

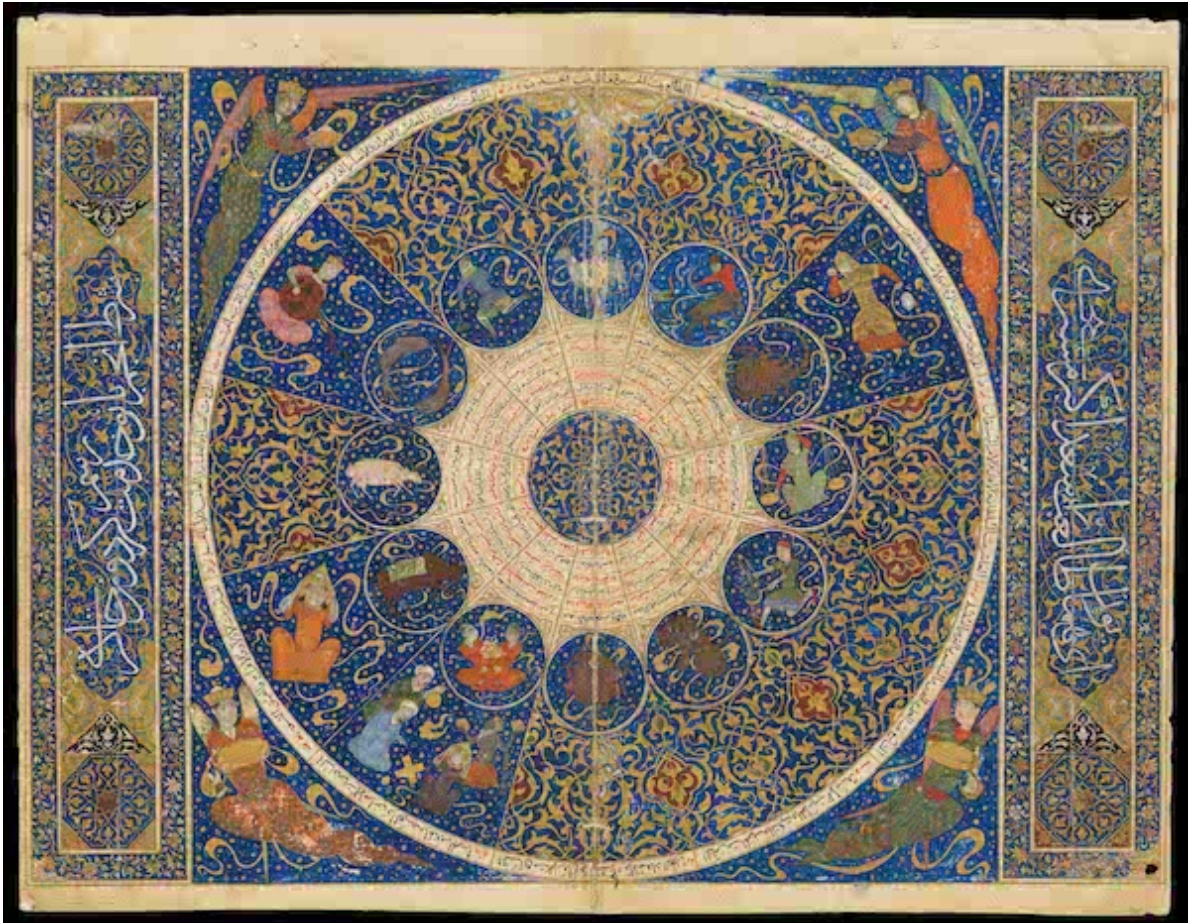
In this month's edition:

- [ICOM UK-NMDC 2021 Working Internationally Conference](#)
- [Science Museum acquires empty vial from world's first Covid-19 vaccine](#)
- [Black Country Living Museum to become a vaccination hub](#)
- [National Museums Scotland joins partnership to create the UK's first biobank](#)
- [University group including Fitzwilliam Museum wins £3m Capability for Collections grant](#)
- [£250m available in second round of Cultural Recovery Fund grants](#)
- [Scottish Government announces additional £3.1m in support for independent museums](#)
- [Culture GVA up 9.5% in 2019, bringing £34.6bn to the economy](#)
- [UK Government withdraws from Erasmus programme and announces new Turing scheme](#)
- [In brief: Brexit guidance and changes affecting the cultural sector](#)
- [Florence Nightingale Museum closes for 'foreseeable future' to avoid insolvency](#)
- ['Eat the Archives' – creation and participation are dominant themes for 2021 museum openings](#)
- [Museum's 'Skills Kitchen' programme gives career training to people in growing and preparing food](#)
- [Black Country Living Museum becomes most followed museum in the world on TikTok](#)
- [York Museums reach 1.5 million people and global media with #CuratorBattle](#)
- [NPG seeks eight museum partners for a Skills & Knowledge Exchange Programme](#)
- [Government announces new legally binding measures to help retain national treasures](#)
- [Gen Z speaks: Museum of London hears the views and hopes of young Londoners](#)
- [Directors from across the world make predictions about the future of museums](#)
- [VisitBritain predicts 2021 international tourism figures at 41% of 2019 levels](#)

...and much more.

Section headings | [NMDC news](#) | [Members' news](#) | [Covid-19 financial support](#) | [Culture powering the economy](#) | [Brexit](#) | [Longer term museum closures](#) | [Museum openings and reopening for 2021](#) | [Digital futures](#) | [Winning at social media](#) | [Surveys and consultations](#) | [Appointments and Honours](#) | [Events](#) | [Opportunities for collaboration](#) | [Cultural objects](#) | [Changing patterns of volunteering](#) | [Heritage and commemoration](#) | [Fundraising](#) | [Reconnecting with visitors](#) | [Tourism](#) | **Jobs**

NMDC news



Horoscope of Iskandar Sultan, 1411 Courtesy Wellcome Collection. Part of the V&A's Epic Iran exhibition

ICOM UK-NMDC 2021 Working Internationally Conference

Each year ICOM UK, in partnership with NMDC, organises the one-day Working Internationally Conference. 2021 will be a little different: this year it will be an online event over three days, taking place at a time when major global issues such as the impact of Covid-19, climate crisis, Brexit, and social justice will see museums continuing to reconsider and reimagine their roles in a global and local context and establish new ways of working. Each day of the conference will focus on a major global issue including social justice, sustainability and the future of museums. A full programme has now been published. Sessions include:

Horniman Director Nick Merriman in conversation with Mary Robinson, Adjunct Professor for Climate Justice in Trinity College Dublin, Chair of The Elders, and Baroness Natalie Bennett, Green Party Peer. They will discuss the role museums can play in reaching net zero emissions and increasing biodiversity.

Richard Benjamin, Head of International Slavery Museum at NML, and Zandra Yeaman, Curator of Discomfort Project at The Hunterian, University of Glasgow discuss pushing for social justice against agendas that find understanding the nuances of community, privilege, silence, sustainability and anti-racism difficult.

- Broadcast from the recently renovated Panama Canal Museum

Tickets are free for ICOM UK, ICOM and NMDC members. Tickets for non-members are £89, but with concessions for students (£40) and retired (£45) and single day tickets (£30, £15 concessions) .

