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Horniman Museum and Gardens - Kusuma Nature Play, a new free space for families. Image credit Horniman and Louisa Rechenbach (photographer).

## NMDC news

### Museum Climate Hub launched

NMDC has worked with AIM (Association of Independent Museums) on a new Museum Climate Hub, which brings together online resources to support organisations on their sustainability journey. It was developed in response to sector feedback on the need for help in navigating the overwhelming amount of available information and guidance on climate sustainability. Experts were tasked with curating a small number of targeted best fit resources, which were then structured and organised to provide clear and easily accessible information.

Every resource in the Hub has been recommended by sector specialists and sustainability experts and has been reviewed against rigorous criteria to ensure it is:

- Trusted: sourced from authors or organisations trusted by the UK museum and heritage community.
- Scientifically accurate and objective: aligned with current climate science and global best practices.
- Actionable and relevant: contains practical advice you can apply, even if it wasn't originally written for museums.
- Current: the information is up-to-date.

NMDC's Climate Lead and CEO of the RAF Museum Maggie Appleton said: "this new resource fulfils a key recommendation from NMDC's 2023 'Museum COP' event, which identified the need for clear signposting to existing resources to enable the urgent action needed to decarbonise the sector and mitigate the impacts of the climate and biodiversity crises."

The new hub was created by [MeThree](#) and has been developed as a strategic pilot to provide immediate, practical help to the sector and serve as a live testing ground. Feedback on the resources and site is encouraged, and every user interaction will inform the blueprint for a possible larger-scale platform in the future. [Museum Climate Hub](#), [AIM](#) (press release)

### Lending and Borrowing Today: 2025 Review

NMDC and The Exhibitions Group have published a new sector-wide assessment of how UK museums and galleries are performing against the 11 Principles for Lending and Borrowing, first published jointly by the two organisations in 2021.

Based on survey responses from 47 organisations including NMDC members and Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations, the report finds genuine progress across the sector. Partnership working has strengthened, in-person courier requirements have reduced significantly - with some organisations reporting a 75% reduction since pre-pandemic - and many institutions have adopted clearer communication and greater transparency around costs.

However, the findings also point to systemic challenges that continue to constrain lending and borrowing activity. Capacity pressures across curatorial, conservation and registrar roles remain the most frequently cited barrier, while rising transport, conservation and environmental control costs are limiting what both lenders and borrowers can realistically achieve. Inconsistencies in the availability and accessibility of online lending information, and variability in how environmental standards are applied, are also highlighted as areas requiring attention.

The review identifies four priority areas for action: improving the transparency and visibility of lending information; strengthening consistency in environmental and security requirements; expanding cost-mitigation strategies; and enhancing clarity around lead-in times and costs from the outset of the loans process.

Laura Pye, Director of National Museums Liverpool and NMDC Chair said: "The survey results show an encouraging move in the right direction especially in light of the pressures the sector has faced over the last four years. We will continue to work with TEG to raise awareness of the importance of good lending and borrowing practices to help museums share their collections as widely as possible." Dana Andrew, Professional Development Manager at The Exhibitions Group adds: "Four years on from the launch of the 11 Principles, we can see they are making a difference, but awareness and adoption still isn't where it needs to be. Our priority now is to work with NMDC and the wider sector to close those gaps and ensure the Principles are embedded in everyday practice."

Download the full report from The Exhibitions Group website. [TEG](#) (press release) [TEG](#) (lending and borrowing)

## Members' news

### Liverpool's waterfront museums receive £91 million from UK Government

Plans for the future of Liverpool's International Slavery Museum and Maritime Museum have received substantial backing of £19 million from the Department for Culture Media and Sport's Public Bodies Infrastructure Fund. The redevelopment of both museums is the cornerstone of National Museums Liverpool's Waterfront Transformation Project, reimagining the area between Royal Albert Dock and Mann Island, combining storytelling, heritage, community and connectivity. Laura Pye, Director, National Museums Liverpool said: "We're hugely grateful to the UK Government for this investment and the confidence it shows in the vision for the museums, and teams making it a reality. This support is ensuring we continue to serve the needs of our communities and audiences, now and for generations to come." [NML](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

