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Strategic planning for the future of culture



Kaleidoscope House Laurie Simmons, Peter Wheelwright and Bozart, USA, 2001© Victoria and Albert Museum, London. This modern dolls house contains miniatures of work by Ron Arad and Cindy Sherman and is part of the 'Small Stories' exhibition at Norwich Castle Museum. Full story in members' news.

Countries of Culture report published

The House of Commons Culture Media and Sport Select Committee has published its conclusions following their inquiry into funding and support for the arts outside London. NMDC submitted evidence alongside major funding bodies, the Minister for Culture and national museums. The report affirmed that culture supports policy objectives around health, education and economic objectives but said that it is 'unlikely that the current funding challenges will recede'. It therefore looks beyond reinstatement of local government funds to other solutions. The Committee supported NMDC's proposals to grant greater operational freedoms to local authority museums, including granting them their digital independence, and consider how services can be effectively delivered in partnership. It echoed NMDC's view that there is a "no one size fits all" business model, included examples from NMDC's submission, and also noted concerns about the erosion of specialist knowledge. A chapter of the report considers how cultural organisations work in partnership, including exploring the role of national institutions. The Committee also called for greater support from the Department for International Trade for cultural organisations and increased investment in cultural tourism.

Other conclusions and comments

- Submissions emphasised the impact of local government cuts, which is the greatest area of reduced funding for culture. The report comments, "*the biggest impact of local authority cuts to culture is likely to fall where the cultural offering is already weak with the result that those with most to gain from cultural investment will lose out.*"
- ACE's Creative People and Places and new pilot Cultural Citizens schemes target areas where cultural participation is low. These were welcomed in the report, but it acknowledged that these could not replace lost local authority investment. It said that accessibility must be given even higher priority in cultural policy.

- The report said that it recognised London as a 'leading cultural asset' and the geographically equitable distribution of HLF investment, but suggested a greater proportion arts investment could be spent outside London.

Additional proposals to vary income streams

- Not all arts organisations see themselves as charities: DCMS should lead an awareness-raising campaign so that all organisations which could benefit from charitable status should obtain it.
- The report found that while some regionally-based companies invested locally, such as Cranswick in Hull, these are relatively few in number. The National Theatre said it could not find regional sponsors for box office hits such as *War Horse*. Government should seek ways to incentivise regionally based philanthropy, including with tax breaks.
- DCMS should work with Treasury to look at the impact of tax incentives, business rates, VAT regulation and business rates on cultural organisations.
- The report praised efforts by ACE and HLF to develop revenue generation and fundraising skills, and recommended that funding for NPOs and MPMs should be dependent on these sharing their skills with smaller organisations.
- DCMS should generate case studies showing innovation in income generation.

Trusts and partnership working

- Partnership was a recurring theme throughout the inquiry. The report said "*culture is more likely to flourish, and be accessible to more people, where partnerships are strong*" and called for more work with the Department for Education and Department for Communities and Local Government. It welcomed the Cultural Destinations programme, which brings together the cultural sector with VisitBritain and destination management organisations, but said that much more could be done.
- The hub model may be useful in building local capacity and has worked well for Cornwall Museums Partnership and Manchester Museums Partnership in creating economies of scale for otherwise independent bodies. However other hub models have shown risks of reducing curatorial expertise in an individual location, reducing a museum's ability to make the most of its collections.
- The report recommended that national funding should be dependent on undertaking local partnership work with measurable benchmarks for success.

Skills

- The report said the cultural sector is facing 'serious skills challenges' and the 'loss of curatorial and development roles'. It praised schemes such as the Clore leadership programme, but said that smaller entities needed to access upskilling, through online learning and through a requirement for national institutions to partner smaller ones and share skills.

[Parliament.uk](#) (conclusions), [Parliament.uk](#) (whole report), [NMDC submission](#), [NMDC supplementary evidence](#)

Welsh Government proposes new bodies to support culture in Wales

The Welsh Government has published '*Light springs through the dark: a vision for culture in Wales*'. The document describes the importance of culture in helping people to feel that they have a stake in society and promoting connectivity. It also sees culture as essential to tourism and to projecting an outward-looking and welcoming face internationally, post-Brexit. Government commitments in the report include:

- Creating a new body Creative Wales to support the sector. It will aim to 'sustain at least 850 jobs and £40 million a year in production expenditure.'
- The government will create a Challenge Fund initially for arts and sports organisations, to match fund their work and bring together creativity and digital exploitation.
- 'Historic Wales' will be created to enhance the commercial functions of the Welsh heritage sector.
- Create 100,000 apprenticeships for all ages, many of which will be in the arts sector.
- It will work with partners to develop an A55 'Culture Corridor' promoting the cultural value of Welsh mountains, castles and coast.
- There will be feasibility studies into establishing a National Art Gallery and Football Museum in North Wales.