[ICOM](#), [Eventbrite](#)

Members' news

Science Museum acquires empty vial from world's first Covid-19 vaccine

On 8th December 2020, 90-year-old Margaret Keenan became the first person to receive a Covid-19 vaccine outside of a trial, when she received the Pfizer/BioNTech version at Coventry University Hospital. Now the Science Museum has acquired the empty vial as part of its Covid-19 collecting project. Other objects collected include homemade masks and 'stay at home' signs from Downing Street briefings. These acquisitions fit with a much longer story of combating disease told by the museum, which also holds the lancets used in the first vaccinations in 1796. All will be part of an exhibition opening at the museum during the spring, which will also give the context of previous epidemics including Ebola, polio and bubonic plague. [Guardian](#), [SMG](#)

Black Country Living Museum to become a vaccination hub

Black Country Living Museum will become one of 46 mass vaccination centres over coming weeks, alongside sports centres and stadiums, car parks and nightclubs. The Thackray Museum of Medicine in Leeds is also becoming a vaccination hub, offering its conference area as a place to treat high priority groups. The programme there was organised through the Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation. Director Nat Edwards said *"just to witness the very best of modern medicine in action alongside the whole history of humanity's centuries of effort to understand and overcome disease is hard to describe."* [NEMO](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Dudley News](#) (BCLM), [Telegraph](#)

NHM describes 503 species new to science during 2020

Although much activity slowed or halted at the Natural History Museum during 2020, scientists were able to continue research at home or within quieter collections. One result is the documenting of 503 new species during the year – ranging across all forms of life, from a praying mantis and an emerald-green moth to lichen, wasps and a monkey. Dr Tim Littlewood, the museum's Executive Director of Science said *"in a year when the global mass of biodiversity is being outweighed by human-made mass it feels like a race to document what we are losing. 503 newly discovered species reminds us we represent a single, inquisitive, and immensely powerful species with the fate of many others in our hands."* [NHM](#), [Nature](#)

Also: The Natural History Museum is featuring in a new weekly TV series on Channel 5 'Natural History Museum: World of Wonder' which was filmed over several months during 2020 and looks behind the scenes at the museum's work. [Experience UK](#)

National Museums Scotland joins partnership to create the UK's first biobank

National Museums Scotland is working in partnership with the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland to create the first national zoological biobank, part of the international CryoArks Biobank. It will act as a hub for scientists across the UK, offering tissue, cells and DNA from endangered wildlife, contributing to conservation planning. NMS has been collecting tissue from animals donated to its collections for 25 years and can therefore bring thousands of samples to the project. Dr Andrew Kitchener, NMS's Principal Curator of Vertebrates said *"this project is crucial in enabling researchers to engage with a vast resource of biological data samples which until now was difficult to access. We have a responsibility to future generations to ethically collect these biological samples, store them in appropriate conditions and make them available for research."* [Royal Zoological Society](#)

University group including Fitzwilliam Museum wins £3m Capability for Collections grant

Five institutions within the University of Cambridge have been awarded a £3m Capability for Collections grant from AHRC. The group includes the Fitzwilliam Museum, Hamilton Kerr Institute, McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, and Cambridge University Library. Together, they will now be able to invest in equipment and refurbishment that will enable researchers from across the UK and worldwide to undertake new research into heritage collections. The work will be carried out as part of the Cambridge Heritage Science Hub (CHERISH) initiative. Fitzwilliam Museum Director Luke Syson said: *"Our CHERISH initiative draws together our collections and research methodologies to investigate the making and histories of art and artefacts from prehistory to the present day, from all over the world."* [University of Cambridge](#), [Academic Gates](#)

Images this month: V&A's Epic Iran exhibition

Images this month are from the V&A's Epic Iran exhibition, which covers 5,000 years of the country's art, design and culture from the Cyrus Cylinder to modern photography. It has been 90 years since the last major UK exhibition on Iran - the new show will capture many of the dramatic transformations that have taken place in the intervening time. The exhibition is planned to open on 13th February, if Covid-19 restrictions permit. [V&A](#),

Covid-19 financial support



Armlet, 500-330 BC, from the Oxus Treasure © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

£250m available in second round of Cultural Recovery Fund grants

A second round of the grants strand of the Cultural Recovery Fund has opened, offering £25k - £3m per organisation from an overall pot of £250m. The emphasis of funding moves on from the emergency interventions of the first round and is intended to support a transition back to a viable and sustainable operating model during the coming financial year. Funds must be spent on work taking place from 1st April – 30th June. All accredited museums and those working towards accreditation must apply to this ACE-administered scheme, and not to any additional arms-length bodies. However, non-accredited museums should apply instead to National Lottery Heritage Fund programmes. The deadline for second round applications is midday on 26th January. [ACE](#)

Government announces recipients of £165m in loans from Cultural Recovery Fund

Eleven organisations employing 9,000 people have been loaned £165m through the repayable finance strand of the Cultural Recovery Fund. Recipients include Historic Royal Palaces, the Southbank Centre, National Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Company. A second round of repayable loans closed in early January. [Gov.uk](#)

Scottish Government announces additional £3.1m in support for independent museums

The Scottish Government has announced that it will top up the Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS)-administered Museums Recovery and Resilience Fund with an additional £3.1m to support independent museums. MGS will publish details of how to apply for funds this week. The Scottish Government is also providing an extra £4m for grassroots music venues. [Scottish Government](#), [STV](#)

Manchester Museum among recipients of £60m in the latest round of the Capital Kickstart Fund

74 arts organisations of all sizes have received further funding through the Capital Kickstart Fund – bringing the total to 260 projects receiving £107m, with 75% based outside London. Recipients in this round include Manchester Museum, which receives £1.3m towards its £13m 'Hello future' major refurbishment project, with the museum reopening in August 2022. It includes a two-storey extension and new South Asia and Chinese Culture galleries. Turner Contemporary in Margate has been awarded £264,000 to complete a long-term transformation of its visitor facilities and digital infrastructure. [Gov.uk](#), [University of Manchester](#)

Chancellor announces new lockdown grants including up to £9k for leisure businesses

Following the new national lockdown, Chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced a further £4.6bn in support for business and local authorities. This includes:

- A one-off payment of £4k - £9k per property for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England. The sum paid will be based on the rateable value of each site.
- There will also be a £594m discretionary fund to support other impacted businesses.
- The devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will respectively receive £375m, £227m and £127m to support similar schemes administered in each country.

[Gov.uk](#)

Job Retention Scheme runs to April 2021, with monthly deadlines to make claims

The Government's Job Retention Scheme now runs through to the end of April, but there are new monthly deadlines for making claims – the first being 14th January for any claims relating to December 2020. As previously, the scheme will cover 80% of wages for hours not worked, with employers covering all costs for hours worked, and NICS and pensions only for hours not worked. Additionally, a third round of grants is available through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme for those with businesses impacted since 1st November 2020. The deadline for claims to SEISS is 29th January. [Gov.uk](#) (new deadlines), [Gov.uk](#) (Job Retention Scheme details), [Gov.uk](#) (self-employed support)

Culture powering the economy

Culture GVA up 9.5% in 2019, bringing £34.6bn to the economy

DCMS has published Economic Estimates for 2019 for all the sectors it oversees, showing impressive growth in the year before the coronavirus struck. These sectors, comprising digital, culture, tourism, creative industries, gambling, sport, telecoms, civil society and tourism generated £295bn for the UK economy or 15% of UK GVA, up from 14.6% the previous year. Individual sector figures show:

- The cultural sector contributed £34.6bn in 2019, or 1.8% of UK GVA. This is an increase of 9.5% since 2018 and by 27.0% since 2010 in real terms. This is more than twice as much as

sport, which contributed £17bn.

