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## Members' news



Mithras: Roman religion from Thames to Tyne runs at the Great North Museum Hancock from 1st July.

### £9.4m lottery grant for National Portrait Gallery expansion

The National Portrait Gallery is undertaking a major £35.4m expansion project to increase its gallery space by 20% and refurbish the building and also plans to expand its programmes to reach half a million young people. The Heritage Lottery fund has announced a £9.4m grant towards the costs, and the gallery has already raised an additional £7m. Spaces used as offices for more than 50 years will be repurposed and pictures redisplayed. The museum currently receives two million visitors each year and its special exhibitions routinely sell out. The gallery will build new partnerships with museums across the country, including skills sharing partnerships for staff, and co-curated exhibition programmes for young people. NPG hopes to reach young people not in employment, education or training as well as those at school. Director Dr Nicholas Cullinan said that the work would be *"the biggest transformation the gallery has ever undertaken. We are going to make ourselves an essential place for everyone to feel part of the culture they have been born into, chosen, or are seeking to understand, to become a truly national gallery for all."* NPG will begin the process of seeking an architect in the autumn. [Guardian](#), [NPG](#), [HLF](#), [DCMS blog](#)

### Postwar shops and industrial buildings relocate to the BCLM in major project

The Black Country Living Museum has been awarded a £400k HLF grant towards planning its major 'Forging Ahead' project which will relocate a series of high street buildings from the 1940s – 60s to the museum site, increasing its size by a third. It is expected to receive a further £9.8m from HLF when the plans are approved. Buildings chosen for translocation include West Bromwich Gas Showroom, Woodside Library, JH Lavender Aluminium Foundry and William Griffin & Sons Proving House. The museum is also going to recreate four buildings using archival material, and replicate other existing buildings including a butchers, newsagent and a hairdressers. The whole project will cost £21.7m and will employ 450 people in the local area. The work is expected to be completed in 2022. [M+H](#), [HLF](#), [Museums Journal](#)

### 'A space to breathe' V&A celebrates its extension opening with a free festival

The V&A has opened its new, vast, ceramic tiled Exhibition Road entrance and vast underground exhibition space: a free festival marks the occasion until 7th July. Deputy Director Tim Reeve says that the redevelopment will give visitors a proper sense of arrival in the extensive courtyard at the Exhibition Row entrance, as well as an opportunity to catch their breath. *"I think traditionally when you go into... a major cultural attraction you quite quickly get the impression that somehow you are being processed and there isn't always that opportunity to pause and to take in your surroundings and to think about what you might want to do before you actually go into the museums and start to enjoy the experience there."* The *Guardian's* Oliver Wainwright praises the huge gallery space beneath, which has the volume of 'ten Olympic swimming pools' and has a *"faceted origami ceiling... which ripples overhead"*. The first exhibition will open in the new space at the end of September. [V&A](#), [M + H](#), [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#)

### Royal Pavilion & Museums appoint shadow board of new Cultural Trust

Royal Pavilion & Museums has appointed nine members of its Shadow Board as the cultural service transitions to become a Trust. The transfer will be complete in April 2018, in the interim, Board members will shape its structure, service and future development. [Brighton & Hove council](#)

### Hull receives £15m to celebrate maritime culture

HLF is investing £15m in a place-making project which will develop several sites in Hull telling the story of the city's maritime heritage. The Maritime Museum, Dock Office Chambers and North End shipyard will be beneficiaries, alongside two historic ships, the Arctic Corsair and Spurn Lightship. Work on the Maritime Museum will include giving the public access to one of its roof domes, which will give spectacular views across the city, and increasing collections on display by 50%. Hull City Council, which has already invested £100m in cultural and tourist infrastructure, will be giving a further £12.5m to the project. The work, which will be carried out over the next seven years, will explore Hull's past as a trading and fishing port as well as looking to the future. Arts Minister John Glen who visited Hull during his first week in post commented: *"this £15m investment will help Hull build an enduring legacy from its fantastic year as UK City of Culture."* [HLF](#)

## Goldsmiths' Company donates £10m to new Museum of London building

The Goldsmiths' Company has become a Founding Partner of the new Museum of London, donating £10m toward the new building which will open on the site of Smithfield Market in 2022. A gallery will be named after the Goldsmiths' Company, containing the Cheapside Hoard alongside highlights from its own collection of historic and contemporary silver. Museum Director Sharon Ament said "*historically London was the centre of the global goldsmithing trade. Today the world still looks to London, as a capital of creativity and design, for the latest jewellery and silver trends. It is a great pleasure to be working in partnership with such an august, innovative and long-standing institution as the Goldsmiths' Company.*" The Museum of London now has £60m to raise to fully fund its new home. [Evening Standard](#)

