a phased closure process following the loss of Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation funding in January 2023. The Museum Development Officer role will continue to the end of this financial year and the Cornwall Heritage Awards will go ahead on 7 February 2024. [CMP](#), [Museums Association](#)

Tullie announces temporary closure for redevelopment

Tullie in Carlisle will close as part of a phased redevelopment programme on the 24 December 2023. Project Tullie saw the first phase of the Costume Collection opening in July 2021, phase two focuses on a more accessible entrance and atrium space and a new ground floor gallery. The £4.5m revamp will reopen in Summer 2024. [Tullie](#), [BBC](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Sir John Soane's Museum wins award for Drawing Office restoration

The Georgian Group has announced Sir John Soane's Drawing Office winner of the 'Restoration of a Georgian Interior' in their annual architecture awards. Working with Julian Harrap Architects on the extensive restoration project saw the oldest remaining architectural office of its type in Britain open for public tours for the first time in 200 years in May 2023. [Sir John Soane's Museum](#), [Georgian Group](#)

Hull's Spurn Lightship receives conservation award

The Martyn Heighton Award for Excellence in Maritime Conservation 2023, by National Historic Ship UK, has been awarded to Hull Maritime for best practice in demonstrating the principles in Conserving Historic Vessels. Built in 1927, the Spurn Lightship played a key role guiding vessels as they navigated the Humber estuary. Due to open in 2024, it is part of a larger project, supported by £13.6m of National Lottery Heritage Fund investment, to celebrate Hull's maritime heritage. [Hull Maritime](#), [NLHF](#)

Images this month

Images this month come from Sheffield Museums' new exhibition 'City of Rivers' which opened on 24 November at Weston Park Museum. The exhibition shows how rivers have shaped Sheffield over the centuries and runs till November 2024. Weston Park Museum is also celebrating the opening of a new Changing Places Toilet which will make the museum more accessible for visitors. [City of Rivers](#)

Government news

Reaction to the Autumn Statement 2023

National insurance cuts and an increase to the minimum wage took the headlines from Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's Autumn Statement delivered on the 22 November, with 110 measures aimed at boosting economic growth. But concerns have been raised over the precarious nature of local councils by the [Local Government Association](#). Other commentary from the [Charity Finance Group](#) referenced public sector budgets, and the [Association of Independent Museums](#) whilst welcoming an increase in the minimum wage voiced concern over museums operating in difficult funding environments. The round up from the [Museums Association](#) mentions cultural tax reliefs and business rates. [BBC](#) (Autumn Statement coverage)

Also: Civic museums grapple with an existential crisis, 21 Nov, [Museums Association](#)

Also: Nottingham city council wasn't reckless. It was hollowed out by austerity, 29 Nov, [Guardian](#)

DCMS annual report published

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport have published their annual report and accounts for 2022-23. The report includes details of Grant In Aid for sponsored bodies. [DCMS](#) (website), [DCMS](#) (report, pdf, 254pgs)

Final Levelling Up Round 3 funding announced to cultural projects across the country

The government has announced the recipients of Round 3 of the Levelling Up funding programme, splitting £1bn between 55 projects. According to the selection criteria published on the government website £100m was set aside for culture. [Gov.uk](#) (press release), [gov.uk](#) (list of projects), [Arts Professional](#) (£)



Jackie Prachek, Underbank Reservoir. Image © the artist.

Climate crisis and COP28

Global call to put cultural heritage, arts and creative sectors at the heart of climate action

NMDC was one of nearly 1,500 organisations and individuals to sign the 'Global Call to put Cultural Heritage, Arts and the Creative Sectors at the Heart of Climate Action' as COP28 gets underway in Dubai. Led by the Climate Heritage Network, it calls for artists and cultural voices across the world to support embedding culture into climate policy by asking the UN to approve a 'Joint Work Decision on Culture and Climate Action'. The call to action is still open for signatories: [Climate Heritage Network](#)

On 4 December the UAE and Brazil - hosts of COP28 and COP29 respectively - announced the launch of the Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action at the UNFCCC (GFCBCA). This international coalition of UN Member States, co-chaired by the UAE and Brazil, aims to build political momentum for the role of culture in climate change policy and to "advocate for culture-based climate action; to develop interventions, solutions, and multilateral action demonstrating the benefits of integrating culture into climate action; and to provide a space for all nations and communities, regardless of background or location, to share knowledge, experience, and best practices." [GFCBCA](#) (press release), [Julie's Bicycle](#), [Museums Association](#), [Europa Nostra](#)