[Welsh government](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Scotland forms creative industries advisory group

The Scottish Government is inviting leaders of the creative industries to join a new Advisory Group to grow the sector in Scotland. Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said, "*I want to hear directly about the successes, issues and priorities the sector is experiencing so we can collectively take a strategic view on how the Scottish Government and its public agencies can further support the creative industries sector as a whole.*" [Scottish Government](#)

Gulbenkian inquiry into the civic role of arts organisations

The Gulbenkian Foundation is reaching the end of the first phase of its three-part work to assess and support the civic role of arts organisations. Phase one explored how far arts organisations already see themselves as civically engaged, and found that while many are in practice, only 32% have explicitly discussed the subject at Board level, suggesting that work may not always be strategic. First phase work has included a literature review and 'deep dive' location studies in Basingstoke, Great Yarmouth & Lowestoft, Nottingham and Sunderland led by What Next? Culture Minister Matt Hancock welcomed the work in a speech saying that arts organisations have the potential to be "*the town halls and parks of our communities - the focal points - acting as places for people to debate about important issues facing our society and creating a safe space where their voices can be heard.*" Phase two will develop recommendations to expand the civic role of arts organisations, and phase three will create an implementation plan. [Civic role of the arts inquiry](#), [Gov.uk](#)

Firestarters: incendiary new ideas for 2017

All Hull let loose

Hull's year as City of Culture has begun with a spectacular firework display on 1st January. The first event - *Made in Hull* - consists of installation art and performance across the city describing the last 70 years of its life, 'where the streets speak and the buildings tell stories'. The installation embraces life as really lived from the 'Hull caravan experience' to an exploration of the 'sharp end of benefit sanctions', to *Embers* – a multi-screen sound installation reflecting the local club scene. Hull 2017 Chief Executive Martin Green said the final preparations had been met with 'a mixture of surprise and jaws hitting the floor'. The city has received £1bn in investment since it was announced as the City of Culture. [Hull City of Culture](#), [BBC](#), [ACE blog](#), [Telegraph](#)

Stories from a fire scarred building: in praise of more risk-taking and individual museums

Arts Council England's Director of Museums John Orna-Ornstein has blogged about the tension between maintaining standards and creative subversion which can lead museums in new and fruitful directions. He described some of the early results of placing Wandsworth Museum in Battersea Arts Centre, itself recovering from a catastrophic fire in 2015. In the *London Stories* project, migrants lead groups through the fire-scarred building telling stories of their own life events. Each contributed an object to Wandsworth Museum. Orna-Ornstein writes: "*the whole experience was hugely moving, but also gently challenged our ideas of what a museum should look like and how it should behave. The objects were personal and every-day, only made significant by their story. They were displayed on plinths and not behind glass. They amplified a story rather than leading it.*". He argues that while other art forms, such as theatre, are now routinely manifested in all sorts of settings, museums are typically more cautious. He argues museums which are 'changing, creative and entirely individual to [their] location' will provide more vivid experiences, and be more connected to their communities. [ACE blog](#)

Fire brigade's pop-up museum uses VR film to demonstrate its work

Since November, London Fire Brigade has been running a pop-up museum in a workshop behind its building on the Albert Embankment. It marks 150 years of the service, and it is hoped that there will be a permanent brigade museum in the next few years. The pop-up museum includes a new digital innovation: a BBC Virtual Reality film capturing the experience of a blaze last year in which six children were rescued from a house fire. The BBC's Research & Development unit used more than 500 layered effects to recreate the fire. The immersive experience stars Crew Manager Paul Rich who was later named 'Firefighter of the Year' following a split-second decision to climb through a window and rescue five children from a smoke-filled room. London Fire Commissioner, Ron Dobson, said: "*This remarkable film is the most realistic representation of being at a real fire that I have seen. We have never been able to show people what it's really like before so this is an excellent way to highlight the dangers and difficulties our firefighters face at the scene of a fire. I anticipate the fire service embracing virtual reality more widely in the future, I can certainly see it being used for things like firefighter training.*" [London Fire Brigade](#) (pop up museum), [London Fire Brigade](#) (VR film)

All hands on deck: transforming volunteering in museums

Volunteering is changing, and more young people are getting involved, but increasingly they need the work to be rewarding as well as useful. A new app, Volunteer Makers, is being launched in London this month to transform museum volunteering. The app tracks skills and interests, offers gamification and a list of 'challenge' activity. The work is the result of a transformational pilot project at Wardown Park Museum in Luton, which increased volunteers from 40 to over 1000, and built wider links with local businesses and the community. Arts Council England's Director of Museums, John Orna-Ornstein, said, "*the app... not only makes it easier for people to find out how they can help, but addresses their interests or availability so that everybody wins. It's volunteering for the modern world.*" There is a free launch event at the Museum of London from 2pm on 12th January. [Volunteer Makers](#), [ACE](#), [Volunteer Makers](#) (MoL event)