- Creative industries contributed £115.9bn in 2019, an increase of 5.6% since the previous year. Just over 40% of this came from IT, software and computer services, with film, TV, video, radio and photography contributing 39%.
- The creative industries are also largely responsible for the fact that DCMS sectors (excluding tourism and civil society) have grown much faster than the economy as a whole, seeing its value increase by 43.6%, three times the UK average of 15%.

[Arts Professional](#), [Gov.uk](#)

Brexit



Farhad Moshiri, *Eshgh (Love)*, 2007 © Farhad Moshiri. Photo: Peter Kelleher/Victoria and Albert Museum, London

UK Government withdraws from Erasmus programme and announces new Turing scheme

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced that the UK will withdraw from the Europe-wide Erasmus scheme, which offered educational exchanges to students and young people. He has instead announced a new 'Turing scheme' with a wider global reach. Some details of the Turing scheme have already been announced:

- It will be backed by over £100 million, providing funding for around 35,000 students in universities, colleges and schools to go on placements and exchanges overseas, starting in September 2021.
- The scheme will target students from disadvantaged backgrounds and areas which were under-represented among UK participants in Erasmus+.

- It will include countries across the world.
- Universities, colleges and schools are encouraged to begin preparation with international partners to meet delivery deadlines.

Meanwhile, the Republic of Ireland has announced that it will offer funds of around €2.1m each year on an ongoing basis, to cover participation in Erasmus for students in Northern Ireland. Ireland's Minister for Further and Higher Education Simon Harris said *"it's an investment in relationships between institutions north and south. It's an investment in our next generation, and I think it's a really practical sensible way of continuing to cooperate post-Brexit."*

The Turing scheme will not fund bringing students into the UK as Erasmus did, leaving universities with a potential shortfall of £200m. Seán Hand, Vice President in charge of Europe at the University of Warwick said *"there will be a relative loss of income for British universities, but from a diplomatic and ambassadorial point of view, the loss is invaluable"*. Others have asked how far an average of £2.8k per student will go in funding a significant experience abroad. However Universities UK International Director, Vivienne Stern praised the new scheme, saying *"evidence shows that students who have international experience tend to do better academically and in employment, and the benefits are greatest for those who are least advantaged. The new Turing scheme is a fantastic development and will provide global opportunities for up to 35,000 UK students to study and work abroad."* [New York Times](#), [Gov.uk](#) (Turing scheme), [RTE](#) (Irish funding), [Guardian](#)

In brief: Brexit guidance and changes affecting the cultural sector

- Following a deal with the EU and an end to the transition period, DCMS has updated its advice on work in Europe of particular interest to the cultural sector. Issues covered include import and export of cultural objects, mobile phone use and personal data. [gov.uk](#)
- There is also updated guidance on employment of foreign nationals. [gov.uk](#)
- The Heritage Alliance has updated its extensive Brexit guide to reflect the deal with the EU and end of the transition period. [Heritage Alliance](#)
- The UK Government has withdrawn from new import licensing regulations for cultural property, introduced by the EU in 2019 and due to be enforced by 2025. [Art Newspaper](#)
- There will be no successor to the Creative Europe programme, worth £3.1m to the cultural sector. However, UK organisations may be able to join some projects with 'third country participant' status. [Arts Professional](#)
- The UK will remain in the Horizon Europe research programme, joining 16 other countries which pay for associate status, allowing UK researchers to continue to apply for funding. [Science mag](#)

Actors and performers call for Government to negotiate EU work permit

Actors, musicians and others working in the creative industries have expressed anger at the lack of a one-stop shop work permit for UK creatives touring Europe following Brexit. Video technician Tim Brennan told *The Guardian* that if each country requires its own visa, valid for only one trip *"as a freelancer I and many like me travel through the EU countless times a year on different tours and events [and] this will become impossible due to cost and time if we do not have visa free travel."* His petition, now signed by 250,000 people and backed across the sector, calls for Government to negotiate a free cultural work permit. There is also concern about the costs and red tape for EU artists entering the UK for gigs and festivals. According to sources quoted by *The Independent*, the EU offered the UK a mutual 90 day visa exemption for creative workers on tour, and this was rejected by the UK. The UK Government claims that it 'pushed for a more ambitious agreement' - a statement disputed by the EU, which claims that the UK Government refused to discuss both short and long-term visa options. [Guardian](#), [Arts Professional](#), [Arts Professional](#), [Independent](#), [NME](#), [NME](#), [Classic FM](#), [NME](#) (EU statement), [BBC](#)

Longer term museum closures

V&A likely to remain closed on Mondays and Tuesdays until 2022

The V&A has announced that it is likely to remain closed on Mondays and Tuesdays until early 2022. Like many others, the museum showed a slow recovery when it reopened over the summer, with 15% of usual footfall in August, and expects less than 50% of its usual visitor numbers in 2021-22. Deputy Director Tim Reeve said that opening just five days each week would allow the museum to offer visitors *"the V&A they know and love, rather than opening seven days and spreading things too thinly, by perhaps closing some of the galleries"*. [Art Newspaper](#)

Florence Nightingale Museum closes for 'foreseeable future' to avoid insolvency

The Florence Nightingale Museum has announced that it will close from 28th February for the 'foreseeable future' to avert bankruptcy, regardless of when the national lockdown is lifted. The museum, which generates almost all of its revenue from visitors, is also likely to face major restructuring and a reduction of staff from 11 to three. Director David Green said *"to go from the furious activity and high visitor numbers of the early months of 2020 to instant desolation was a major blow, especially as this all happened during Florence's bicentenary year... Since March 2020, we have explored every avenue and resource available to us, in order to keep the Museum operating."* He added that the situation is unlikely to improve for many months. [Evening Standard](#), [BBC](#), [Art Newspaper](#), [Museums Journal](#)

In brief: museums facing job losses and potential closure

- Wirral Council is contemplating closing the Williamson Art Gallery & Museum in Birkenhead in a cost cutting exercise, saving 327k. [Liverpool Echo](#)
- 130 roles will be lost in a cost cutting and restructuring exercise at the Royal Collections Trust, which oversees the Queen's art collection. RCT lost £64m during 2020 as a result of the coronavirus. The posts of Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures and Surveyor of The Queen's Works of Art are among those to be lost. [Art Newspaper](#)
- The People's History Museum in Manchester is facing an 'uncertain future', having lost £200k due to the coronavirus. It is now crowdfunding to cover its essential costs. Stars including Julie Hesmondhalgh, Sir Ian McKellen and Melvyn Bragg are supporting the campaign. Hesmondhalgh described it as her 'favourite museum' which 'deals with ordinary people and our struggles'. [BBC](#), [PHM](#) (Twitter update), [PHM](#)
- It is also estimated that around 55,000 workers in music, visual and performing arts have lost jobs as a result of the pandemic, with reduced hours for many who remain in the sector. [Creative PEC](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Museum openings and reopening for 2021

'Eat the Archives' – creation and participation are dominant themes for 2021 museum openings

After several years in development, with significant community co-production, Derby Museum of Making will open in the spring, telling the story of 300 years of making in the region, while inspiring people to use their own creativity. Derby Museums Director Tony Butler said *"we are really keen on putting forward the idea that every young person can be a maker. The challenges that we face in the 21st century, things like climate change and environmental loss, much of that will be mitigated by technology, engineering and ingenuity, and those are the kind of makers we need in the future."*