## Mithras: from Thames to Tyne

Images this month come from a new exhibition 'Mithras: Roman religion from Thames to Tyne' which is showing at the Great North Museum, Hancock until 27th August. For the first time, it brings together Mithraic objects excavated in the 1950s from Carrawburgh on Hadrian's Wall and Walbrook in London. Together these form the most significant holdings on Mithraism in the UK, a religion that went into decline after the 4th century, contrasting with the huge growth of Christianity. [Great North Museum](#)

## Funding

### Arts Council England announces NPOs for 2018 – 2022

The Arts Council has announced the cultural bodies which will be National Portfolio Organisations for the period 2018 – 22. In a speech introducing the portfolio Chief Executive Darren Henley said organisations were 'representative of and relevant to' contemporary society, and include many smaller organisations for the first time. 831 organisations collectively receive £409m each year, or £1.6bn over the whole period. There are 183 new NPOs, of which 66 are museums. All NMDC's current Major Partner Museum members have been confirmed as new NPOs at either tier two (£250k - £1m) or tier three (over £1m). Statistics include:

- Of the £409m invested in NPOs, £341m is grant-in-aid and £68m National Lottery funding.
- 531 previously funded organisations received the same level of support, 12 received a decrease, and 98 an increase, the latter in 'exceptional circumstances' for organisations producing genuinely new work or increasing their resilience.
- £170m more will be spent outside London – a shift of 4.6% which means more than 60% will be spent outside the capital. Reading, Bradford, Plymouth, Northumberland and Stoke are among the places receiving significantly more.
- The 'Elevate' programme was successful in making many organisations ready to receive NPO funding for the first time: 20 of 40 Elevate participants are now NPOs.
- There are 72 museums and six libraries in the portfolio.
- Annual spend on portfolio museums will be £36.6m, up from £27.3m in the last round when only 21 large museums were included.
- AIM was one of six Sector Support Organisations with a brief specifically for museums to receive funding. It receives £1.2m. Kids in Museums has also become a Sector Support NPO for the first time.

Commenting in *Apollo magazine*, the MA's Alistair Brown said that the announcement was not the 'rescue package' that some museums had hoped for, but nevertheless ACE has spent £10m more on museums and invested in smaller institutions in places such as Barnsley where the council is also investing in its museum and cultural services. Meanwhile most larger institutions maintained standstill funding.

ACE's press conference also emphasised its 18 months of work to ensure more organisations from the regions and a more diverse cultural mix joined the portfolio. ACE's new Chairman Sir Nicholas Serota said "*everyone deserves the chance to experience the sheer enjoyment, creativity and new horizons that culture can bring. We set out to deliver a significant increase in our investment outside London. We've done that, without detriment to the internationally renowned cultural offer of the capital. Alongside continuing support for our great national companies, we've funded inventive, pioneering arts organisations and a new range of museums across the country.*" [ACE](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Museums Journal](#) (comment) [AIM](#), [Evening Standard](#) (Nicholas Serota), [ACE blog](#), [M + H](#),

[The Art Newspaper, Apollo magazine](#)

**Also:** The Arts Council has produced an online self-evaluation toolkit for cultural projects. It will enable users to generate reports and evaluations. Although run from the ACE website, the results are private: ACE will only monitor how many people are using the service. [ACE](#)

**HLF asks how it should spread its funding across museums**

In her first speech about HLF's work with the museum sector, HLF Chief Executive Ros Kerslake said she is consulting with museums about how HLF distributes its funds. Questions include:

- Should HLF cap larger grants so it can fund a wider group of people?
- Is there a place for low-interest or no-interest loans?
- Should higher levels of match funding be expected?

In the most recent Major Grants Board meeting, HLF considered requests totalling £224m, with available funds of £40m. Kerslake said "*this poses some challenging questions that we need to think about together.*" HLF's capital funding investments have a positive effect on 81% of museums' long term sustainability – with business-oriented rethinks involving plans such as shops and cafes or hiring out space and public programmes bringing in revenue. Kerslake encouraged museums to think in these terms when applying for funding. [HLF](#), [M + H](#)

**Fundraising preference service**

The Fundraising Preference Service launches on 6th July allowing members of the public to request removal from charity contact lists for contact by phone, text or email. Organisations spending more than £100k on fundraising should already have heard from the regulator, but if not can send any queries to [fps@fundraisingregulator.org.uk](mailto:fps@fundraisingregulator.org.uk). Smaller charities need do nothing unless requested to remove someone from their mailing lists. [FPS](#)

**Deadlines for Arts Council Building Resilience programme**

The Arts Council's two-year Building Resilience programme has three strands with deadlines in July (the fourth, on assets and IP closed in June). Applications are welcome from across the arts and cultural sector, including museums. The upcoming application cut off dates are:

- Diversity and entrepreneurship – 14th July. The School for Social Entrepreneurs will support up to 25 organisations. There is a bursary of £5k for participating.
- Change management – 17th July. Run for 50 leaders, the programme includes workshops and one to one mentoring and bespoke research.
- Fundraising and revenue diversification – 31st July. Run by Arts Manager International, this is an 18-month teaching and consultation programme, which will include up to 25 organisations.