UK and the EU

Higher education and Brexit

The House of Commons Education Select Committee exploring the effect of leaving the EU on higher education has published 191 pieces of evidence submitted to the inquiry, from organisations including universities, the British Council and Research Councils UK. The University of Cambridge told the Committee it was currently modelling a two-thirds fall in EU students. The Chair, Neil Carmichael MP, summarised the concerns expressed. He said: "*the evidence raises a variety of issues relating to freedom of movement, including the prospects for recruiting EU students post-Brexit and the future rights of EU staff to live and work in the UK. Concerns are also raised about how to maintain the UK as an attractive destination for EU and international students, about the financial viability of universities, and the need to ensure Britain can continue to compete on the international stage as a provider of world-class university education.*"

In our inquiry, we are determined to examine the opportunities for higher education post-Brexit....It's crucial that we don't allow Brexit to become a catastrophe for our university sector." [Parliament.uk](#), [Guardian](#)

UKRG lists practical concerns about Brexit

The UK Registrars Group has published a short document listing its concerns around Brexit, in particular what will happen to the laws and standards around cultural policy. Many of these are drawn from the EU law, including the movement of cultural property in the EU (including customs and export licensing), and the loss of specialist staff who are non-UK residents. [Ne-mo](#)

Also: As former government ministers Michael Gove and Ed Vaizey tiffed on twitter about the value of the Turner Prize, some newspapers argued that there is a gulf between the pro-internationalist contemporary art scene and a Brexiting public. *The Guardian's* editorial begged to differ: "*a strange kind of disconnect, this, that sees almost 5 million visitors a year pour into Tate Modern, and a young wave of contemporary art galleries around Britain, like the Hepworth in Wakefield and Turner Contemporary in Margate, connecting their local communities to the work of artists like never before.*" [Guardian](#)

Members' news



Tate Baby House England—Dining Room, 1760 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Birmingham Museums Trust points to consequences for public, education and businesses as it faces 24% cut

Birmingham Museums Trust is facing a £750k cut in 2017/18, a reduction of 24% to its budget. The Trust had anticipated a decrease of £250k as Birmingham Council copes with ongoing significant cuts. Director Ellen McAdam said, *“we were expecting and planning for a reduction in funding and we hope to work with the council to minimise this. We recognise that this is a very difficult time for Birmingham City Council. However, Birmingham Museums Trust is one of the city’s success stories, with visitor numbers and earned income growing strongly. We believe that it is vital that Birmingham’s great museums and collection should continue to receive the investment they need so that we can build on this achievement.”* The Trust has launched a petition so the members of the public can express support for its work and call for a reduction to the cut. In its message to the public, the Trust said it risked ‘substantial reduction in public access’ to some museums, fewer learning activities, and reduced capacity to work deliver projects alone or in partnership. It added that each visit to a museum in Birmingham is worth £30 to local businesses, overall generating £30m for the city’s annual economy. Birmingham City Council has had £519m cut from its budget since 2010 and needs to reduce spending by £50.6 million in 2017/18. Other cultural bodies in the city are facing an even more severe reduction, including 62% less for Birmingham Rep. Council leader John Clancy said that the level of necessary cuts was ‘unprecedented’ and that ‘every conceivable saving has been on the table.’ The Council’s consultation on the budget lasts until 18th January. [Birmingham Museums Trust](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Arts Professional](#)

V&A returns Tudor room to National Trust

In the late 19th century the impecunious ninth Earl of Carlisle approached the V&A to sell a complete paneled Tudor room from the Sizergh Castle. The Museum purchased it for the then enormous sum of £1k, followed by £400 for the four poster and stained glass windows a few years later. By the mid-20th century the family regretted the sale, and approached the V&A to get the room back – a point pursued by the newly formed National Trust when it took over the property a few years later. Now the V&A and the National Trust have reached an agreement, and a legal transfer has returned the room to the ownership of the castle, although it has been in place at Sizergh on long term loan since 2001. V&A curator and Tudor furniture specialist Nick Humphrey said that in the 1950s the V&A had been uncertain whether the National Trust would last. Now, he says, “*we know the National Trust isn't going away any time soon. The room is back in the right place.*” [Guardian](#)

Dippy has left the building (almost)

Dippy, the Carnegie cast of a Diplodocus which has greeted visitors to the Natural History Museum since 1979, has enjoyed it's last day on public display in South Kensington. Dippy will now be carefully dismantled, cleaned and "flat packed" ready for it's tour of the UK, starting at the Dorset County Museum in February 2018. Dippy, who was commissioned for the Natural History Museum by King Edward VII, will tour until October 2020 and also visit Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Ulster Museum, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Hancock: the Great North Museum, the National Assembly of Wales, Number One The Riverside in Rochdale and Norwich Cathedral. The Natural History Museum's Head of Conservation, Lorraine Cornish, explained to BBC News how to pack up and re-assemble a 70 foot-long, 292-bone dinosaur. [BBC News](#)