Meanwhile, the new Museum of Oxford also plans on a collaborative approach, exploring 'the community's place in the city's history'. Manchester Jewish Museum reopens in the Spring having doubled in size with a new gallery, studio, kitchen, café and shop. Its programming for February includes an 'Eat the Archives' event, making use of the kitchen to bring history alive through taste. Bow Street Police Museum is a new attraction opening in a former police station and magistrate's court in Covent Garden, telling the early story of policing and crime from the Bow Street Runners of the 1740s onwards. The Museum of the Home in East London and Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds will reopen after major redevelopment projects at dates to be confirmed once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. In Bath, a new attraction, Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein, will look at the author and her famous character, and their influence through time, with dark tourism overtones. Later in 2021, the Courtauld will reopen in London with major new galleries covering its medieval and early Renaissance collection, 20th-century art, and the Bloomsbury Group. [Museums Journal](#), [Derby Museums](#), [Manchester Jewish Museum](#) (Eat the Archives), [Museum of the Home](#), [Thackray Museum](#), [Courtauld Gallery](#), [Bow Street Police Museum](#), [Arts Industry](#) (Bow Street Police Museum), [Guardian](#)

Munch and Grand Egyptian Museum among high profile international openings

Meanwhile *The Art Newspaper* offers a round-up of some of the major museums opening or expanding across the world in 2021, many of them long-planned projects delayed by the coronavirus. They include the Humboldt Forum in Berlin, which opened with a virtual event in late December. There is programming around environment and social change, and physical exhibitions from the spring. The Grand Egyptian Museum will open with collections including 5,000 artefacts from the tomb of Tutankhamun. Munch, planned since 2008, will open on the waterfront in Oslo, showcasing the world's largest collection of the artist's works. Following a 20 year project, billionaire François Pinault will be opening a private museum of contemporary art, the Bourse de Commerce-Pinault Collection, in Paris later in January. [Art Newspaper](#), [Humboldt Forum](#), [Munch](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (Bourse de Commerce-Pinault Collection), [New York Times](#)

Museum's 'Skills Kitchen' programme gives career training to people in growing and preparing food

The Museum Of East Anglian Life is running a new project in 2021 called Skills Kitchen. The project will work with up to 20 people not in full-time work or education and help them develop the skills they need to take the next steps into either formal education or work. Scheduled to begin in April and running one day a week for 16 weeks, participants will gain knowledge and understanding of the food business. They will help grow and then use produce from the museum's walled garden as they learn cookery techniques and how to prepare food from a range of cultures. The Skills Kitchen will bring together local food businesses and chefs with museum staff to deliver the programme and is funded by the Local Investment in Future Talent (LIFT) Community Grant Scheme from the European Social Fund and administered by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils. Meanwhile, the museum is transitioning into becoming The Museum of Food. The Collections and Interpretations team have begun the process of evaluating the extensive collection of over 40,000 objects, and will use them to help people understand food and its heritage from production and preparation to consumption. [Museum of East Anglian Life](#) (Skills Kitchen), [Museum of East Anglian Life](#) (national museum of food future plans)

Digital futures

'People. Change. Museums.' podcast considers issues from precarity to agency

The One by One project, which is focused on extending digital literacy in museums, has launched a new podcast 'People. Change. Museums.' It looks at topics where museums and technology intersect, at a time of multiple crises. The first episode explores 'Precarity' with a wide-ranging discussion including retaining jobs, AI and why a human-led approach is essential to digital upskilling. The six-part series includes interviews with museum workers internationally giving insightful and often heartfelt accounts of how the crisis has affected them and the sector, as well as considering how this will shape digital innovation in museums. [One by One](#)

Mixed Reality in Cultural Heritage – from seeing the past of buildings to attracting youth audiences uninterested in 'kings and queens'

A new podcast series, 'Mixed Reality in Cultural Heritage' looks at how this new technology is being practically applied across culture. In the first episode, Dr Dominique Bouchard, Head of Interpretation at English Heritage looks at the new visitor benefits that MR can bring, for example, in visualising how sites have radically changed in appearance across time. She also discusses how using digital for new topics of storytelling allows heritage to attract young people who 'don't give a pin about heritage' or see its relevance to central generational concerns such as climate change and equality. Mixed reality and digital can offer new issues and storylines through sites for those uninterested in more traditional 'kings and queens' topics. The podcasts are hosted by Dr. Mariza Dima, a Mixed Reality designer and lecturer in Creative Technology for Games at Brunel University London. [Anchor FM](#)

In brief: escaping the Zoom grid of doom for interactive virtual spaces

- Virtual offices where teams can meet together to collaborate across the working day have been available through VR headsets for a while, and offer an immersive alternative to Zoom. However, given the cost and relatively low takeup of VR headsets, this has not been practical for most work groups. Now digital business Spatial has made virtual office software available on devices such as smartphones and tablets. Avatars in the space can walk around, write on a sticky note and follow powerpoint presentations. [Mashable](#)
- VR business Cooperation Innovations has developed a new Curatours app, which allows visitors accessing virtual tours to interact with each other and staff through an avatar. It is accessible through VR headsets, smartphones and tablets. The app was developed with support from the Government's Innovate UK fund and is currently being piloted at Hill House, a National Trust for Scotland property. [Museums Journal](#)

PHAROS explores copyright issues for new online research platform providing open-access to millions of art-historical images

PHAROS is an international consortium of 14 photo archives in Europe and North America, specialising in images of works of art. The group has been working since 2013 to create a digital research platform facilitating comprehensive consolidated access to tens of millions of photo archive images. The images depict works in public and private collections across the world and the initiative will provide access to material that is often unpublished and only available in hard-copy through in-person visits to repositories. Following a workshop involving experts from the UK, EU & US, PHAROS has now produced a report on the copyright issues associated with the project. The report has implications for museums and galleries worldwide. It explores the layered nature of copyright for such works, the appetite for risk within institutions, agrees a definition of open access and works towards an IP framework for the consortium. It identifies that issues of ownership & control need revisiting in an online environment and urges further debate and collaboration in the sector. The recommendations are likely to be useful to any individual or institution thinking of publishing photographic archive materials online – please contact Charlotte Brunskill (cbrunskill@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk) with any questions or feedback. Meanwhile, PHAROS is currently engaged in a pilot project, funded by the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, which aims to make available an initial 1.5 million works of art drawn from the collections of five PHAROS members. The project will use ResearchSpace software and is due to be launched later in 2021. [Paul Mellon Centre](#) (full PHAROS report), [PHAROS](#) (project site)

Winning at social media



Royal bust, about 439-57 Photo: © The Sarikhani Collection

Black Country Living Museum becomes most followed museum in the world on TikTok

In just four months, Black Country Living Museum has gained over 350,000 followers and 10 million views on TikTok, making it the most popular museum in the world on the platform and attracting widespread media coverage. BCLM presented its costumed staff playing historic characters, including a 1940s young woman describing the role of women in WW2. A 1920s grandad dispensing life advice gained 12,000 comments and 2.2m views. Communications Manager Abby Bird who opened the account in late August said *"I remember thinking I would be really happy if we got 10,000 followers by Christmas"* but actually hit that milestone on her second post. Bird is herself a 'TikTok addict', showing the importance of understanding social media platforms to create a successful presence. (See also: 'Winning at social media' section below for TikTok advice for museums.) [Heritage Digital](#), [Guardian](#), [BBC](#), [TikTok](#) (BCLM account), [TikTok](#) (Victorians prescribing highly lethal poisons to treat mild anxiety)