Also: As COP28 opens in Dubai, museums grapple with Net Zero, 29 Nov, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

National Trust highlights three key priorities for heritage and nature prior to a general election

The three main asks are part of the National Trust's Election Policy Platform outlining seven critical priorities which should be at the forefront of a political agenda during the upcoming general election. The three main calls for action are:

- Progress to the renewal of nature must be accelerated with adequately resourced watchdogs with more teeth capable of tackling both sewage and agricultural pollution.
- Any future government should recognise the impact of climate change on the nation's heritage, landscapes and natural environment, including policy changes to help reduce emissions from historic houses. As well as supporting a green workforce capable of delivering retrofitting for homes and businesses.
- A legally binding target that everyone should be able to access green space within a 15-minute walk from their home. [National Trust](#) (policy platform, pdf, 22pgs), [NT](#) (press release)

Climate change is the single biggest threat to UK heritage say National Trust

'A climate for change: adaption and the National Trust' is a new report highlighting that without concerted action over 70% of the places in the care of the National Trust will be at risk because of climate related hazards by 2060. The report details how the Nation Trust are dealing with the impacts of climate change in the present and adapting to face them in the future. It includes case studies with specific detail on actions taken. [National Trust](#) (website), [National Trust](#) (report, pdf, 58pgs), [BBC](#), [Guardian](#)

The British Council releases two reports to support climate action in the arts

'Mapping trends and best practice in climate action and sustainability in the arts' looks at trends across the British arts and cultural sectors. Developed by researchers at the University of the Arts London, the scoping research highlights eight trends from across the UK including decarbonising arts and culture. 'Climate change impacts on cultural heritage' is a literature review that covers international evidence and research. [British Council](#) (website), [Mapping trends](#) (report, pdf, 45pgs), [Climate change literature review](#) (pdf, 74pgs)

Report highlights the need for a UK public engagement strategy on climate change

Published on the 5 September 2023 by Ashden, Climate Outreach and the Climate Citizens Research Group at Lancaster University the report – 'Towards a UK public engagement strategy on climate change' calls on the UK government to publish a public engagement strategy to tackle climate change, with four key asks:

- A nationwide strategy.
- Impact measurement.

- Sector specific strategies.
- A leadership role in international cooperation. [Climate Outreach](#)

NEMO launches interactive map highlighting the work of European museums on climate change and new research report.

NEMO, the Network of European Museum Organisations, has launched a new interactive map to demonstrate and create awareness of the museums across Europe who are actively contributing to climate action and sustainability. NEMO welcomes the involvement of UK museums and projects whether large or small. There are currently no UK projects listed.

NEMO has also produced a new report to coincide with COP28 – 'Museums, Climate and Politics – taking political action in the sustainable transition' has a useful overview of EU member states and examples of policies and reports on their current actions on climate change. There are examples of museum climate action and 7 tips for advocating the sustainable transition of your museum. [NEMO](#) (map), [NEMO](#) (report, pdf, 44pgs)

Also: Design Museum launches display space dedicated to design research on the environmental crisis, curated by Future Observatory, the museum's national research programme for the green transition. [Design Museum](#) **Also:** German Museum Association involved in the development of a uniform CO2 balancing standard in Germany which includes a CO2 calculator and mentions other calculators in Europe. [Museums Bund](#) **Also:** Climate activists attacks Velázquez's 'Rokeby Venus' at the National Gallery in London, 6 Nov, [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Guardian](#), [BBC](#), [BBC](#) (court report 21 Nov) **Also:** Climate activists spray-paint Paris's Louvre pyramid, 30 Oct, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Sector news

Art Fund celebrates 120 years

Founded in 1903 the Art Fund celebrated 120 years in November, highlighting the 135,000 members who buy a National Art Pass and the 850+ partner museums that have contributed to building up the UK's art collections and programmes making art accessible to the public. In 2022 Art Fund helped to bring over 900 objects and works of art into public collections including the acquisition of Joshua Reynolds' Portrait of Mai (Omai). The ever popular Art Fund Museum of Year prize for 2024 is also now open for applications following the success of this year's winner the Burrell Collection in Scotland. [Art Fund](#) (120 years), [Art Fund](#) (Museum of the Year)