Images this month: Small Stories at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

This year Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery will be displaying twelve dollshouses on loan from the V&A Museum of Childhood. The dolls houses span 300 years and illuminate the history of the home, everyday lives and changing family relationships. Tate House was created in 1760 and passed through six generations of a family, from mother to eldest daughter, while the Kaleidoscope House embraces modernity and contains miniatures of contemporary art and furniture from Ron Arad to Cindy Sherman. The finale of the exhibition is 'Dream House 2017': 22 individual miniature rooms created by Norfolk artists, architects, makers and schoolchildren, capturing their imagination and aspirations. The exhibition runs from 4th March - 25th June. [Norwich Castle](#)

New Year's Honours and appointments

Jenny Waldman from Imperial War Museums has received a CBE for her work as Director of the 14-18 NOW programme.

Susan Miller, Director of Cultural Services at Glasgow Life became an Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

Clare Pillman, Director of Culture and Sport at DCMS, was awarded the Companion of the Order of the Bath.

[Gov.uk](#) (complete list)

Appointments

Jennifer Scott becomes new Director of Dulwich Picture Gallery. She was previously Director of the Holburne Museum in Bath. [Museums Journal](#)

New year, new investment



Hopkinson House—Children's Bedroom (set in 1940s), England, 1980s-1990s © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Bolton Council invests in town's unique Egyptology collection

Bolton Council is investing £3.8m in a new look for Bolton Museum, which holds a unique Ancient Egyptian collection. It hopes that the work will draw international tourism to the area. The gallery will include a darkened 'Beliefs' section focusing on death and the afterlife, leading to a full-size recreation of the tomb of Thutmose III. There will also be a welcome Rotunda explaining why Bolton has such extensive Egyptology holdings. In addition to the Council's capital funding, the work has also been supported by revenue from a touring exhibition and local sponsorship. The redesigned museum is expected to open in 2018. [Bolton News](#), [Manchester Evening News](#)

Museum of motor racing

Following an HLF grant of £9.1 million a new museum of motor racing, the Silverstone Heritage Experience, will open in 2019. Placed at the main entrance to the race circuit, the exhibition space will inhabit the last remaining Second World War hangar on the Silverstone site. There will also be an education programme based on STEM subjects [ALVA](#)

David Hockney gallery to open in Bradford

A permanent gallery of the work of David Hockney is to open in Bradford to celebrate the artist's 80th birthday. It will be housed in the Cartwright Hall which owns the largest public collection of Hockney's early work. Hockney said, "I used to love going to Cartwright Hall as a kid. It was the only place in Bradford I could see real paintings." [BBC](#)

Polishing up the Ragged School Museum

HLF has awarded a transformative grant of £4.3m to the Ragged School Museum, creating a new direction for the museum and saving it from the risk of eventual closure. The museum is unique in preserving the only remaining Ragged School building, and commemorates the struggle for universal free education. Currently, most visitors are school parties, attracting 15,000 each year, plus 9,500 other visitors. New exhibitions, telling the story of Dr Barnardo and the Ragged School movement are expected to bring in a much larger audience. The refurbishment will also add an enterprise hub on the Regent's Canal, a restaurant and improved public facilities. HLF Chief Executive Ros Kerslake said, "*the Ragged School Museum is extraordinary and reminds us of a Dickensian world where children lived in abject poverty with no access to formal education. As Christmas approaches, it's timely to remind ourselves of the difference Dr Barnardo's philanthropic vision made to London's East End.*" [HLF](#)

Budgets

Balancing the budget for Scottish Culture

The Scottish Government has published its draft budget for culture for the 2017 – 18 financial year, which includes a mixture of cuts, freezes and budget increases. Headline figures include:

- £77m for national collections – a 4.5% decrease since 2016/17, and a further cut compared to 2015/16 when the figure was £85.9m.
- However, National Museums Scotland's core funding will remain the same as 2016/17.
- The Government will contribute to a number of capital projects including the Scottish National Gallery, V&A Museum of Design in Dundee, and Kelvin Hall in Glasgow.
- Museums Galleries Scotland's funding will remain the same at £2.35m with an additional £200k for capital projects.
- Historic Environment Scotland which repairs historic buildings and regenerates town centres receives an additional £3.4m, bringing the budget to £84.8m.
- There is also a significant increase in funds for major events – rising from £12.6m to £30.3m. This is part of a wider strategy to encourage events, including the 2018 Year of Young People – cultural and educational events designed by the young.