York Museums reach 1.5 million people and global media with #CuratorBattle

York Museums Trust spent much of 2020 picking petty fights with other museums on twitter – to heartwarming effect. Its #CuratorBattle programme invited museums to argue that they held the best object on a variety of themes, and in doing so, made connections with museums nationally and internationally, raised awareness of collections and delighted the public. 1.5 million people engaged with the content, 5.4 million saw YMT objects, and staff were interviewed on radio stations from Australia to Canada. The campaign also benefited other museums, including Scarborough Museums, which increased its monthly impressions from 15k to 931k by coming up with the #CreepiestObject. It has recently been shortlisted for a PRUK marketing award, in the category of 'best performance during Covid-19'. On the last day of 2020, the Yorkshire Museum tweeted *"We started 2020 with 13,000 followers We closed in March & haven't reopened yet. We still wanted to share our objects - so started a little thing called #CuratorBattle & other fun ideas We're now ending 2020 with [just short] of 30,000 followers. Thanks for your support."* [York Museums Trust](#), [Yorkshire Museum](#) (twitter), [Yorkshire Museum](#) (star object curator battle), [Yorkshire Museum](#) (#CreepiestObject), [YMT](#) (marketing award shortlist)

Also: Dominic Head, Digital & Marketing Officer at Historic Houses has grown the organisation's Instagram account over the past year by 1000%, using popular content to drive visitors to the newsletters and websites. [Heritage Digital](#)

Getting started on TikTok

Reason Digital has written an initial guide to getting started on TikTok, with a particular focus on charities. It says that although it is a good idea to consult younger people who know the form and memes, it's also worth noting that the demographics using it have shifted in the past couple of years - from a largely teen audience, to one with a third of users now over 24. Heritage Digital also offers advice based on the recent success of Black Country Living Museum on the platform. [Reason Digital](#), [AMA](#) (Training: Using TikTok and Instagram to Diversify your Audiences), [Heritage Digital](#)

Surveys and consultations

CIF Covid-19 impact survey

The Creative Industries Federation is seeking responses to a survey of the economic impacts of Covid-19 to support its ability to speak to Government on behalf of the sector. The survey should take around 15 minutes to complete. [CIF](#)

House of Lords debates the Antique Firearms Regulations 2020 – and new costs to museums

The number of antique firearms recovered in criminal circumstances rose from four in 2007 to 96 in 2016, and they have also been associated with six fatalities since 2007. As a result, new regulations are being brought in, in conjunction with the Firearms Act 1968, which more closely define an antique firearm. The regulations list seven firearms and cartridges which will no longer be defined as 'antique' because of a greater risk that they will be used for crime. In a debate on these changes in the House of Lords, Lord German raised the point that the new regulations would have financial implications for around 200 museums holding firearms with 'the costs fall[ing] unevenly on smaller institutions'. Typically it will cost £200 for a licence and £3000 for appropriate storage, at a time of 'zero visitor income'. He asked the Government to offer 'an appropriate period of grace' longer than the three months currently proposed to address the changes. Speaking for the Government, Baroness Williams of Trafford said that she sympathised with this point and would seek a response. [Hansard](#), [Legislation.gov.uk](#) (Antique Firearms Regulations 2020)

Appointments and Honours

Cultural sector figures receiving New Year's Honours include former Art Fund Director Stephen Deuchar, who receives a knighthood. Former British Museum Keeper Josephine Fitton and Gavin Edgerley-Harris, Director of the Gurkha Museum, received OBEs. In all 25 people received awards associated with culture and heritage. [Arts Professional](#), [Arts Industry](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Katherine McAlpine has been appointed as the new director of The Brunel Museum, London and will take up the post this month. She was previously Exhibitions and Interpretation Manager at Imperial War Museums [Brunel Museum](#)

Edmund Southworth is retiring as Director of Manx National Heritage. He previously worked for National Museums Liverpool and York Archaeological Trust. [Manx National Heritage](#)

Obituary

Dame Margaret Weston has died. The first woman to be a Director of any national museum, she led the Science Museum from 1973 - 86, with career highlights that included acquiring Concorde and overseeing the opening of the National Railway Museum (1975), Wroughton site (1979) and National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, now National Media Museum (1983). SMG Director Sir Ian Blatchford described her as a 'pioneering and impressive leader'. A full obituary will be published by the Science Museum shortly. [Science Museum](#) (career history, published 2016), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#)

Events

Heritage Digital offers events on how Brexit will affect IP and data protection

Heritage Digital is offering two online events on the practical effects of Brexit for the sector: Brexit, Intellectual Property Rights and Heritage on 2nd February and Brexit, Data Protection and Heritage on 26th January. [Heritage Digital](#)

Rebuilding Heritage Spring programme focuses on wellbeing and inclusion

The Rebuilding Heritage upskilling programme continues throughout the spring with events especially focused on wellbeing and inclusion. Sessions include Wellbeing at Work on 21st January and the Wellbeing Gym on 28th January, with a look at short workouts to help manage working from home. There are also two events with the Disability Collaborative Network on inclusive leadership and workplace practice. [Rebuilding Heritage](#)

Managing digital in a time of accelerating change

John Stack, Digital Director of the Science Museum Group will be giving a talk on 'Managing digital in a time of accelerating change' as part of the Research Libraries UK digital transformation series. He will discuss how to find the right mix of sustainable long-term practice, new experiments and approaches to emerging technologies, despite rapidly evolving audience behaviour. The event takes place online on 20th January from 2pm, and is free. [Research Libraries UK](#)

Participate in events for Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on 27th January, and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust is inviting anyone running relevant events to list them on its website. It also offers advice on organising activity, work with schools and marking the day online. [HMD](#)

Science Museum Group launches 2021 Climate Talks

Science Museum Group has announced the programme for a year of 'Climate Talks' – public facing panel discussions on the impacts of climate change, looking at the social, political and scientific approaches that will be needed to avert disaster. Some of the events announced so far include:

- Climate Change: Why Should We Care? led by Dr Hannah Fry on 28th January
- Samira Ahmed leading a panel on the Future of Fuel on 12th February
- Jon Snow asking 'Is Capitalism Compatible with Environmentalism' on 26th February

Tickets are free online and more events will be announced in the spring. The events will be complemented by an exhibition 'Our Future Planet' looking at the nature-based and technological solutions needed to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. [SMG](#), [SMG](#) (twitter), [Museums Journal](#)

VISTA-AR webinar showcases new technology for visitor intelligence

The VISTA Augmented Reality project is a research partnership of eight organisations on both sides of Channel, collaborating with Exeter Cathedral and the Château of Fougères. Funded by Interreg France (Channel) it aims to create new visitor experiences through advanced digital technologies. By sharing development, and offering a final product through a cloud-based system, it hopes to create a suite of tools that is widely affordable despite the challenges faced by the cultural sector. The group is now offering a webinar to demonstrate the visitor intelligence tools strand of the project, including sentiment analysis and a digital profiling tool which, by mapping how visitors move around sites, will give insights on the preferences of different demographics. The event takes place on 26th January from 1.30pm. Please fill in the booking form at the footer of the event page, and contact vista-ar@exeter.ac.uk with any queries. [VISTA-AR](#)

MuseumNext Digital Summit

MuseumNext is holding a Digital Summit, with talks offering 'actionable ideas' and online networking including icebreakers sessions. Topics include making festivals digital, playing games online, getting more out of livestreams, doubling online donations with small tweaks, monetising museum digital, getting young people excited about science, 'doomsday prepping' and the renaissance in live interactive schools workshops. The event takes place in the afternoon and early evening of 22nd – 26th February. Tickets for individuals are £120, but museums can send an unlimited number of staff on a group ticket for £240. [MuseumNext](#)