Also: Art Fund and Arts Council England have published a new guide to giving and selling art and cultural artefacts, 'Everybody is a Winner'. It includes guidance on the various government initiatives supporting the gift or sale of artefacts to museums, highlighting how museums and galleries can acquire objects for free or for less than their market value, as well as benefits to the donor/seller. [Art Fund](#), [Guide to Giving](#) (pdf)

Organisations sign up to create a Northern Creative Corridor

Arts Council England, Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) and Royal Society of Arts have created a partnership to boost creative and cultural activity through the North of England. A new charter has been signed by nearly 30 signatories including the BBC, Creative UK and the mayors of Liverpool, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, and the North of Tyne to develop a 'Northern Creative Corridor' (NCC). [RSA](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£), [BBC](#), [Design Week](#)

Also: What if we could pivot our entire mission to supporting communities? Keith Merrin, Director of Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums looks at how museums support communities in the North East, 17 Oct, [Museums Association](#)

The Audience Agency announce merger with Culture24

The two independent charities have made the decision to merge following the loss of Arts Council National Portfolio Funding in March 2023. The Audience Agency has restructured to offer a new five-pillar programme of services and products, Culture24 will lead on a digital pillar with the other four pillars being: participation and engagement, impact and evaluation, cultural and creative places, data and evidence for policy. They have also launched their first joint programme, Let's Get Real: Using digital to add value which is in partnership with the Institute of Digital Culture at the University of Leicester. They are looking for 25 organisations who will be offered workshops, mentoring and expert guidance. The programme is self-funded and costs range from £1,250 to £2,650 depending on organisation size. [Audience Agency](#), [Culture24](#), [Let's Get Real](#)

Museums Association 2023 conference now online

Recordings from the MA's 2023 conference in Gateshead are now available online for delegates to watch any sessions they may have missed. Sessions include:

- A crisis in English civic museums with Ian Blatchford, Science Museum, Tony Butler, Derby Museums, Eliza Easton, Erskine Analysis, Lord Parkinson and Baroness Young.
- The power of letting it go, on museum disposal.
- Beyond 2050: the future of climate change programming in museums.
- Museums Strategic Disability Network. [Museums Association](#)

1 in 5 jobs in London in the creative economy, new research shows

Research from City Hall has highlighted the importance of the creative economy to the Capital with one in every 5 jobs reliant on the creative industries, with more than 1.1m jobs in total, rising more than 200,000 in five years. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan said, "Culture is the beating heart of our city and our creative industries not only help make London the greatest city in the world but help to drive our economy forward following the impact of the pandemic.... But our creative industries still have significant challenges, including spiralling operational costs, Brexit bureaucracy and reductions in funding." [London.gov](#), [Evening Standard](#)

Assessing the direct impact of the UK arts sector

McKinsey & Co, the management consultancy, have published a report exploring the impact of the arts in three areas: impact on the UK economy, impact on individuals and impact on communities. It shows that the UK arts sector contributed £49bn to the UK economy in 2022. [McKinsey](#), [McKinsey](#) (full report requires email sign up, pdf, 53pgs)

Drop in arts and humanities PhD funding

The number of UK-based students studying for PhD's funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council has nearly halved since 2018/19 according to a Freedom of Information request from Times Higher Education. [Times Higher Education](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Rising costs, funding pressures and organisation closures

Creative and Cultural Skills to close

Founded 18 years ago, Creative and Cultural Skills (CCS), the sector skills council for the creative and cultural industries has been forced to closed due to a lack of funding. CCS was unsuccessful in their application to Arts Council England for National Portfolio funding for 2023-2026. In a statement they said "We are proud of what we have achieved in the 20 years we have resolutely stood up for a fairer, more equitable and progressive cultural sector. The last few years have been challenging, as they have been for many organisations, and we have not been able to secure the funds needed to continue despite assurances from arts councils across the UK that our work is vital." [CCS](#), [Museums Association](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Also: Further closures of unsuccessful NPO applicants, 15 Nov, [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Arts Council Northern Ireland annual survey highlights cost of living pressures