A spokeswoman for National Museums Scotland told *Museums Journal* that "*the financial climate remains challenging, but we aim to deal with this by continuing to keep a tight rein on our costs and expanding and enhancing our earned income.*" [Museums Journal](#), [Scottish Government](#), [MGS](#)

National Museum Wales shaves off nine posts, but avoids further cuts

National Museum Wales will be saving £400k each year by deleting nine curatorial and learning posts. Six are voluntary redundancies, one vacant and in two cases staff moved to other jobs. NMW has lost 33% of its budget in real terms over the past five years. However, the Welsh Government has announced a 3.5% increase in its Grant in Aid for 2017 - 18, averting the prospect of having to save a further £3.5m over the next three years. [Museums Journal](#)

Red House Museum closes as Friends group winds up

Red House Museum in Gomersal – one of a number of museums which lost funding from Kirklees Council – closed in December. The buildings are due to be sold if no group comes forward with a viable business plan before March, and the collections are now in store. The Council is urging people who 'have a business case for taking over the buildings for the benefit of the local community' to complete an application form. However, the Friends of Red House Museum are not in a position to make a bid, and the group is being wound up. The MA's Alistair Brown said, "*these museums were hugely popular and their closure will be a real blow for the people of Dewsbury, Gomersal and the surrounding areas.*" Staff said that 'more visitors than ever before' had flocked to a pre-Christmas closing event. [Museums Journal](#), [Telegraph and Argus](#), [Telegraph and Argus](#)

Kirklees Council retreats from selling Francis Bacon painting

In December, Kirklees Council publicly discussed selling its 1940s Francis Bacon painting *Figure Study II*. Valued at £19.5m, it is estimated that it might be worth up to £60m if auctioned. Leader of the Council David Sheard said that the painting costs £10k each year to insure and is too valuable to display locally except at Huddersfield Art Gallery. *"I can't see any value of owning a painting which is stuck in a cellar most of the time. I know recently it has been on tour, but there have been times where it has been in storage for a very long time. It is an issue that we need to have an open debate about as it is a problem if it is costing us so much to insure yet we're not able to display it."* Others had variously argued its sale could fund the threatened museum service 'for decades' or essential council services. The *Huddersfield Examiner* reported some local support for the sale. However, the picture was acquired through the Contemporary Art Society which said *"the conditions of the gift means it cannot be sold. This is in line with the Arts Council's museums accreditation policy."* The Council has now accepted that it cannot sell the picture, but this is the second time since 2014 that selling museum collections has been raised by Kirklees, and reflects a shifting attitude. Sheard told the *Museums Journal*: *"If someone approached us now [offering the Bacon painting], would we accept it? The answer is we wouldn't. It is not a core function of ours to store paintings."* [Guardian](#), [Huddersfield Examiner](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Huddersfield Examiner](#)

Events



Whiteladies House Moray Thomas, England, 1935 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Working Internationally Conference 2017

For the fifth year, NMDC is working with ICOM-UK to produce the Working Internationally Conference. The one-day conference, which provides delegates with the opportunity to share information, learn about good (and bad) experiences and discuss international partnerships, is taking place on **2nd March** at the **Natural History Museum**. Tickets are just £45, and the theme of the event will be working internationally following the UK's decision to leave the European Union. More information and tickets: [NMDC](#)

Museums and Resilient Leadership programme

The Arts Council England-funded Museums and Resilient Leadership programme will be running for a second year at the Black Country Living Museum. It draws on a wealth of knowledge about how to be a good leader culturally and commercially, and draws on Black Country Living Museum's own financially successful model. The programme includes a fully funded overseas study visit, a personal mentor, eight workshops and two residential. It represents a £7.5k investment by Arts Council England, but participants' contribution is £750 + VAT per person. Applications are open until 31st January. [Black Country Living Museum](#)

Let's Get Real: Young Audiences Conference 2017

Culture24's 2017 conference explores how arts and heritage organisations can create a digital offer relevant to children and teenagers, and how best to support teachers online. It will feature experts from within and beyond the arts and heritage sector. Participants will learn about what works and what doesn't; hear from young audiences and meet colleagues with similar aims and challenges; and leave with practical, actionable advice to improve engagement with young audiences. It takes place at the Museum of London on 20th March. Tickets are £76.55 including booking fee and VAT. [Culture24](#)

Saying the unspeakable in museums: International Museum Day

The International Council of Museums has announced that International Museum Day will take place this year on 18th May. The topic will be 'museums and contested histories: saying the unspeakable in museums'. Events will highlight how museums become hubs for promoting peaceful relationships between people – and how accepting that a history is contested is the first step towards reconciliation. International Museum Day is a growing event with 35,000 museums taking part in 145 countries in 2016. [ICOM](#)

Museum Freelance Network event

The Museum Freelance Network is running its first event at the London Canal Museum on 13th March. The topic is 'Proactive, Empowered and Confident freelancing' and will include speakers and trainers as well as opportunities to contribute and network. Speakers include Assistant Director of the Association of Independent Museums Helen Wilkinson, and professional coach Anna Lundberg. Tickets are £70 - £95. [Eventbrite](#)