[ACE](#)

**Also:** Creative United has published a list of seventy cultural organisations accepted onto its ACE-funded Prosper programme which helps to create more resilient, income-generating institutions. Participants include Derby Museums Trust and Museums Sheffield. Shorter training events and workshops continue to be available from Creative United. [Creative United](#)

**Lottery arts funding declines £55m**

The National Lottery saw sales decline by 8.8% in 2016/17, leading to a drop in giving to good causes of 14.4%. Funds for arts fell from £380m in 2015/16 to £326m last year. Camelot predicts that 2017/18 will be 'equally if not more challenging' because of economic uncertainty. The Arts Council lost £38m in funds last year, but in March 2016 had stockpiled lottery reserves of £334m which it promised to reduce. Arts Council Wales laid plans based on an expected £18m in Lottery receipts, but actually received £16.4m – a spokesperson said "*in the short-term the Arts Council of Wales has had to fund fewer projects that it might otherwise have been able to support. We're therefore reviewing all of our Lottery funding programmes to see how we can sustain future patterns of funding and support.*" [Arts Professional](#)

### Scottish World War One fund reopens until August

Museums Galleries Scotland is opening its World War One commemoration fund for one round during 2017, with a closing date of 4th August. Accredited museums can seek grants of £1k - £10k, or up to £20k if there is collaboration with artists or other partners. Projects are particularly encouraged which improve access to WW1 collections, engage the young, are collaborative and involve working with artists. [MGS](#)

## Tax

### York Museums Trust wins business rates case

York Museums Trust has received a rebate of £100k on a decade's worth of backdated business rates after winning a case about how charges are calculated. The case may have a significant effect on how rates are set for other museums in England and Wales. The Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) agreed with the Trust that business rates should be set based on net income, and not by how much a building would cost to rebuild. The Tribunal also agreed that areas used by both the commercial and charity arm of the museum – such as York Castle Museum, which contains a shop – should receive the 80% rebate for buildings with a charitable purpose. The Trust will save £10k each year in rates as a result of the case. Colin Hunter, who acted as the Trust's expert witness said "*the outcome of the appeal reflects more than a decade of discussions with the VOA on behalf of York Museums Trust and the Association of Independent Museums. This decision will not only help museums in York, it could also help the 767 museums valued on this basis in England and Wales. The VOA's attempt to separate out the values of shops and offices is the most financially damaging aspect of the case. Had their appeal succeeded, its implications would not only affect museums, it would have significant repercussions for any charity with a trading subsidiary.*" Other museums will not be automatically reassessed in the light of the case: museums interested in appealing backdated business rates must do so before 30th September. [YMT](#), [Museums Journal](#), [AIM](#), [York Press](#)

### HMRC offers social investment tax relief

HMRC's social investment tax relief (SITR) allows those who invest in the business arm of charity to receive tax relief on their investment. To be eligible, the charity must have fewer than 500 employees at the time the investment begins. The maximum investment eligible for SITR is around £250k over three years. [HMRC](#)

## Making better places



A reconstruction by Alan Sorrell of the Temple to Mithras at Walbrook, London. Courtesy of the Museum of London

### Towards Cultural Democracy

King's College London has published a new report 'Towards Cultural Democracy: promoting cultural capabilities for everyone', based on a 15-month research project. The report argues that while cultural policy conversations have been focused around access and the success of the creative industries, much everyday creativity has been ignored. Examples range from people deeply committed to singing in choirs, making things in community crafting groups, or participating in breakdancing, which has its own informal networks and intergenerational teaching. The report therefore challenges many ways policy makers have traditionally seen culture including:

- the 'deficit model' of creativity, where those not engaging with publically funded artforms are regarded as missing out, or engaged in second class arts activity, and the idea that some areas of the country are cultural 'cold spots'.
- It argues there are risks in flagship inclusion programmes such as ACE's Creative People and Places in being seen to take the 'arts to the people' instead of promoting cultural capabilities and cultural democracy.