Digital tools for fundraisers event – plus spring programme

Art Fundraising & Philanthropy has launched its spring programme with events including 'Digital Tools for Fundraisers' which takes place over two sessions on 23rd February and 2nd March. It will cover which digital channels achieve the best returns as well as the latest trends in digital fundraising. Tickets are £50-£75 +VAT. Other topics include relaunching membership schemes and fundraising for individual artists. [Art Fundraising & Philanthropy, AF&P](#) (full course list)

AMA spring programme – from career planning to attracting new audiences through TikTok

The Arts Marketing Association has published its spring programme, with events including 'Setting personal and professional intentions for 2021' (13th January), 'Making the most of your CRM system' (9th February) and 'Using TikTok and Instagram to diversify audiences' (10th February). The programme is free with £70 annual AMA membership – however, membership is free to those currently between jobs. [AMA](#)

Catch-ups: recordings of past events

Recent seasons of events now available as recordings include:

- Sessions from NMDC's virtual conference on museums responding to the climate and ecological crisis, convened by CEO of the Horniman Museum Nick Merriman, are available to watch online. The focus was on sharing positive action and practical solutions in areas including sustainable exhibitions, reducing energy emissions, working internationally and engaging audiences. [NMDC](#)
- The webinar 'rebuilding attraction websites in times of lockdown and social distancing' looked at the experiences of the South Bank Centre and London Transport Museum, including a look at successful monetisation of online events by LTM. There is now a blog of the event, alongside the recording. [Deeson](#)
- Sessions from the Fair Museum Jobs Summit are now online, with topics discussed including CV advice, hybrid careers in the private and museum sectors, how to write a job application, networking and CV advice. [Fair Museum Jobs](#)

Opportunities for collaboration

NPG seeks eight museum partners for a Skills & Knowledge Exchange Programme

The National Portrait Gallery is seeking eight new partners to join its Skills & Knowledge Exchange Programme. Funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund with support from Art Fund, the programme has been co-designed with four initiating partners – The Ulster Museum, Nottingham City Museums & Galleries/Nottingham Castle, Gainsborough's House Sudbury and the Box, Plymouth. A bespoke programme will be drawn up for each partner to learn from colleagues. Partner programmes could include work with the national collection or NPG's new interpretation and learning approaches developed for its Inspiring People project. Partners could alternatively choose to focus on other parts of the operation, including commercial or building activities. For further information and how to become involved, contact LDown@npg.org.uk or SFarmer@npg.org.uk. The deadline for applications is 29th January.

Art Fund offers up to £10k to support student placements at museums

23,500 students hold Art Fund passes, and many of this group want to go beyond visiting museums to actively working in the sector. Art Fund is offering museums funding of up to £10k to support short paid placements, setting up to 100% of the costs associated with the placement. Students will be paid either the London or National Living Wage, depending on location. Art Fund particularly wants to support work facilitating public engagement with art, whether that is in person or online. [Art Fund](#)

Cultural objects



Rhyton, 500-330 BC. Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Government announces new legally binding measures to help retain national treasures

Following a consultation with the sector, the Government has announced that there will be a change to the process for buying objects that have received an export bar – moving from a 'gentleman's agreement' with the seller, to a legally enforced commitment to sell if funds can be raised.

Previously, if a UK institution agreed a price with the owner of an item that would otherwise be sold abroad, and raised the funds, the seller could then choose to withdraw the item from sale, wasting considerable public goodwill and museum resources on the fundraising effort. Although relatively rare, this has happened eight times in the last five years, including in 2017 when the National Gallery raised £30m for Jacopo Pontormo's 'Portrait of a Young Man in a Red Cap' only for the sale to fall through. The new rules, in force since 1st January, mean that this can no longer happen, with agreements becoming legally binding once a UK institution has stepped forward and the owner has agreed to sell. In its response to the consultation on the changes, NMDC said *"the proposal should help to ensure that more national treasures are retained within the United Kingdom, giving the public greater access to our cultural heritage, and reducing the wastage of public money and resource on campaigns to acquire works that are subsequently withdrawn."* National Gallery Director, Dr Gabriele Finaldi, said *"I welcome the new rules that remove the ambiguities that have led to major works of art being lost to the nation. The clarity will be beneficial to museums and vendors alike."* [Gov.uk](#) (full outcome), [Gov.uk](#) (press release), [Museums Journal](#) (2017 – failed Pontormo sale)

Acceptance in Lieu scheme results in £65m in art for UK museums and galleries

The Acceptance in Lieu tax scheme, which allows cultural objects to be donated to UK public collections in exchange for writing off inheritance tax, has resulted in a record £65m in gifts during 2020. This settled tax debts of £40m, thus spending up to the limit of the scheme for the first time. Objects acquired include:

- A manuscript by Paul Gauguin was given to the Courtauld Institute to cover a £6.5m tax bill;
- Works from the collection of George Pinto, including 'The Lavergne Family Breakfast' by Jean-Étienne Liotard (1702-89), given to the National Gallery and 'A Capriccio' by Francesco Guardi (1712-93) given to the Fitzwilliam Museum;
- A Manet portrait and a landscape by Camille Corot were acquired by National Museum Wales;
- National Galleries of Scotland received a gouache by Marc Chagall;
- Six etchings by Rembrandt have gone to National Museums Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile the Cultural Gifts Scheme, which is more philanthropically-centred while offering some tax advantages, received 14 collections associated with tax reduction of £1.2m. The National Library of Scotland received The Carlyle Journals, the Churchill Archives Centre received a letter written by the statesman and The British Museum received the Hamish Parker Collection of 147 drawings and prints. AIL panel Chair Edward Harley said *"we are likely to see a shift away from big blockbuster touring shows and a refocus on the nation's great public collections, celebrating and re-examining the many treasures we have been entrusted with over the years. The AIL and CGS Schemes are going to be as important as ever."* [Art Newspaper](#), [ACE](#) (press release), [ACE](#) (full report)

Export bars in brief: Shackleton's sledge and flag acquired by UK museums

- Following an export bar imposed last year, the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich has acquired a sledge belonging to Antarctic explorer Edward Shackleton, and the Scott Polar Research Institute has been given a related flag. Both institutions previously had barely any objects from Shackleton's landmark Nimrod expedition, and therefore faced difficulties in telling the story. The National Heritage Memorial Fund provided a £204.7k grant to retain the objects in the UK. [Guardian](#), [NHMF](#)
- Meanwhile, an ivory sculpture depicting the Death of Cleopatra has received an export bar. Carved by Henri de Triqueti in 1860, it is valued at £150k. The export bar runs to 17th March with a possible extension to 17th [Gov.uk](#)

Also: Cambridge University Library has announced that two notebooks written by Charles Darwin and worth millions have been missing for 20 years. Curators carried out an extensive search, but now believe that the notebooks, last requested in November 2000, have been stolen. [BBC](#)

French return 27 artefacts to museums in Benin and Senegal following restitution bill

The French Government will return 27 objects from the Musée du Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac to Benin and Senegal, after passing a new restitution bill. The new law relates only to these specific objects and does not create a legal precedent. Further laws would need to be passed for each collection to override the 'inalienable' right of French museums to hold objects according to its heritage code, thus slowing any future returns. The Republic of Benin is now building a new museum at Abomey, which will house its 26 artefacts. French Culture Minister Roselyne Bachelot said *"France supports the initiatives of these two countries in favour of heritage, well beyond just restitution. This text is a true act of friendship. It will allow the Beninese and Senegalese peoples to reconnect more directly with their past and access the constituent elements of their history, as our own collections allow us to do."* Meanwhile, *Artnet* looks at the big picture of shifting attitudes to restitution across Europe, quoting Christian Kopp of the group Berlin Postkolonial who said *"though one should by no means underestimate the conservative forces, we are sure that the growing grassroots movements for global decolonisation cannot be stopped anymore"*. In the UK, Arts Council England is expected to publish new restitution guidelines in the spring. [Art Newspaper](#), [Artnet](#)