### Heritage Fund grants £4m to V&A's South Asia Gallery

The V&A will transform its South Asia Gallery with thanks to £4 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The reimagined space, is expected to open in spring 2028, and with fresh research and interpretation will explore the colonial history of the collection and the complex story of how these works of South Asian heritage came to the UK. The Gallery will be co-designed with young people and intergenerational community groups from the South Asian diaspora. [V&A](#) (press release), [M+H Advisor](#)

### NHM launches biodiversity programme for 8 partner museum sites

Museums For Nature is a new partnership programme from the Natural History Museum which will support eight museums to map existing habitats and identify interventions to enhance biodiversity across their grounds, in collaboration with local communities. Museums involved in the first year of the programme are Birmingham Museums Trust; The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry; Great North Museum: Hancock, Newcastle upon Tyne; Amgueddfa Cymru - Museum Wales; Touchstones, Rochdale; Wollaton Hall, Nottingham; National Museums NI and the Natural History Museum, Tring. Following the pilot year there will be a wider roll out across the museum sector. Participating museums will also create pollinator-friendly habitats that support climate resilience and enhance biodiversity in their towns and cities. [NHM](#) (press release), [M+H Advisor](#), [Museums Association](#)

### Tate Britain Garden Awarded Gold at the 2026 RHS Chelsea Flower Show

The Tate Britain Garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith and funded by the Clore Duffield Foundation and Project Giving Back has been awarded a gold medal at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The show garden offers a taster of the forthcoming Clore Garden, also designed by Stuart-Smith, due to open at Tate Britain on London's Millbank in 2027. Alex Farquharson, Director of Tate Britain, said: "We know visitors cannot wait to see this beautiful garden realised on an even larger scale when the Clore Garden at Tate Britain opens next year, where they will be able to enjoy a restful space built on principles of sustainability and biodiversity which will transform the gallery façade." [Tate](#), [RHS](#), [Times](#) (£)

### National Galleries Scotland Art Matters strategy

'Art Matters: 2026-2030' is the new strategic plan for National Galleries Scotland that places a focus on increasing access to Scotland's national art collection, particularly for children and young people. At the heart of the document is a commitment to building The Art Works, a new, free-to-visit experience in north Edinburgh that will be a new home for over 130,000 works from the national art collection. The plan includes free entry to ticketed exhibitions for under 18s and a revised schools offer. [NGS](#), [M+H advisor](#)

### NMDC members in the news:

- More strikes planned at **The Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust**, [The Argus](#)
- The future of the **British Library**? Robot workers and more cyber defence, [Times](#) (£)
- The Guardian view on gallery and museum gardens: a blooming triumph, **Tate**, [Guardian](#)
- 200th UK archive achieves accredited status, **Science Museum Group**, [M+H Advisor](#)



- Vivienne Westwood jewellery exhibition to celebrate designer's 'close relationship' with Scotland, **V&A Dundee**, [The Scotsman](#)
- Profile | 'The people who put this place together wanted to unify science', **Gavin Svenson**, Director, Oxford Museum of Natural History, [Museums Association](#)
- Natural History Museum repatriates ancestral remains to Japan, [Museums Association](#)

## Images this month

Images this month celebrate the opening of Kusuma Nature Play at the Horniman Museums and Gardens in South London. Part of their Nature + Love Project, the free new addition to the museum will offer an engaging space for families to encourage learning and wellbeing through nature and play. Kusuma Nature Play features a children's play area inspired by local wildlife and a new family-friendly cafe, as well as more direct access onto the Horniman's historic Nature Trail which will offer step-free access for the first time. 2026 also marks the 125th Birthday of the museum as they look forward to the reopening of the Natural History Gallery, also part of the Nature + Love Project, in early 2027. [Horniman Museum and Gardens](#)