More positively, the report gives examples of 'pillar' organisations where formal structures like schools and art centres help people develop their cultural interests. The Old Vic Community Company is a particularly well developed example, where the professional theatre company's expertise is used to help the community company develop and stay together over time, rather than just for a single performance. Developing cultural democracy has various benefits, including keeping the stress of working life or exams in perspective, self-expression and the sense of 'having a voice', and generating transferable skills. "*The extent to which cultural capability is deliberately enabled and promoted within the cultural lives of neighbourhoods, cities, regions and nations will vary greatly. In drawing attention to this, our research poses fundamental challenges to the deficit model and the prevailing ambitions of cultural policy.*" The report ends with fifteen proposals for government and for cultural bodies to help create a more networked, less divided model of cultural activity. [KCL](#)

### Nominate an area as a Heritage Action Zone

Historic England is seeking nominations for a second round of places to become Heritage Action Zones. These are areas which have seen some decline, but are of significant historic interest, and could use heritage as an aid to economic regeneration. The focus in 2018 is on housing, and Historic England welcomes partnership working across a wide range of local groups and organisations. The next deadline is 5pm on 7th August. [Historic England](#)

### Three month review: 90% of Hull residents have visited a City of Culture event

The University of Hull's Culture, Place and Policy Institute has produced a report measuring the impact of Hull City of Culture, using data from the first three months of the programme. It finds that nine out of ten people in Hull have visited an event, and seven out of ten agree the programme is having a positive effect on the lives of local people. Events have drawn huge and often sellout crowds. Ferens Art Gallery and Hull Maritime Museum have seen crowds grow by over to 500%, and Hull Truck Theatre company grew audiences by 25%, with 40% being new visitors. Hotel occupancy is up by 13.8%, and there was a 17% increase in train journeys to and from Hull in January. Beyond the statistics, some residents have spoken movingly about the effect of the festival *"we used to feel down-trodden, nobody came here – why would they? – and we were second class citizens. Now we like being Hull, we believe we have something to offer, that we can take our place alongside any other city"*. [Hull Daily Mail](#), [University of Hull](#) (full report), [Taitmail](#)

### Funding Swansea museum

Debates about how local museums fund themselves in the face of local council cuts have resurfaced as Swansea City Council voted to remove £50k from Swansea Museum's grant for next year. A spokesperson for the Council said the cut represents less than 10% of the museum's overall budget and that the shortfall was covered by early retirement and voluntary redundancy. The leader of the Council Rob Stewart added that the museum needs to act more commercially, by creating a coffee shop and building on opportunities from the £500m city centre regeneration. Victoria Rogers, President of the Welsh Museums Federation has countered that its programming and community work are likely to suffer as a result of the cuts. She said *"Swansea Museum is a fantastic example of a community-centred museum, and our concern is that it does not have the time it needs to build its markets and ability to income generate to the levels it needs"* [BBC](#), [Museums Journal](#)

### Leicester City Council plans £7m transformation of Jewry Wall museum

The Jewry Wall in Leicester is one of the most substantial Roman remains in the UK, and was once part of a bathhouse complex. It is central to the Jewry Wall Museum, which Leicester City Council now intends to upgrade with an ambitious £7m project, making a new visitor centre in an adjacent building recently vacated by the University of Leicester. The Roman Vine Street Villas, which now exist only in the archaeological record, will be recreated as part of the work. City Mayor Sir Peter Soulsby said *"An amazing opportunity for us as a city council has come up as a result of the university's decision to move out...because we can look at exciting new ways to use this space to interpret Roman Leicester, for Leicester people... but also for visitors to Leicester who are coming here in increasing numbers."* The council hopes visitor numbers will be tripled from 27,000 to 80 – 100,000 paying visitors. It aims to complete the work within a couple of years. [Leicester Mercury](#)

### Museum of Military Medicine planned for Cardiff

Cardiff council has unveiled the plans for a new building for a museum of military medicine in Cardiff Bay. The museum is currently at Keogh Barracks in Aldershot. The government offered £2m towards the project in the 2016 Autumn Statement. The museum will tell the story of four Army Medical Corps with collections from uniforms to ambulances, and facilities including a café and reading room. A spokesperson for Cardiff council said the museum would be 'part of its tourism offer as it seeks to establish itself as a European capital'. [BBC](#),

### Managing capital projects

AIM has produced a new publication 'Managing Capital Projects' written by Bill Ferris, Managing Director of Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, where there have been three major capital projects in the last 15 years. It is available to download online. [AIM](#),

## Honours and appointments

### Queen's Birthday honours

Cultural sector workers receiving Queen's Birthday honours this year include an MBE for Sir John Soane's Museum Deputy Director Helen Dorey and an OBE for David Dewing, former Director of the Geffrye Museum. [Gov.uk](#), [Mirror](#) (full list), [Arts Professional](#) (culture sector honours)

### Culture links of new MPs

*Arts Professional* has tracked the cultural interests of 63 MPs newly elected to parliament in 2017 and says that a third have connections to the arts sector. Giles Watling, Conservative MP for Clacton, is a former actor; Sarah Jones, Labour MP for Croydon Central conceived the GREAT marketing campaign for VisitBritain while working as a consultant. A jazz saxophonist (Darren Jones) and political satirist (Rosie Duffield) also feature. Vince Cable, the leading Liberal Democrat who regained his seat in 2017 is a nifty dancer who once earned 36/40 on *Strictly*. Parliament has also become more diverse as a result of the election, with new Sikh and disabled MPs and a greater proportion of women. [Arts Professional](#)