Arts Council Northern Ireland's Annual Funding Survey has shown the impact the cost-of-living crisis is having on the arts sector as it struggles to return to pre-pandemic levels of programming and audience levels. It shows a complicated picture where core running costs for 95 small, medium and large scale organisations have risen by 16% to £4.8m compared to the previous 12 months, and are now 43% higher than before the pandemic. This was set against a backdrop of limited available public funding particularly as sources of European funding had declined post Brexit. Some good news in the data was that organisations had managed to leverage new funding sources as income from trusts and foundations, which had risen by 20% year on year. [Arts Council NI](#)

Creative Scotland reveals £56m gap in funding

The Scotsman reported that Creative Scotland, the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland is facing a funding gap of more than £50m from organisations, festivals, venues and events seeking long-term funding. With applications from 361 cultural organisations for multi-year support the total request was £96m per year. Creative Scotland was reported to have £40m a year available in its existing budget for long-term funding programmes. [Scotsman](#), [Creative Scotland](#)

Also: Scotland's museums are at a tipping point – after more than a decade of funding cuts, some services and struggling to finance education and outreach programmes, 1 Nov, [Museums Association](#)

Donor revenue down by 25% according to new report

Tessitura Network, a not-for-profit software services provider, has reported that donations to 24 of the top UK arts bodies has fallen by 25% in the last year, from £126.4m in 2021 to £97.2m in 2022. Despite the numbers of individual donors increasing by 29% to 550,190, 85% of those donated £20 or less. [Times](#) (£), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Nesta report looks at emerging funding sources for the creative and cultural sectors

'Impact investing in the Cultural and Creative Sectors: Insights from an emerging field' was commissioned by Creative PEC and published on 27 November, it looks at 'impact investing' where investors proactively seek investment opportunities that will make an intentional positive difference. [Creative PEC](#) (website), [Creative PEC](#) (report, pdf, 40pgs)



R.Hudson, Brook Scene, Endcliffe Woods. Image © Sheffield Museums.

Heritage

159 sites added to Historic England's At Risk Register

Marking the 25th year of publication, Historic England's At Risk Register revealed 203 sites had been removed over the last year but 159 sites had been added. In total there are 4,871 entries in the Heritage At Risk Register in 2023. Sites added included Holbeche House in the West Midlands owned by one of the plotters of the Gunpowder Plot and Polegate Windmill in East Sussex. One site that came off the list in 2023 was Sheerness Dockyard Church in Kent which received National Lottery Heritage Fund investment. [Historic England](#)

English Heritage publishes annual Heritage Counts report

Heritage Counts provides a summary of the best available evidence that might support advocacy for heritage and inform new initiatives. The data and statistics are collated around 8 themes including the economic value of the heritage sector and heritage and society looking at its role in development and placemaking. There is also an interactive map providing local data on the demand for retrofitting skills which highlights the gap in the required workforce needed to bring heritage buildings up to new environmental standards. [Historic England](#), [Interactive Map](#)

The Heritage Alliance's Heritage Debate

On 15 November, the Heritage Alliance held a discussion on the topic of 'Careers at a Crossroads: How can we futureproof the heritage workforce?' Issues discussed included improved pay, diversity and inclusion, promotion of heritage skills, supporting volunteers, and early career pathways, as well as reflecting on the strengths of the heritage sector and the passion and generosity of its people. Fair pay and conditions were voted the overall top priority to futureproof the heritage workforce. Heritage Day 2024 will take place on 7 March. [Heritage Alliance](#), [poll results](#)

Collections

New Museum Data Service Launched

The Collections Trust, Art UK and the University of Leicester launched a website for the new Museum Data Service (MDS) with an aim to connect and share all the object records across all the UK museums, large and small. The first major user of data from the new infrastructure will be Art UK, which already brings more than 300,000 artworks, from 3,400 collections, to an online audience of over 4.5m people a year. The MDS is a free and easy way to share collections data. From Spring 2024, anyone will be able to search across millions of object data records. There are a number of online sessions for those who wish to get an introduction to the MDS. [Museum Data Service](#), [MDS](#) (online briefing and training sessions), [Collections Trust](#)

Wessex Museums launch Virtual Collections website

A new database centralising records for Dorset Museum, Poole Museum, The Salisbury Museum and the Museum of Wiltshire has been launched which features over 250,000 collection items. Supported by Arts Council England the website also has nearly 30,000 images that allow users to build their own virtual collections. Wessex Museums have designed the database using the same digital infrastructure as the Museum Data Service. [Wessex Museums](#)