## Government news

### 2026 elections impact

Following on from the elections in Scotland, Wales and English local elections, Heledd Fychan has been named the new Welsh culture minister. Fychan moved into politics full-time in 2021, and was previously the head of policy and public affairs at Amgueddfa Cymru—Museum Wales. She was a board member of the Museums Association (MA) and served on the association's Ethics and Nations Committees. The Scottish National Party Culture Secretary, Angus Roberston lost his seat to the Scottish Green Party and has been replaced as Culture Secretary by Màiri McAllan. She was elected as member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) for Clydesdale in 2021 and joined the cabinet in 2023 under former first minister Humza Yousef, becoming cabinet secretary for transport, net zero and just transition. [Museums Association](#) (Fychan), [Senedd.wales](#) (profile), [Museums Association](#) (McAllan), [Parliament.scot](#) (profile) **Also:** [Institute for Government](#) - The significance of the 2026 elections for UK government

**Also:** UK soft power push has fallen flat, senior figures say, [Financial Times](#) (£)

### Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND): Round 6 opens

MEND is an open-access capital fund for non-national Accredited museums and local authorities based in England. It provides funding to undertake vital infrastructure improvements and urgent maintenance backlog work beyond the scope of day-to-day maintenance budgets. Round 6 opened for Expressions of Interest on 18 May 2026. Expressions of interest must be submitted by 12 pm (midday) on 12 June 2026. They also accept partnership applications between a local authority and non-national Accredited museum(s). One organisation must act as the lead organisation and submit the application. Funding ranges between £50,000 (minimum) and £5 million (maximum). [ACE](#)

### ACE publishes guidance for £13.6 million Museum Transformation Programme

The Museum Transformation Programme, part of the government's Arts Everywhere funding, aims to support museums in rethinking their operational models. The programme, delivered by ACE on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, offers grants of between £50,000 and £1 million to accredited museums in England that can demonstrate an established relationship with a local authority. The funding is designed to address the longer-term challenges museums face – supporting them to undertake the fundamental shift in their operational models that is required to stabilise their finances and continue to deliver for their audiences and communities. Location in a DCMS Culture Priority Place will be considered as a key part of the assessment process for applications, which will open on 1 September and close at midday on 30 September 2026. Activity funded through this programme might include:

- Digital transformation
- Organisational change
- Organisational restructuring
- Income generation and resilience
- Community and inclusion

- Sustainability.

[ACE](#) (Museum Transformation Programme), [M+H Advisor](#)

### Three heritage funds open for expressions of interest

Part of the wider £1.5 billion Arts Everywhere Fund, these investments will be targeted at areas of high deprivation, which face the greatest fundraising challenges. Places of Worship Renewal Fund offers up to £23 million this year and second rounds of the Heritage at Risk Capital Fund up to £15 million; and Heritage Revival Fund up to £10 million. The Heritage at Risk Capital Fund is for projects that ensure heritage buildings are fit for the future and continue to tell our national story in communities across the country. The fund prioritises projects that restore heritage sites serving disadvantaged communities and which demonstrate strong local benefits, from job creation to cultural events. The Heritage Revival Fund helps communities to rescue and repurpose neglected historic buildings and transform them to meet modern needs, focusing on regenerating historic buildings in town centre locations to create new arts and culture venues, workspaces, affordable housing, and more. [Gov.uk](#)

### DCMS implements a new approach to funding place to target inequality

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is implementing a new approach across their programmes with the aim of improving social and community outcomes. The tailored focus will target areas of 'double disadvantage' where both deprivation and community need is highest. DCMS will apply this approach to relevant programmes aimed at improving social, community and wellbeing outcomes across all of our sectors – covering arts, culture and heritage, sport, civil society and youth. The areas were selected using Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and the Community Needs Index (CNI). The government published the Culture Priority Places on 1 June, the expanded list is in response to the Independent Review of the Arts Council. Twenty-three new areas have been added to Arts Council's existing Priority Places using a methodology that ranked lower-tier local authority areas based on three measures of physical engagement with culture from the 2023-24 Participation Survey: physical attendance at an arts event in the last 12 months, physical attendance at a library in the last 12 months, and physical attendance at a museum in the last 12 months.