### New arts minister at DCMS

John Glen MP has been appointed to the newly created post of parliamentary undersecretary for arts, heritage and tourism. Public libraries, museums and the National Archives now fall under his remit. Matthew Hancock retains the brief as Minister for the digital economy, which also includes creative industries, broadcasting and media. Karen Bradley retains her post as Secretary of State for culture, media and sport. The Cultural Learning Alliance notes that there are pros and cons to the new arrangement: *"it's great to have the arts and heritage brought together in the same brief, and, with the addition of tourism, it may help us to make the case for the needs of the arts sector in the Brexit negotiations. However, it is really important that arts sector does not fall out of the Creative Industries conversation. For example, it is critical that both culture and education are included within the creative industries strand of the Industrial Strategy."* John Glen has blogged about his first week in post for DCMS, in which he describes a flurry of meetings as well as attending the Old Vic's 'Life of Galileo'. [The Stage](#), [Arts Professional](#), [Cultural Learning Alliance](#), [Museums Journal](#), [DCMS blog](#)

### D is for Digital

DCMS has altered its name to the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport, to reflect its growing responsibilities in the area. However, its acronym remains unchanged as DCMS. Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said *"half of [DCMS's] policy and delivery work now covers the digital sectors - telecommunications, data protection, internet safety, cyber skills and parts of media and the creative industries."* [Gov.uk](#)

### Opposition spokespeople for culture

Christine Jardine has been appointed Liberal Democrat spokesperson on Culture, Media and Sport [Twitter](#), Tom Watson remains Shadow Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport for the Labour Party. Kevin Brennan is the Shadow Minister for Arts and Heritage. Brendan O'Hara is the new SNP lead spokesperson on the DCMS Select Committee. [Twitter](#)



## Europe



Minerva, Serapis and Mithras, all found at Walbrook, London. Part of the Mithras exhibition at the Great North Museum, Hancock

### Brexit and museums

*The Art Newspaper* leads its June edition with a story that directors of large museums including the V&A and British Museum are concerned that it will be harder to recruit expert staff from across Europe post-Brexit, damaging their world class reputation. V&A, the British Museum and the Tate's four sites together have around 400 EU staff, or around 15% of the total. BM Director Hartwig Fischer said "we want to secure the status of existing members of staff and ensure that we can continue to attract talented staff in the future." Former Tate Director Sir Nicholas Serota believes the government will 'find a way' to ensure Tate continues to benefit from the international staff who help shape its programme. Artists and academics also point to the cultural benefits of European nationals studying art in London before developing notable careers. There is a drop of 7% in EU students applying to study in the UK this year, but this has been dismissed by pro-Brexit politician Munira Mirza as a minor fluctuation. [The Art Newspaper](#)

### Our Shared European Future statement

A wide number of cultural sector organisations and prominent figures have signed the Our Shared European Future statement, which has six recommendations for European leaders as the UK negotiates Brexit. Signatories include NMDC, the British Council, Museums Association, CERN, V&A, British Museum, Fondation Alliance Francaise and Uni-Italia as well as Professor Brian Cox, Sir David Chipperfield and Mark Wallinger. The six recommendations are:

- Residency rights for EU nationals currently in the UK, and UK nationals elsewhere in the EU.
- Ease of movement in the education, culture and science sectors, where the flow of international ideas and people are essential to success.
- Continued and enhanced multilateral programmes, such as Erasmus + and Horizon 2020
- Engage young people in Brexit policy making, and ensure every young person has inter-cultural and international experience whether through training, language learning, study or work. It adds "such experiences are proven to develop skills, create opportunities, broaden horizons, and build much-needed trust and understanding between nations."

- The EU and UK should continue to co-operate on intellectual property and professional qualification recognition.
- Negotiators should work with representatives of the education, culture and science sectors so as to make informed decisions during negotiations.

Anyone agreeing with the recommendations is encouraged to sign to endorse them, and spread the statement under the hashtag #SharedEuropeanFuture

The recommendations are the result of an ongoing conversation between more than 500 institutions from 32 European nations including museums, galleries, student bodies, scientists, academics and artists – who have all contributed their views on the future of pan-European cooperation via the British Council's EU-UK Culture and Education Series of events. The events and online platform aim to help safeguard the interests of the education, culture, science and research sectors across Europe post-Brexit. Join the conversation here [LinkedIn](#), [CLA](#) (newsletter top item)

**Also:** The Creative Industries Federation has published a two-page document outlining its 'red lines' for the Brexit negotiations in order to preserve the creative economy, which contributes £87bn in GVA. Its requests are broadly in line with ideas described in the press as 'soft Brexit'. CIF says that both 'no deal' or a 'bad deal' will damage the sector. [CIF](#)