Survey on museum documentation practice

Kathleen Lawther has requested participants for her PhD survey entitled 'Backlog: The history and practice of collections documentation and museum's contribution to the digital cultural record'. If you work with collections information at a UK museum please contribute to her research via the survey. [Survey](#)

Digital

Catch up with the Reflect, Share and Inspire day on digital skills

In October the National Lottery Heritage Fund welcomed 540 heritage professionals for a day of insight and inspiration on digital skills in the sector. Sessions covered sustainable digital activities, copyright and licensing and digital volunteering as well as artificial intelligence. The sessions were recorded and you can now catch up online. [Culture Hive](#)

Discovering Online Collections Benchmark Report

This useful report from One Further, the digital consultancy, looked at data from 50 GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives and museums) to find out how users were accessing online collections websites to benchmark what constitutes 'normal user' activity and where there was room for improvement. Findings include:

- Online collections are mostly viewed on desktop computers.
- Collections online tend to account for around 20% website traffic.
- 'Home country' views tend to account for 50% of traffic to online collections.

For the full report visit [One Further](#)

Also: Some interesting reflections on this blog from Ash Mann on digital careers in the cultural sector that reflect on specialisms and broader organisational structures that stifle digital career paths. [Substack](#)



Contour Map Collection, Sheffield Rivers Contour Map. Image © Holly Clifford

Accessibility and inclusion

All In – a new UK-wide access scheme from Arts Council

All In is a UK arts access scheme for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people led by Arts Council England in partnership with Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Arts Council of Wales, Creative Scotland and the British Film Institute. The scheme is designed to improve access and experience of attending creative and cultural events. Plans include –

- UK-wide accessibility standards for the sector.
- Training, resources and support to increase staff confidence.
- Creating a single digital system for people with access requirements.
- Connecting cultural and creative organisations with suppliers that can help improve access provision.
- Providing insight and data to help organisations understand access needs.

The scheme is in development with a pilot planned for 2024. [All In](#)

Also: Disability History Hub from the Museum of Liverpool – part of the Curating for Change programme. [Museum of Liverpool](#)

Funding opportunities

ACE announces 'Unlocking Collections' as a time-limited priority theme for new grants

Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grants include time-limited themes as part of a commitment to funding museums and their collections. These grants are aimed at enabling museums to develop their collections-based work and increase public engagement with, and the use of, their collections. ACE in particular is looking for work which:

- Reinterprets collections to reach a wider audience.
- Uses digital tools and mechanisms within museums, and to link across the sector.
- Collections review improving standards of collections storage and display.

The application process varies depending on grant size, for under £30,000, £30,000-£100,000 and over £100,000. There is an information session on 7 December 10.30-11.30am. [ACE](#) (website), [ACE](#) (info session)

Windrush Day 2024 Grant Scheme open

A reminder that the Windrush Day Grant Scheme from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is offering up to £500,000 in grants to support projects across England and Northern Ireland. Designed to bring communities together to commemorate, celebrate and educate their local area about the contribution of the Windrush Generation and their descendants. Applications close on Sunday 17 December 2023. [Gov.uk](#)

Anhar: Culture and Climate Platform

Art Jameel and the British Council are offering a new programme that supports ambitious arts projects that engage with the climate emergency. Designed to diversify and increase support for practitioners from the Arab world, there is a three-tiered open call that invites individual artists, collectives and cultural organisations to apply. The third tier is open to award grants of £25,000 to £50,000 for collaborations between UK and MENA countries (Middle East and North Africa) that seek to develop a large-scale artistic response to the climate emergency. The deadline to apply is 15 January 2024. [Art Jameel](#)

Awards

Museums Change Lives Awards 2023

The 'Museums Change Lives Awards' from the Museums Association were announced at their annual conference in Gateshead at the beginning of November. Each winner receives a £500 cash prize. The four category winners were:

- Best Museums Change Lives Project – Glasgow Museums, Bangladesh Association Glasgow, and Our Shared Cultural Heritage – Scotland's Lascar Heritage, uncovered the story of South Asian sailors in Scotland.
- Best Small Museum Project – The Whithorn Trust – Whithorn ReBuild Schools Engagement Project, working with vulnerable young people on heritage construction skills.
- Decolonising Museums Award – Wilberforce House Museum – Changing perspectives in Hull, a creative approach to a new community engagement strategy.
- Radical Change Maker Award – Zeynep Kussan – London Transport Museum (previously Museum of London), conceiving and curating the 'Harry Kane – I want to play football' exhibition that engaged new audiences. [Museums Association](#)