[Gov.uk](#) (new approach), [Gov.uk](#) (Culture Priority Places), [M+H Advisor](#)

### Areas of Research Interest updated by DCMS

The updated Areas of Research Interest (ARIs) covering arts, culture and heritage to media, creative industries, sport, civil society, youth, tourism and the visitor economy, help DCMS work across policy areas. This refreshed set of ARIs highlight the questions where new knowledge, data and analysis can most usefully inform policy development and strengthen the evidence base for decision-making. They are designed to support engagement between DCMS and the wider research and evidence community. In a useful blog, Tom Crick, Chief Scientific Advisor at DCMS, explains their importance. He highlights one of the most important features of the refresh is the cross-cutting themes that run across the department's work including the areas of growth; place, pride and social cohesion; participation and engagement; prevention and early intervention; value, valuation and valorisation; major events and national moments; artificial intelligence and digital technologies; resilience; environmental sustainability; and what works and evaluation. [Gov.uk](#), [Blog](#)

### VAT cut with the launch of the government's Great British Summer Savings scheme

Admission tickets for museums are included in this summer's temporary VAT cut in the government's latest initiative to support families with stretched household budgets. Great British Summer Savings will be a targeted and temporary scheme to reduce the costs of children's meals in restaurants, children's tickets for theatres and cinemas, and tickets for everyone for attractions like soft play, adventure centres and theme parks. The scheme is estimated to cost about £300m and cuts the VAT rate on eligible activities from 20% to 5%. It only applies to admission charges and does not cover other services offered by the attraction. However the scheme is not applicable to those organisations already covered under the VAT Act's cultural exemptions, so will not include admission tickets at many museums. [Gov.uk](#), [Museums Association](#)



Horniman Museum and Gardens - Kusuma Nature Play. Image credit Horniman and Louisa Rechenbach (photographer).

## Sector news

### Rising costs and cuts to staffing main worries for directors in 2026

Published every two years, the Art Fund Directors Research captures the views of 329 museum directors from organisations of all sizes and types across the UK. The challenges highlighted included rising costs and insufficient staffing levels to opportunities such as the strengthening of partnerships and museums as trusted civic spaces. Key insights include:

- Income has increased but not kept pace with rising costs.
- Partnership working and community engagement are thriving.
- Lack of staff is the number one challenge for the next financial year.
- Demand is often exceeding capacity.
- Museums' role as trusted civic spaces presents a major opportunity. [Art Fund](#), [Museums Association](#)

### ACE impact, new framework and Chair announced

In May Arts Council England published a new Strategic Framework for 2026, which replaces the previous strategy Let's Create. It is an interim guide which sets out how they will prioritise their work, design services and make investment decisions while they consult on and develop a new long term strategy. For those with funding agreements the relationship with ACE is not currently changing - this includes National Portfolio Organisations, Investment Principles Support Organisations and Creative People and Places consortia. The three key imperatives of the framework are: support excellence, deliver for everybody and reach everywhere. [ACE](#) (new framework), [Arts Professional](#) (£), [Art Newspaper](#) (£) **Also:** Sector has mixed reactions to ACE's Let's Create replacement, [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Dawn Airey, Deputy Chair of the board for Channel 4, has been named as the new Chair of Arts Council England. She has over 30 years of experience in the media and creative industries, holding senior leadership positions across major broadcasters. The Guardian quoted Airey as saying: "The importance of the Arts Council in championing art and culture has never been more needed because the sector has never been more vital to our nation. In a world where AI, technology and automation are increasingly dominant, human connection, experience, imagination and creativity are the things



that bring us together.” Her executive career includes serving as Chief Executive of Channel 5 and she is also currently the Chair of the National Youth Theatre, the educational platform Digital Theatre+ and the Barclays FA Women’s Super League and Women’s Championship board. [Gov.uk](#), [Guardian](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

**Also:** Nicholas Serota, outgoing Chair of ACE, wrote a defence of the geographic spread of Arts Council Funding in a letter to the [Guardian](#) on the 3 May.