### EUNIC London is ten

EUNIC London – the European Union National Institutes for Culture – celebrated its tenth anniversary in June. It is currently supporting more than 20 projects ranging from 'literature to robotics, dance and film festivals' and is upbeat about continuing to organise UK-European collaboration after Brexit. [EUNIC](#),

## Doing things differently

### 'Utopian realists' in the museum: transforming museum business models through digital

Chris Michaels, the newly appointed Digital Director at the National Gallery, argues in a blog for *Nesta* that if museums think more radically about their use of digital, they can transform their funding options in a period where government support has reduced by 30%. Some of these suggestions are already working well in other sectors including:

- Dynamic pricing. Nine out of ten exhibitions are not blockbusters and have unused capacity throughout their run. Dynamic pricing would allow museums to price tickets more cheaply for quieter periods, creating a more even flow of audience, and attracting people who would not pay full price.
- Annual subscriptions to arts institutions are typically £50 - £150 per annum – a significant barrier for some audiences. A change to a 'Netflix' style monthly payment 'priced somewhere between a pint of beer and a large glass of wine' would diversify the audience and allow membership to grow from a fairly select group to a much larger base. This may mean a different kind of offer, not so focused on 'members' rooms' and private soirees which work less well at high volumes.
- Free museums typically ask for a £5 donation at the door – and receive something between 10p and £1 per visitor. Michaels argues that a 'dynamic and changing' ask, which tracks the difference between Tuesday and Saturday visitors, and expresses museums' actual needs in place of a passive and easily ignored constant request for £5, may tap into visitors' sense of common cause with the museum. He suggests that a 'messy Brexit' with an economic downturn may threaten the national museum funding model previously defended by George Osborne against sector-changing cuts.

Michaels says the sector should 'learn these lessons fast', collecting data across institutions, experimenting with dynamic pricing over 20 or so major exhibitions. He argues that access to data gives a significant advantage in a digital age, and museums are well placed to collect it and take advantage of what it can teach. [Nesta](#)

**Also:** Nesta has published the results of the six-month pilot scheme to use the 'accelerator' model of business investment in the cultural sector. It found that of nine participating organisations, two have set up new companies to drive projects forward, and the Holocaust Centre's Forever Project has been highly commended at the M+H awards. [Nesta](#)

### Diversifying museum visitors project

AIM's Diversifying museum visitors project, which will produce case studies and toolkits to effectively widen audiences, has recruited twenty museums to participate in its work. These include Beamish, Black Country Living Museum, National Museums Liverpool, National Museums Northern Ireland, V&A, the National Justice Museum and Glasgow Women's Library. There is also a mailing list open to all who would like to keep up to date with the project. [AIM](#)

## Events: chasing excellence, challenging fakes

### Adventurous Curators – International Perspectives

Hauser & Wirth are hosting the symposium 'Adventurous Curators – International Perspectives' which explores what makes galleries 'leading' and 'pioneering' – from the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill on Sea to the New Museum in New York. International speakers include Daniel Baumann, Director at Kunsthalle Zürich and Anne Ellegood, Senior Curator at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. The event takes place on 10th July at Durslade Farm in Bruton, Somerset. Tickets are £100 including lunch. [Hauser & Wirth](#)

### Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities 2017

The 2017 DCDC conference will explore how heritage and culture create value and how by working together, from academia to archives and museums, the sector can prove the value of collections. Keynotes cover topics including Weston-super-Mare after Banksy's hugely popular Dismaland, the Southbank Centre's Shân MacLennan on 'the telepathy of archives' and Geoffrey Crossick from the AHRC Cultural Value project. There are also networking events, pre-conference workshops and a funders' marketplace.

The event takes place on 27th – 29th November at the Lowry, Manchester. Tickets are from £38.76 for a day ticket to £159.04 for the full conference plus evening events. (Prices include fees and VAT). [DCDC](#)

### From royal sorcerers to the survival of Hitler: several centuries of 'alternative facts'

The National Archives is hosting a summer lecture series describing how inflammatory myths and conspiracy theories became accepted facts for true believers or whole populations at different times in history. Topics include allegations of sorcery and bastardy about the Royal Family in the 15th century, accusations of child murder against Jews in early 13th century Norwich, and the disparity between how Victorian paupers were 'officially' treated and their lived experience as shown in personal letters. The series ends with Sir Richard Evans giving a talk on those who believed that Hitler did not commit suicide in April 1945. All lectures are free, but booking is essential. [National Archives](#) (scroll below 4th paragraph for links to all events)

### GEM launches intermediate 'health and wellbeing' course

GEM has launched an intermediate course for museum educators who have some experience in the area of health and wellbeing and would like to build expertise. Topics include how the health sector creates opportunities for museums, how both health and cultural sectors are now defining wellbeing work, taking a more holistic approach, and how to reframe existing provision for health purposes. Participants will also make a work plan to organise next steps. The workshop will be delivered in Leicester on 10th July, London on 27th November and Manchester on 24th January. Tickets are £50 for GEM members and £90 for non-members. [GEM](#)