Museums Galleries Scotland's Inequalities: Bridging the Gap conference

The theme of Museums Galleries Scotland's next conference will be *Inequalities: Bridging the Gap*. It is seeking paper submissions, with a closing date of 17th February. The conference takes place in Edinburgh on 12th October. [MGS](#)

My primary school is at the museum networking event

King's College London is hosting a networking event to build on the 'My Primary School is at the Museum' programme, which we featured last month, and which piloted three programmes where children spent extended periods learning using a museum as their classroom, in one case for most lessons over a whole term. There will be presentations from participating museums, and a keynote from David Anderson, Director-General of National Museum Wales. It takes place on 7th March at King's College London. Space is limited, and there is a registration fee of £40. [King's College](#)

Art Fundraising & Philanthropy extension

The Arts & Fundraising Philanthropy programme, created to transform fundraising across the cultural sector, is now being extended to March 2018 with additional support from Arts Council England. The extended programme begins in early 2017 and includes:

- The launch of mid-career Fellowships, allowing ten professionals to develop fundraising expertise through a year long programme.
- The development of an online course at the University of Leeds to help arts organisations strategically grow and change.
- Culture Change sessions, which will give intensive support to whole organisations to become good at fundraising and change income profiles.

There will be open calls for fundraisers and regional co-ordinators shortly. [Arts Fundraising](#)

Kids Takeover Birmingham

20 Birmingham cultural organisations, including Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, are welcoming 11–14 year olds for a Takeover programme over the next six months. 200 young people are involved who have not had significant exposure to the arts before. They have formed into a number of clubs, each of which will have a programme of activity giving them meaningful decision-making roles in organisations. The work is managed by Kids in Museums and part of the Cultural Citizens Pilot programme. [Takeover Birmingham](#)

Historia ludens: history and gaming conference

The Digital Arts and Humanities group at the University of Huddersfield are holding a one day conference on history and gaming on 11th February. The organisers write "*gaming and history is gaining more and more traction, either as means to gamify history education or museum experiences, or as computer games as a prism into history*". Ticketing will be set up soon at the link, or alternatively contact Dr Alexander von Lünen at a.f.vonlunen@hud.ac.uk to express an interest. Tickets are just £10. [University of Huddersfield](#)

Tate Exchange 2017

Engage has announced its Tate Exchange 2017 programme. Based at the new Switch House at Tate Modern, it is an opportunity for gallery and arts educators to enjoy three days of intensive professional development. It is aimed at mid-career and senior workers, and will cover reviewing research, current practice and international work. It takes place on 19th - 22nd March. Tickets are £150 - £300 and include lunch. There are two bursaries for attendees from Scotland. [Engage](#)

Rethinking Diversity in a Rural Region

This conference explores what diversity means for rural and smaller museums. It will discuss how museums in Cornwall and other rural regions can help contribute to and develop Arts Council England's flagship policy, the Creative Case for Diversity, and how to create cultural experiences that are inclusive and open to all. The conference is aimed at anyone working, volunteering or running museums in rural regions, especially those interested in visitor experience, learning and collections development. It is also for organisations or individual practitioners that currently work with or would like to work in partnership with museums. The event takes place on 13th January at Wheal Martyn, Cornwall. To book a place please contact bmartin@swlakestrust.org.uk . [Plymouth University](#)

Awards

2023 European Capital of Culture competition launched

The Government has launched the competition to find a UK city to be European Capital of Culture in 2023. The UK has previously hosted a European Capital twice before: Glasgow in 1990 and Liverpool in 2008. Liverpool received 9.7m additional visits during 2008, accounting for 35% of visits to the city that year, generating £753.8m extra spending. So far, Leeds, Dundee and Milton Keynes are preparing bids for the 2023 title. The winning city, which will receive €1.5m in prize money, will be announced around the end of 2018. The Government said it is committed to the competition, but that "*the European Capital of Culture title may be subject to the outcome of [EU] exit negotiations which could have a bearing on the UK's participation*". [Heritage Alliance](#) (scroll), [Gov.uk](#), [Creative Europe Desk UK](#)

Art Fund launches Museum of the Year 2017

The Art Fund has launched Museum of the Year 2017, the largest prize for museums in the UK, offering £10k to runners-up and £100k to the winner. The judges are seeking a museum which fits all or some of four criteria:

- Completed project with a long-lasting transformative effect on the museum
- inspired visitors by bringing collections to life
- delivered an original audience development or outreach programme
- and has won the support of its visitors.