### Creative Industries Skills Audit for the sector

Creative PEC and Working Advance have launched the Creative Industries Skills Audit, a sector-wide study assessing the current and future skills needs across creative industries sub-sectors. There is a specific sub-sector report that focuses on Museums, Galleries and Libraries (MGL). Poor pay and conditions are cited as one of the problems for recruiting to the sector, with skills shortage vacancies in the MGL sector particularly acute for entry-level roles. Employers are also struggling to recruit for a range of occupations, particularly museum and heritage assistants, museum education officers, and collection managers and curators. Recruitment difficulties also persist in marketing and hospitality. Recruiting candidates with digital skills also remains a challenge for the sector as well as skills linked to sustainability. While women and disabled people make up a larger proportion of the sector workforce compared with the UK workforce average, people from working class backgrounds are underrepresented in the sector, accounting for 32% of the sector workforce compared with 40% of the UK workforce. There is lots of really useful data in this report, not only highlighting skills gaps but roles that are in demand and steps that need to be taken to address the future needs of the workforce. It is also useful for those wishing to enter the sector as well as for those planning training. [Creative PEC](#) (website), [Skills Audit](#) (report, pdf, 109 pgs), [Sub-sector Report](#) - Museums Galleries and Libraries (pdf, 22pgs)

### Creative UK ask for help to shape advocacy toolkit

Ahead of Party Conference season, Creative UK is looking to launch a brand-new advocacy toolkit for the cultural and creative industries. The Case for the Creative Industries will outline clear priorities for the sector for any political party to consider in its policymaking – and will underpin Creative UK’s advocacy work for the coming year. The cross-sector toolkit will contain up-to-date:

- Asks: What our network wants respective parties to understand and prioritise in their policy making;
- Data: Why the creative industries matter and why they should be taken seriously
- Success Stories: Reflections on what has worked so far.

You can contribute to the toolkit via his form. [Creative UK](#)

### New study shows art is one way to turn back the clock

A research study published in the journal, Innovation in Ageing, has linked exposure to arts and cultural activities to a slower pace of ageing and a younger biological age, suggested by changes to DNA. Survey response and blood test data from 3,556 adults in the UK showed people who did an arts activity at least once a week seemed to age 4% more slowly than those who rarely engaged with arts. This was the same as those who exercised at least once a week compared to those who did no exercise. [UCL](#), [Innovation in Ageing](#), [Guardian](#)

### Cool Off in Culture Campaign

Don’t forget to sign up to the Cool Off in Culture Campaign which maps cultural spaces where people can stay cool during summer. Register your interest via the link. [Cool Off in Culture](#)

## Cultural sector funding news

### Round-up of funding news

The big funding news for the sector this month came from **The Sainsbury Centre**, at the University of East Anglia campus in Norwich, which has been given £91 million by Lord David Sainsbury through his Gatsby charitable foundation. The funding is intended to upgrade their facilities, extend the south cafe terrace and to make it more sustainable, [BBC](#). Good news also came from **Cornwall Museum** which has now surpassed 50k visitors after facing closure ([M+H Advisor](#)). The **South London Gallery** announced an exhibition at Christie's London this June, to raise vital funds for the Peckham based arts centre. More than 25 British and international artists, who have strong connections to the SLG, have donated works with an aim of raising £2m to mark SLG's 135th anniversary campaign. [SLG](#)

Henley's **River and Rowing Museum** site which closed in September 2025 has been earmarked for a health and fitness centre according to the [BBC](#). In **Jersey**, free museum access will end following a decision by the Government of Jersey to stop funding the initiative due to rising costs. The government started funding the cost of admission fees in July 2024 as part of a year-long trial which was extended until the end of March 2026. The [BBC](#) reported that visitors doubled in the first year of the trial but fees of £15.45 for adults will be introduced from 1 July 2026. Following a 'temporary' closure at Ditchling Museum in East Sussex, the [Museum Association](#) reported that all staff at the museum have been made redundant. The museum, which celebrates Ditchling's rich legacy as a thriving centre of art and craft in the 20th century, closed in February 2026 for a period of 'reimagining' to plan a new business model.