Portable Antiquities Scheme reports increase in garden finds under lockdown

The British Museum's Portable Antiquities Scheme has announced an increase in garden finds under lockdown – possibly a consequence of the limits placed on metal detecting further afield during the period. Discoveries included 50 1970s South African Krugerrand solid gold coins in Milton Keynes, Tudor coins in a garden in the New Forest, a medieval belt mount showing the white boar of Richard III found in Colyton, Devon and a 13th or 14th century seal matrix with an image of St Margaret, found in a Lincolnshire garden. Meanwhile, figures for 2019 show finds were up by around 10,000 to 81,602 in that year. [British Museum](#), [Evening Standard](#), [Telegraph](#), [Sky News](#), [Smithsonian Magazine](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Changing patterns of volunteering



Bottle and bowl with poetry in Persian, 1180-1220 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Make Your Mark campaign aims to increase number and diversity of volunteers in Scotland

Make Your Mark is a Scottish heritage campaign aiming to encourage more people to consider volunteering and to increase the diversity of those who do so. The 2018 Scottish Household survey revealed that most volunteers are older, from less deprived areas and do not reflect more marginalised demographics. Since Covid-19, inequalities have widened, while many organisations express concern about the health of older volunteers and whether it is safe for them to continue in the current circumstances. A public-facing campaign is launching this month and any Scottish organisation working with volunteers is encouraged to sign up as a participant. [MGS](#), [Make Your Mark](#)

Changing patterns of volunteering and charitable giving before and during lockdown

In July 2020, DCMS re-contacted 2,812 respondents who had contributed to the Community Life Survey between July 2018 and February 2020 to find out how their volunteering, charitable giving and social connection had changed during the lockdown period from March – July 2020. Findings include:

- Overall, there was a similar amount of formal volunteering pre-Covid and during lockdown (23% vs 21%), but with an underlying shift – with 23% doing less volunteering under lockdown and 15% undertaking more.
- 56% took up new voluntary tasks during the epidemic while 44% continued with existing voluntary commitments.
- Informal volunteering increased from 28% to 47% during lockdown.
- Charitable giving decreased under lockdown from 73% of those surveyed to 62%. However, among those still able to give, the average amount increased from £24 to £33.
- 16–24 year olds were the most likely of any age group to be new or renewed donors under lockdown, at 20% of all respondents, compared to 5% among those 70+, the lowest percentage.
- Average wellbeing scores deteriorated over all four measures under lockdown – for example life satisfaction fell from 7 to 6.78. However, most metrics for loneliness stayed the same, with 8% in both periods saying they felt lonely 'often or always'. Only a feeling of being 'isolated from others often' increased under lockdown (12% vs 15%).

[Gov.uk](#)

Heritage and commemoration

Shared History Fund offers £1m for events marking the centenary of Northern Ireland

The Shared History Fund is now open, offering a £1m pot to support events remembering the creation of Northern Ireland in 1921. A wide range of arts, heritage, voluntary, community and other non-profit organisations are invited to apply – a majority will be in Northern Ireland, but organisations across the UK are welcome to apply. [Gov.uk](#), [NLHF](#)

From a railway café to a huge department store: Historic England reveals 400 sites listed during 2020

Historic England has published a list of more than 400 buildings, structures and monuments that have been listed during 2020. These include recently rediscovered and very rare 17th century wall paintings at a building in Old Hatfield, the Beauchamp Lifeboat Memorial built at Caister, Norfolk in 1903 and Selfridges department store, erected on Oxford Street from 1906–1928. Churches, pubs, the Victorian café at Retford railway station, a radio tower and a seaside shelter also feature in the varied listings. [Historic England](#), [Guardian](#)

Fundraising

Art Fund publishes Together for Museums campaign assets

As of early January, the Art Fund is over a third of the way to its target of raising £1m for its 'Together for Museums' Covid-19 support fund. It has also published a set of assets, including films, posters and social media posts to encourage donations. [Art Fund](#) (campaign assets), [Art Fund](#) (donation page)

Bidder pays Louvre €80k for personal view of the Mona Lisa during annual inspection

A bidder has paid €80k for a private view of the Mona Lisa, to take place during its annual examination when it is removed from its case at the Louvre. Only a handful of people, typically world leaders, have been invited to this event in past decades. The museum offered this and other curated experiences at auction, as it seeks ways to fill a £81m gap in its finances caused by the coronavirus. Over the past year, it was able to open for only 161 days and has seen its visitor numbers drop 72% from 9.6m to 2.7m. [MSN](#), [Sky News](#), [Art Newspaper](#)

Collaboration with Disney and Netflix? – co-creation with business as a source of museum revenue

In October 2020 the National Portrait Gallery worked with Disney Plus on a pop-up installation in Covent Garden, featuring characters from the Star Wars universe alongside an oil painting 'The Mandalorian and the Child', promoting the second series of the sci-fi programme. NPG's Ros Lawler said that she hoped that the collaboration would attract new audiences and younger people to the gallery, adding *"there is no doubt that Star Wars is a cultural phenomenon that has had a huge impact on popular culture and has involved a wide range of talent from across the British film industry."* Meanwhile in the US, exhibition collaborations with commercial brands have included Brooklyn Museum and Netflix offering an interactive virtual exhibition of costumes from 'The Queen's Gambit', and an installation at Los Angeles County Museum of Art in partnership with beer brand Miller Light – the latter being denounced as 'tacky' by one local art critic. These collaborations offer potential both as new revenue streams and routes to attract the huge audiences for popular culture into museums. However, some instances raise questions about appropriate commercial partners, and the line between curation and commerce. [Artnet](#), [Metro](#) (NPG collaboration)

Reconnecting with visitors

Culture Restart Toolkit launched to help with retaining and reactivating visitors

The Insights Alliance has launched a new Culture Restart Toolkit, designed to help cultural organisations, including museums to keep in touch with visitors and understand their needs at all stages of reopening. This will allow venues to understand visitor needs, respond rapidly to problems and build positive sentiment. The two trackers are:

- An audience tracker, gathering sentiment metrics from existing visitors and newsletter subscribers, develop a viable reopening plan, and explore the appetite for digital and willingness to pay for it.
- An experience survey, to capture visitor sentiment before and after a visit, and assess the success of safety measures and messaging as well as finding out whether people are likely to visit again.

Participants will have access to responses in real time and will also be contributing to a sector-wide national data set, building up a rich understanding of visitor and audience needs across the country. The ACE-supported Insights Alliance is a joint project by Indigo Ltd, One Further and Baker Richards. [Indigo Ltd](#)

Gen Z speaks: Museum of London hears the views and hopes of young Londoners

The Museum of London has published a report on the views and aspirations of 3,000 young Londoners, drawing from research by Partnership for Young London. Under-25s form a third of London's population and with the museum's new site at Smithfield scheduled for completion in 2024, it is seeking younger generations to play an active part in its creation, ensuring their experiences are reflected in displays. Findings include:

- Education and employment are the biggest issues for this group, and these factors also has the largest effect on mental health.
- For other issues, Black and Asian young people most likely to rank having a voice as being most important to them, while White young people are more likely to cite pollution and the environment.
- 68.8% of young Londoners visit museums or historic sites. However, 30% of young Londoners rarely or never visit cultural spaces of any kind.
- Black young people are more likely to use youth clubs than White young people (25% vs 15%) but are significantly less likely to visit art spaces (57.7% vs 77.2%), as are South Asian young people (57%).
- Young people living in London overwhelmingly identify as Londoners, finding this more important than local or national identities.
- Gentrification was seen as a negative term, with 61.5% agreeing that 'gentrification is a bad thing'. Only 40% of those questioned thought they would be able to live in London in the longer term, with Black young people and those from East London most likely to feel pushed out of the area they grew up in.
- 58.5% do not think that those in power understand the issues that they face.