Applications are open until 7th. February, finalists will be announced in April and the winner in July. [Art Fund](#)

Also: the 'Armada Portrait' of Elizabeth I has been voted the favourite portrait acquired with the help of the Art Fund during 2016, with thousands casting votes. The portrait is now in the collection of Royal Museums Greenwich. [Art Fund](#)

Jodi Awards open for 2017

The Jodi Awards has opened for 2017. These recognise the best use of digital technology in widening access to collections, learning and creativity for disabled people in museums and galleries. The organisers welcome low and high tech entries from both big and small organisations. Criteria include a commitment to disability equality, involving disabled people in planning and inspirational value and potential impact. The deadline for applications is 27th January. [Jodi Awards](#)

Export bars and cultural gifts



Tate Baby House, England, 1760 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Gift Aid declarations made easier

Changes to the law, which will come into force from April 2017, will make it easier for charities to receive Gift Aid on donations given by Twitter, SMS or other digital means. Currently donors have to fill in a Gift Aid form each time they give to a new charity: the new rules allow an intermediary to create a Gift Aid declaration on the donor's behalf for all subsequent gifts in a year. However, donors have to continue to annually positively affirm that their gifts qualify for Gift Aid. [Heritage Alliance](#), [Charity Tax Group](#)

Nine export barred objects saved for the nation in 2015 – 16

Newly released statistics show that nine out of 21 objects which received an export bar in 2015 - 16 found a buyer in the UK. However, these had a combined value of £7m, or only 6% of the total value of objects placed under deferral. Objects are chosen for export bar if they are closely connected with UK history, are of outstanding aesthetic importance, or are particularly relevant to a study of art, learning or history. The saved objects included a dagger belonging to T.E. Lawrence, a picture of Nonsuch Palace and an Anglo-Saxon brooch.

Of the items not purchased in the UK, six were sold abroad for a combined £37.5m. In four other cases, the request for an export license was withdrawn. [Gov.uk](#)

Export bar for Josiah Wedgwood's Greek style vase

Four Greek-style vases survive which were made by Josiah Wedgwood himself on the opening day of his factory in Etruria on 13th June 1769. Two are owned by the V&A and a third is on long term loan to the British Museum, but a fourth is now at risk of export. An export bar is now in place until 17th March, with a possible extension to July, to seek a UK buyer able to raise £482.5k plus VAT. Wedgwood himself treasured his 'First Day Vases' and said they should not be sold. [Gov.uk](#)

Acceptance in lieu in review

Arts Council England has published the latest figures for its Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Schemes. During 2015 - 16 the Acceptance in Lieu scheme dealt with 36 cases and received works of art worth almost £50m. Highlights include further works by Lucian Freud and the only known picture of Bonnie Prince Charlie painted during the Jacobite Rebellion which was acquired by the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. The Cultural Gifts Scheme has also flourished, with acquisitions including half of the Great Seal of Queen Victoria, which joins the other half in the British Museum. The first archive of a living artist – illustrator Nicholas Allan – has been gifted to Seven Stories: the National Centre for Children's Books in Newcastle. [ACE](#)

Further details of museums tax relief

The Association of Independent Museums has written a helpful summary of further nuances to the recently-announced tax relief on exhibitions. For example, off-site storage costs between exhibitions will be eligible, but indirect expenditure such as marketing and education programmes will not. Exhibitions which are not held in eligible institutions can still claim tax relief provided they are put on by museums or galleries which are eligible. [AIM](#)

Diversity

Arts Council tracks shift towards more diverse workforce

Arts Council England has published recent data on the make-up of the arts workforce in *Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case 2015–16*. It said that the results showed a shift towards a more diverse and equal balance, but that more work is needed particularly in the representation of disabled people. Statistics include:

- Among NPOs, 17% of the workforce is BME, 4% is disabled, 55% female. The most represented age group is people from 20 – 34 who form 29% of the workforce.
- Among MPMs, 7% of workers are BME, up 2.3% since last year's data; 4% are disabled, down by 3.5%; 62% are female. The most represented age group is again 20 – 34 year olds, but these are only 17% of the workforce.
- Despite a large female workforce, fewer are senior executives: 32% are Chairs, 43% Chief Executives, 28% artistic directors.
- 8% of Chief Executives, 10% of artistic directors and 9% of Chairs are BME; 5% of all of these groups are disabled.
- Non-disclosure may skew some of these figures: 30% of artistic directors 'preferred not to say' in response to gender, ethnicity and disability questions.

For comparison, among the working population in the UK, 15% are BME, 19% have a disability, half are female, and 32% are aged 20 – 34. The report also publishes an individual statistical breakdown for each of the NPOs and MPMs supported by ACE. [AIM](#), [ACE](#), [Arts Professional](#), [The Stage](#), [The Guardian](#)

From Fun Palaces to Channel 4: some diversity comparative data

Statistics in the US are very similar to UK patterns – with the data also broken down to show BME people much more likely to work in facilities, finance or security rather than curatorial roles. However, a piece from *CultureType* lists 17 curators breaking that trend. [CultureType](#)