### Museums + Tech conference 2017

The next Museums Computer Group conference will take place on 3rd November at IWM London. The theme is 'tech in a divided world' and speakers will pose challenges to existing practice across the sector. Topics range from 3D printing to bring objects to schools, questioning museums' responsibilities in a post-truth world, better access for blind visitors, the 'death of the label' in the digital gallery and 'space=sound', a plea for holistic sound scenography. Tickets are £95 for early birds who join MCG (which is free) – standard tickets are £150/£120. [MCG](#)

## Survey: evaluating the nature conservation mission of museums and galleries

Museums and galleries can play an important role in supporting nature and nature conservation, whether through their exhibitions and events, their collections, research programmes, how they run their buildings or their grounds. Supporting nature and nature conservation is not restricted to natural history museums. Henry McGhie, Head of Collections at Manchester Museum is running a survey to discover how museums, galleries and cultural venues support nature and nature conservation. Take part in this short questionnaire to find out, and to contribute to a national study. [Survey link](#)

### Protecting Collections



A Chinese tea taster in store in Staffordshire. Courtesy of ArtUK

### ArtUK launches project to catalogue 170,000 sculptures

ArtUK has launched its project to digitally catalogue up to 170,000 sculptures held across the UK – whether indoors in public collections or outside on the streets. The project is world-leading as no other country has attempted to create such a comprehensive record. The UK has an impressive collection but much is not on display, and very little is photographed and some is at risk. The project will run to 2020, cover sculpture from the last thousand years, photograph most of it, and capture some in 3D. There will be training, education and volunteering opportunities across the UK. The Masterpieces in Schools programme will bring 125 sculptures into primary and secondary schools and 75 events in the Sculpture Around You programme will offer different ways for a wider public to engage, from sculpture brought into shopping centres to skills development. ArtUK is opening a small office in Glasgow to create deeper engagement with Scottish audiences as it embarks on the programme. The project will be recruiting staff and volunteers in 2017 – the work of recording sculpture begins early next year.

This image shows some of the issues with the storage and accessibility of sculpture in collections. Four statues of Chinese tea-tasters were previously located on top of a tea warehouse in Market Street, Stafford. The building was demolished in the 1960s and the statues are now in storage in the collection of Staffordshire Heritage and Arts. Their size means that they are stored outside with agricultural equipment from the collection. These objects will be moved shortly into a new indoor

store as part of Staffordshire Heritage and Arts<sup>1</sup> storage relocation project. [ArtUK](#), [Museums Journal](#)

**Also:** Arts Minister John Glen has placed an export bar on a drawing by Austrian artist Joseph Anton Koch, which was created as a study for his painting of the Schmadribach Waterfall around 1793. £68,750 + VAT is needed to keep the work in the UK. The bar runs until 27th September with a possible extension to December. [Gov.uk](#)

### New round of Cultural Protection Fund recipients announced

The British Council has published details of the latest group of projects to be funded by the Cultural Protection Fund which preserves heritage in areas at risk from conflict. New projects include:

- An intergenerational project to record and preserve the culture and agricultural practices of nomadic Bedouin tribes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- Recording and preparing management plans for the fortified archaeological site of Rum Kale in Syria.
- Syrians and Jordanians with traditional stonemasonry skills will be trained to repair heritage buildings affected by conflict.
- Digital documentation of the Qsar es-Said Palace in Tunisia, which has been closed for the past fifty years.
- Protecting the cities of Diyarbakir and Mardin in South East Turkey. There will be surveys of the buildings, which date from the medieval period onwards, but also a training programme for up to 200 people to build protection capacity through learning.

19 projects have now been supported since the fund started in June 2016. [British Council](#)

### Tate Britain displays Khadija Saye's work in her memory

The artist Khadija Saye lost her life age 24 in the Grenfell Tower fire, which killed at least 80. Her work was showing at the Venice Biennale at the time of her death, and she also worked as a freelance in the Learning team at London Transport Museum. Prompted by a suggestion from Sunday Times art critic Waldemar Januszczak, Tate Britain is now showing one of her pictures along with details of a memorial fund set up in her name. [Telegraph](#), [Evening Standard](#), [Museums Journal](#)

## Awards

### Kids in Museums 2017 shortlist

Kids in Museums has announced the shortlist for its annual Family Friendly Museum award. The ten shortlisted museums include a mixture of larger and smaller museums; some in city centres, others well off the beaten track across England and Wales. They are: The Cardiff Story Museum, Dylan Thomas Centre, Great North Museum: Hancock, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Jewish Museum, People's History Museum, Rainham Hall, River & Rowing Museum, Tudor House in Worcester and the Vale and Downland Museum in Wantage. Over the summer families will visit as 'secret shoppers' and their reviews will help choose the winning museum. The winner will be announced in October. Kids in Museums is among the organisations achieving NPO status for the first time this year. [Kids in Museums](#)