Asked what they valued about the city, 38% cited 'diversity' of both culture and people. One 17 year old said "*[I like] the diversity and range of things to do, the colourful and bright cultural events and the fact that people don't judge at all. You can be whoever you want and embrace any culture or religion and you will always be welcomed. I love the mindset that Londoners have, which I feel is that 'change is always a possibility' and that we are constantly looking for solutions to any problems. Nothing is considered 'weird', and mental health is an issue that is actually taken seriously.*" [Museum of London](#)

Also: The Challenge London programme looked at the experience of young people in London during Covid-19, publishing results in mid-November. It found stark increases in educational inequality – with 38% receiving full schooling and 25% receiving none at all. Young people were particularly likely to suffer from poor mental health during the epidemic – with an estimated rise of 18.2% among women aged 16–24. A small survey of 100 young creatives also pointed to the pressures on the sector, with 30% furloughed, 74% of freelancers losing work and 59% re-evaluating their career paths. [A New Direction](#)

Directors from across the world make predictions about the future of museums

28 directors of museums across the world have made predictions about the future of the sector for a new book 'The Future of the Museum: 28 Dialogues', with excerpts published on *Artnet*. The Met's Max Hollein predicts that although the physical presence of museums will continue to be important "*bringing more and more objects to one place will become less relevant, versus how you translate the knowledge, understanding, and complexities of these objects to a wider audience.*" Koyo Kouoh Director of the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa in Cape Town argues that the context of African museums requires practitioners to 'think outside the box' and evolve without the distinctions between roles that exist elsewhere. She points to artist Daudi Karungi who developed first a commercial art gallery, then a biennial, then an art journal, followed by a residency programme – gradually creating the whole ecosystem of a functioning art world. Mami Kataoka, Director of the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo thinks that higher ticket prices may be one result of social distancing – but also thinks museums have an important role as a platform for 'doubt', questioning the utopianism of promises that so often come with new technology. Anne Pasternak of the Brooklyn Museum, New York says that museums are slowly moving away from white patriarchal narratives to show more work from women and BIPOC artists. She adds "*our field has only taken baby steps, but I am hopeful that fundamental change is happening. It's essential—including for the survival of our field.*" [Artnet](#)

Ed Vaizey gives predictions and recommendations for the museum sector

Former and longest serving Culture Minister Ed Vaizey has given an interview to Maxwell Blowfield's museum newsletter, with his views on the future of the sector. He says that *"museums have made a lot of progress but they are still way too conservative"* in their application of digital, seeing it as an add on to what is still 'essentially a Victorian creation'. He adds *"there are lots of art-tech start ups out there which find it impossible to have a dialogue with museums, and they would be willing partners in new commercial strategies."* He strongly opposes bringing back entry charges as a response to Covid-19. He predicts 2021 will continue to be difficult, saying *"museum staff have been heroes and it has been the worst time, but I think 2021 is more of the same, getting through and trying to survive."* [Maxwell Museums](#) (latest newsletter) [Maxwell Museums](#) (signup for fortnightly newsletter)

Tourism

VisitBritain predicts 2021 international tourism figures at 41% of 2019 levels

VisitBritain has published estimates for national and international tourism in the UK during 2020, as well as predictions for 2021, which show some recovery, but at levels well below pre-Covid volumes. Figures show:

- 2020 inbound tourism to the UK declined by 76% to 9.7m, with an 80% decrease in spending to £5.7bn – a loss of £24.7bn.
- During 2021 VisitBritain anticipates 16.9 million visits, up 73% on 2020 but only 41% of the 2019 level; and £9.0 billion to be spent by inbound tourists, up 59% on 2020 but only 32% of the 2019 level. Although tourism is expected to gradually increase through the year, it will not be 'even close' to normal levels.
- European short haul travel is likely to recover faster than long-haul visits, achieving 50% of 2019 levels. Long-haul travel is predicted to be at 24% of 2019 levels.
- Domestic tourism in England during 2020 was around 63% down on 2019 levels, with very similar percentage losses for day trips and overnight stays.
- The 2021 forecast for English domestic travel is at 68% of spending levels seen in 2019 – the healthiest of all the projections for the coming year.

VisitBritain emphasises that these figures are based on a 'fast-moving and uncertain situation' and will be subject to revision. VisitBritain and VisitEngland will receive an additional £5m for the next financial year to support recovery of the sector. The bodies' work is supported by the recent Global Travel Taskforce Report, which recommends an overseas marketing campaign, recovery plan over five years, and possible innovations including 'tour bubbles' of overseas visitors, who will have their own private transport and visit Covid-secure venues. This model has already been used by sports teams during 2020. [VisitBritain](#), [Department for Transport](#) (Global Travel Taskforce Report), [VisitBritain](#) (2020 and 2021 travel estimates), [Travel Daily Media](#)

York aims to become a World Heritage Site by 2025

York is a city heavily dependent on tourism that has been particularly badly affected by the loss of visitors during 2020. However, through a partnership of 30 local cultural, educational and civic organisations, it is aiming to become a UNESCO World Heritage site by 2025. The plan includes spreading cultural work across the city beyond its historic centre and giving more creative opportunities to young people so that they do not leave the city post-education. It also aims to become one of the top five cities in England for council-funded cultural provision. Capital works at museums and historic sites including York Castle Museum and the National Railway Museum will also be designed to have 'culture at their heart'. York Council Culture member Darryl Smalley said *"It's now more important than ever... to put York's cultural offer at the forefront of recovery, supporting communities across York and building on the city's reputation worldwide."* [Arts Professional](#)

Bans on single use plastics comes into force across leisure and tourism sectors

Since new environmental protection regulations came into force in October 2020, businesses including museum restaurants and cafes are banned from providing plastic stirrers, cotton buds and plastic straws to the general public. However, there are some exemptions for plastic straws – which can be provided on request, so long as they are not on public display. Businesses can also use up any stirrers, cotton buds and straws purchased before 1st October 2020, but only until 1st April 2021. [VisitBritain](#)

VisitScotland publishes scenario planning toolkit for Covid-19 futures

The Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group has published a toolkit to help businesses steer through the various scenarios that may play out as the sector emerges from the coronavirus crisis in 2021. Emphasising the importance of creating flexible strategies, it suggests five scenarios, ranging from the situation in July 2020, to the 'old normal' or more difficult outcomes including a 'long chill' on tourism or a 'five winters' scenario. [VisitScotland](#)

Jobs

Posts being advertised this month include:

- [Copyright Manager - British Library](#)
- [Conservator, Art on Paper - British Museum](#)
- [Head of Access and Equity - Science Museum](#)
- [Masterplan Project Developer - National Railway Museum](#)
- [Early Career Creative Programmer, South Asia Gallery Performing Arts - Manchester Museum](#)

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

Also: Museums Sheffield and Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust are combining to become Sheffield Museums Trust during 2021. A number of contracts are now out for tender to support this change, including for website development, collections management review, a schools programme consultant and creative designer. A full list of opportunities is available here: [Museums Sheffield](#)

Additionally, our friends at Manx National Heritage are [seeking a new Director](#).

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