Fun Palaces has just published its 2016 evaluation: this year 4,800 local makers created 292 Fun Palaces attended by 124,000 people. 58.9% took place in libraries and archives, 3.77% in museums or heritage venues. 62% of maker teams included someone from a BME group and 27% included disabled people. [Fun Palaces](#)

The Asia-Europe Foundation has published a report comparing policy around disabled people and the arts, comparing practice in Asia and Europe. [Culture360](#)

Channel 4 has announced that it will advertise all future vacancies on the website Evenbreak, which is run by and for disabled people to help access employment. [Channel 4](#)

'Buddy scheme' to make museums more accessible to blind people

The RNIB is working with five museums in the South East to make it easier for blind and partially sighted people to visit. Volunteers at each location will 'buddy' a blind visitor and provide them with tailored information and support. The museums involved are University of Oxford Museums, Canterbury Museums, Royal Pavilion and Museums in Brighton, Lewes Castle and the Conan Doyle Collection. The scheme is part of the HLF funded Sensing Culture programme. [Museums Journal](#), [Sensing Culture Oxford](#)

International

UK, Germany, USA fall in the Nation Brand Index 2016

The UK has fallen by a relatively dramatic 1.31 points in the GfK nation brand index for 2016 – but so has the United States (-1.04) and Germany (0.96). The study tracks 50 developed and developing countries each year. Professor Simon Anholt, who created the study in 2005, said, "usually, global perception of individual countries is incredibly stable – but changes can and do take place. It is a country's perceived impact on the world that affects its global reputation, far more than its assets or achievements - and this is what we are seeing here." The UK remains in third place, behind the US and Germany at one and two. The UK is ranked at 7th in the world for 'a rich cultural heritage' after briefly taking 6th place in 2015. [GfK.com](#), [Heritage Alliance](#)

Lost cities and a rock salt mosque: Cultural Protection Fund recipients announced

The British Council has announced the recipients of the first round of its £30m Cultural Protection Fund awards. The aim is to build skills so that local experts can protect their own cultural assets for future generations; ensuring that archaeological sites under threat are documented, conserved and restored; and helping local people to identify and value cultural heritage. Grants include £460k to complete the last three galleries of the newly-reopened Basrah Museum, and offer training to museum staff; £330k for a University of Manchester project to survey, document and protect the site of the Alexandrian city of Charax and 14 other sites in Southern Iraq; £100k to preserve rock cut reliefs in Turkey; and £80k to revive the Mosque of Moqbil, which is cut from rock salt and in the Western Desert of Egypt, and increasingly at risk as political unrest and a decline of tourists emptied the area. [British Council](#), [Museums Journal](#)

V&A gallery in China to open in 2017

The V&A's first gallery in China is opening in Shenzhen this year. It is in partnership with a state-owned company and part of a wider cultural complex called Design Society. It will focus on 20th and 21st century design. Acting V&A Director Tim Reeve said, "for the V&A, this important international initiative represents a new way of engaging more deeply with China at a pivotal moment in its design history." [Blouinartinfo](#), [Design week](#)

Consultations and reviews

MA launches museum salaries survey

The MA is launching an Arts Council England-backed survey into pay and benefits in the museum sector, its first since 2004. It will be working with the specialist company Incomes Data Research, and will explore a variety of roles from curatorial to front of house and freelances. MA Policy officer Alistair Brown said, *"this is a fantastic opportunity to really understand how pay and benefits have changed in the museums sector in the past decade. There have been huge economic changes in that period, and we want to understand how these have affected pay in museums and equivalent professions. I'd encourage every museum to complete the survey."* The MA will be contacting museums directly, but if you have not heard from them by 9th January and would like to take part, please email clairedebond@incomesdataresearch.co.uk. [Museums Journal](#)

Scrap Metal Dealers Act review

The Home Office is reviewing the 2013 Scrap Metal Dealers Act to find out if it has been successful in its objective of preventing a trade in stolen metal. Responses should be sent to SMDAreview@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk by 30th January. [Heritage Alliance](#)

Consultation: Changes to the Taking Part survey

DCMS are planning changes to the Taking Part survey from April 2017, including deleting a number of questions and adding two new ones. It is keen to hear users views on the proposed changes at takingpart@culture.gov.uk, preferably by 6th January (though a little later is acceptable.) Full details of the changes are described [here](#). [Taking Part](#)

£60m for under-represented broadcasting genres

The Government is creating a pilot 2–3year £60m fund to help develop more TV, radio and online content in under-represented categories, including the arts and programmes for children. It is seeking views from producers, broadcasters and other interested parties on the focus of the fund, distribution platforms and other criteria. [Gov.uk](#)

Jobs

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

- [Casual Explainer - National Media Museum](#)
- [Director of Public Programmes - Science Museum Group](#)
- [Researcher, Conservation Science, NANORESTART - Tate](#)
- [STEM Ambassador Hub Manager - Science Museum Group \(Manchester\)](#)
- [Sculpture Conservator - V&A](#)

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

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