### Don't mean a thing if you ain't got that zing

V&A Director Tristram Hunt has written for the *Telegraph* about the shortlist for the Art Fund's Museum of the Year, which he is helping to judge, while taking gentle potshots at his former place of work, the Houses of Parliament. *"I'm still working in a large Victorian institution surrounded by gnarled artefacts. So there's a degree of similarity about my work. But the difference is that, ironically for a museum, we have a keen sense of the future. Parliament lacks the same degree of energy. Here, we're all pulling in the same direction and are involved in a cohesive, creative enterprise... being the Art Fund Museum of the Year for 2016 helped people to see that the V&A has made the transition from a place with a slightly fusty reputation to something much more dynamic, innovative and exciting."* [Telegraph](#)

## Historic England seeks 100 places that tell the story of England

Historic England has launched a project to choose 100 'buildings and places' across England which tell the story of the country. It is inviting members of the public to make nominations under a dozen themes from Music & Literature to Homes & Gardens and Loss & Destruction. Nominated places do not have to be well known or old, but must have some impact on local, national or world history, and must be locatable on a map. [Historic England](#)

## Mayor launches London Borough of Culture competition

As promised in his election manifesto, the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has launched a London Borough of Culture competition. Two boroughs will be selected to take the mantle in successive years – the first in 2019, then in 2020. The winning bids will demonstrate what is distinctive in the borough, and make use of its flagship projects. Each winning borough will receive a £1.1m revenue grant, up to six individual exemplary projects within the borough will also receive £50k - £200k. Winners are also encouraged to apply to HLF and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, both of which have committed to support the programme. Local authorities must find at least 30% match funding. Applications must have support from the borough leader and the deadline is 1st December. [Mayor of London](#)

## Sotherby's launches \$250k international museum prize

Sotherby's has launched an international prize with up to \$250k available to create an exhibition or curatorial initiative which is 'trailblazing' and 'potentially landscape changing'. For the inaugural year, Sotherby's will accept applications relating to exhibitions which are already being organised. The application is very simple, with a deadline of 24th July. A final decision will be made in early September. [Sotherby's](#)

## Education

### Entries for non-Ebacc subjects continue to fall

The number of students taking non-Ebacc subjects has fallen by 11% between 2016 (when there were 1.4m entries) and 2017 (1.24m). In creative subjects, the drop is 8% over the same period. Entries for Art and Design subjects have fallen by 5,000 and Design and Technology by around 17,000. Since 2010, there has been an average 27% drop in creative subjects at GCSE, but this has been unevenly distributed: with Art and Design subjects declining by only 4%, Design and Technology by 42%, and Performing Arts by 36%. A spokesperson for the campaigning group Bacc to the Future said "*these new figures confirm that the EBacc is having a devastating effect on the uptake of creative subjects at GCSE and A level. The secretary of state must listen to the evidence and the teachers on the front line and scrap the EBacc in its current form before any more damage is done.*" [The Stage](#), [SchoolsWeek](#), [CLA](#)

### HLF appoints young heritage ambassadors

HLF has appointed 17 Heritage Ambassadors aged 16 – 25 to help allocate £10m in funding for the Kicking the Dust revenue stream, which will fund projects for teenagers and young adults. HLF comments that although there are many heritage events for children and families "*opportunities decrease dramatically during teenage years and typically don't return until later in life*". Kicking the Dust hopes to bridge the gap by creating heritage projects which will involve and interest young people. You can follow the evolution of the project via #DustKickers on social media. [HLF](#)

## Jobs

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

- [Wildlife Gardener/Ecologist - Natural History Museum](#)
- [Explainer \(freelance\) - Horniman Museum](#)
- [Chief Curator - National Portrait Gallery](#)
- [Assistant Curator - 2 x temporary posts - National Museums Scotland](#)
- [Assistant Buyer - Science Museum Group](#)

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

## And finally...

### **Strong and stable: how Romans made better concrete**

Modern concrete sea defences dissolve after a few decades, revealing an oxidising tangle of metal reinforcements as they succumb to the sea. By contrast, sea defences built by the Romans survive much better: not only still visible on the coast after two millennia, but even stronger than when they were first made. Scientists are now uncovering why the Roman concrete recipe of volcanic ash and rock + seawater + lime is so successful: the ingredients react together over time, generating new minerals which reinforce the structure. Researchers say modern concrete making could be transformed by their insights. The Romans themselves were not above showing off about their excellent concrete, which Pliny the Elder describes as 'impregnable to the waves and every day stronger'. [Guardian](#)

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