Volunteers celebrated at the London Heritage Volunteering Awards

The 14th London Heritage Volunteering Awards recognised and showcased volunteers across museums and heritage organisations in London in November. Winners included Best Team award for the 'Women in Science Tour Team' at the Natural History Museum; 'Going the Extra Mile' award for Jen Austin also at the Natural History Museum; and Trustee Award for Rania Nur from the Museum of the Home. For the full winners see the YouTube video of the online ceremony. [Heritage Volunteering Group](#)

Sandford Award 2024 now open for nominations

The Sandford Award recognises high quality, inclusive and accessible learning that takes place in an heritage setting or in the natural environment. The awards focus on curriculum aligned heritage learning programmes but also recognises informal learning such as family programmes and self-guided provision. Applications open on Monday 4 December and close on 16 February. Cost of entry is £400, the award is valid for 5 years. [Heritage Education Trust](#)

Seeds of Change Prize Fund from the Association for Cultural Enterprises

Seeds of Change is a new £10,000 prize fund designed to support sustainable initiatives in the cultural sector. The opportunity aims to empower organisations to design and deliver a sustainable project that fosters community engagement, promotes the adoption of sustainable practices and explores new materials and technologies to create a new commercial income stream. Open to the Association for Cultural Enterprises members, joint applications are welcome. Deadline is 29 March 2024. [ACE](#)



William Ibitt, Brook near Ughil, 1852. Image © Sheffield Museums

Conferences and events

Family Arts Conference 2024 returns in February

The 2024 conference from the Family Arts Campaign will be held at Leeds Playhouse on Thursday 29 February with a keynote speech from Waterstones Children's Laureate Joseph Coelho. For arts, community and family support professionals across the UK. With reduced prices for freelancers and small organisations starting from £150, standard tickets cost £225 with the option of team ticket bundles. [Family Arts Campaign](#)

Museums, Health and Wellbeing Summit from MuseumNext

Presentations and actionable advice from museums across the globe for this virtual conference on 29-30 January with sessions on supporting young people with mental health issues, quiet visits and slow art, and unlocking our sound heritage. Student ticket £30, freelance ticket £60 and standard ticket £130. [MuseumNext](#)

Histories and Archives in Practice 2024

History and Archives in Practice is an annual event, a partnership between The National Archives, Royal Historical Society and Institute of Historical Research, which will be hosted in Cardiff on 6 March 2024. The theme of the 2024 event is 'Historical legacies: collecting history, historical collections and community voices' and proposals are open for workshops, panels, papers and demonstrations until Friday 15 December. [Institute of Historical Research](#)

Oxford Cultural Leaders 2024

Celebrating 10 years of the Oxford Cultural Leaders programme, new for 2024, OCL will be offering 1:1 coaching package exclusively for cultural leaders. Coaching is offered alongside existing online and residential courses. Applications for the online programme open on 1 December with a deadline of 22 January for dates running from 22-26 April 2024. The 2024 residential will take place in September with applications opening in April. [University of Oxford](#)

Cultural Heritage Data School 2024

Organised by Cambridge Digital Humanities, the In-person Cultural Heritage Data School runs between 8-12 April. The intensive teaching programme will be structured around digital collections and archives pipeline covering generation, exploration, visualisation, analysis and preservation of digital collections and archives. Applications close on 21 January, standard fees are £750 per person. [Cambridge Digital Humanities](#)

Developing digital/hybrid learning for Welsh museums, archives and local studies libraries

Offered by GEM Cymru, funded by the Welsh Government Culture Division, this training will be delivered across three online sessions and based on the award winning Leeds curriculum - [My Learning](#). The training will explore how professionals can develop their heritage education service using digital engagement and how it links to your physical offer. Session run on 22, 29 January and 5 February. [GEM Cymru](#)

Developing My Leadership 2024 for Scottish Museums

Running across 6 sessions from 25 January to 25 April the course is designed for Scottish museum professionals to become more confident and self-aware leaders building the skills required to engage and lead individuals and teams. Offered by Museums Galleries Scotland and delivered by Social Enterprise Academy. The programme is online over Zoom and costs £225 for Charities/3rd Sector and £425 Public/Private sector. Deadline to apply is 16 January. [MGS](#)

Appointments and resignations

Michelle Charters has been named as the new head of the International Slavery Museum. Charters is the Founding Chair of the Merseyside Black History Month Group and the first woman to be appointed a Trustee of the Everyman and Playhouse Theatres in Liverpool. She will be focussing on the £28m transformation of the International Slavery Museum as part of the wider National Museums Liverpool Waterfront Transformation. [NML](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Artist **Tracey Emin** joins the British Museum as a Trustee. She replaces Grayson Perry as a trustee nominated by the Royal Academy and will serve a term of four years. [British Museum](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence has been appointed as the new Chair of the Science Museum Group for a four year term from January 2024, replacing Dame Mary Archer who steps down after serving two terms. [Science Museum](#)

Alex Patterson appointed Director and CEO of Brooklands Museum replacing Tamalie Newbery who has been in post for six years. Patterson joined Brooklands Museum as Director of Collections, Interpretation and Heritage in 2018. [Brooklands Museum](#)

Arts Council England have appointed **Annabel Turpin** and **Sally Shaw** as North and South East Area Chairs for a period of four years. [ACE](#) Arts Council England have also announced four new members of the Designation Panel, including **Katie Eagleton**, **Belinda Day**, **Hugh Maguire** and **Janet Dugdale**, Executive Director, National Museums Liverpool. [ACE](#)

Moira Sinclair has been named as the new Chair of Manchester-based Factory International, the organiser of the Manchester International Festival and the newly opened Aviva Studios. Sinclair is currently Chief Executive of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Chair of Clore Leadership, and will take up her role in January 2024. [Factory International](#), [Access All Areas](#)

Kids in Museums appoint two new young trustees aged between 18-25, **Rachel Brodie** and **Joe Rattray**, are initially appointed for a one year term, the charity hopes to encourage other museums to recruit young trustees to their boards. [M+H Advisor](#)

Alex Paterson has resigned after seven years as Chief Executive of Historic Environment Scotland. [M+H Advisor](#)

Catch up

Book: Marketing Strategy for Museums – a practical guide by Christina Lister, [Routledge](#)

British Museum should 'limit ticket numbers to avoid overcrowding', 1 December 2023, [Times](#) (£)

Why won't the UK government stand up for the arts? 28 November 2023, [Apollo Magazine](#)

'Cultural vandalism': row as Kew Gardens and Natural History Museum plan to move collections out of London, 25 November 2023, [Guardian](#)

Colonial past must be in mainstream of UK history, says new English Heritage Chief, 24 November 2023, [Guardian](#)

Regulator could crackdown on 'irrational' donation rejections chair warns, 10 November 2023, [ThirdSector](#)

One year on: what the companies that lost NPO funding did next, 9 November 2023, [Stage](#) (£)

International news

Podcast : Is the US museum sector in crisis? 24 November 2023, [The Week in Art](#)

Bombing of Gaza has damaged or destroyed more than 100 heritage sites, NGO reports, 28 November 2023, [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [ARTnews](#)

As Iceland braces for the winter, museums lobby for more storage, 27 November 2023, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Guggenheim Museum names the first woman to serve as its director and CEO, 20 November 2023, [Artnet](#)

The MET reopens 45 European art galleries after a five-year renovation, 18 November 2023, [Euronews](#), [NYT](#)

Prado exhibition takes a rear view look behind some famous paintings, 7 November 2023, [Guardian](#)

Artists withdraw work from US National Gallery in protest of 'government funding of Israel's military assault' in Gaza, 6 November 2023, [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [ARTnews](#)

World Press Photo exhibition: Hungary Museum head sacked over LGBT content, 6 November 2023, [BBC](#)

Jobs

Posts being advertised on the [NMDC jobs board](#) this month include:

- [Exhibitions and Interpretation Officer - Imperial War Museum North](#)
- [Facility Assistant - Tyne & Wear Museums & Archives](#)
- [Digital Development Manager - The National Archives](#)
- [Head of Collections Registration - Imperial War Museum London / Duxford](#)

- [Assistant Collection Manager \(Loans and Display\) - British Museum](#)
- [Finance Operations Lead - University of Oxford Gardens, Library & Museums](#)

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