## Awards

### Museum and Heritage Awards announced

The 2026 Museum and Heritage Awards were announced on the 13 May, celebrating the very best in initiatives, organisations, exhibitions, staff and volunteers across the sector. There were 19 categories to compete in with NMDC members recognised in a number of awards including the most popular one which was Community Engagement Programme of the Year, with the final winner being the **Horniman Museum and Gardens** for All Eyes on Her!: Community Stewardship for Institutional Change. Other NMDC successful organisations included **Birmingham Museums Trust** which was a joint winner of the Sector Impact Award with their Citizens Jury. This award spotlights the people and organisations driving positive change and making a real difference to the sector. Best use of digital went to the **National Science and Media Museum** for their Bradford Digital Creatives programme and Visitor Accessibility Award was won by the **V&A** for their Design and Disability exhibition. Even though the main **London Museum** site is closed, their Young Londoners' Archive Schools Programme took home the Learning Programme of the Year prize. There were also celebrations for the **Fitzwilliam Museum** for best Marketing and Communications Campaign, **Norwich Castle** was recognised for Restoration or Conservation Project of the Year, whilst the **National Archives** outstanding Mi5: Official Secrets exhibition won the category for Best Temporary or Touring Exhibition (Budget over £80,000). [M+H Awards](#)

### Collections Trust Award 2026

There is still time to submit a nomination for the 2026 Collections Trust Award which recognises the often-unsung achievements of those who manage the collections that lie at the heart of all museums. The theme of the 2026 award is Accountability for Collections with the winning museum receiving £1000 to spend on an agreed collections management activity. Submissions can be made using the form on their website, or by submitting an audio or video response to the same questions. The deadline is 10am on Tuesday 30 June. [CT](#)



## Sector reports and surveys

### Survey exploring the role and impact of small museums

AIM (Association of Independent Museums) are looking for museums who receive up to 50,000 visitors a year, to take part in this survey running until Monday 29 June 2026. They are seeking views on the role and impact of small and medium museums with a particular focus on their contribution to local placemaking and community life as part of a research project commissioned by the AIM in partnership with Arts Council England; Culture Division, Welsh Government; and Museums Galleries Scotland. They welcome responses from both accredited and non-accredited museums and they are looking for responses from someone with the authority to speak on behalf of your organisation. [AIM](#) (survey)

### Heritage Science Data Service (HSDS) user needs research

The National Heritage Science Forum are running this survey on behalf of the Heritage Science Data Service (HSDS), as part of the Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science (RICHeS) programme. The survey is aimed at anyone working with heritage science data as a researcher, practitioner, conservator, curator - or in any other role. It will take around 15–20 minutes to complete and will be open until 15 June 2026. [Survey](#)

### Embedding commercial thinking in the cultural sector

The Association of Cultural Enterprises have brought together data from more than 260 arts and heritage sites for the first time, marking what will become an annual view of audience and commercial performance across the sector. The report highlights a clear trend: organisations that integrate commercial thinking into strategic decision-making are consistently more successful in generating income. This requires commercial expertise to be represented at senior leadership level, including at Board. Commercial activity now represents the largest share of income for many organisations, yet success is increasingly shaped by how effectively programming, audience insight and commercial thinking are brought together. Key themes that emerge from the report include: Demand is concentrating around key seasonal moments, and experience-led offers and external pressures, including cost of living and climate, are now ongoing conditions to plan for. [Cultural Enterprises](#) (report, pdf, 35pgs)

### Global survey on the use of Artificial Intelligence in Museums

UNESCO and ICOM have launched a Global Survey on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Museums. Institutions of all types and sizes are invited to contribute by completing the online survey by 21 July 2026. Findings from the survey will inform a forthcoming joint UNESCO–ICOM report on AI in museums. This publication will provide an evidence-based overview of current practices, highlight key challenges, and showcase practical case studies from around the world. [ICOM](#)



Horniman Museum and Gardens - Kusuma Nature Play. Image credit Horniman and Louisa Rechenbach (photographer).

## Young people and families

### Young people and work report highlights concerns for NEETs

Commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions, this interim report by the Rt Hon Alan Milburn has highlighted that nearly one million young people aged 16 to 24 in the United Kingdom are not in education, employment or training (NEET), which equates to 1 in 8 young people. It is a figure that is rising. Nearly 60% of young people who are NEET now are economically inactive, 6 in 10 young people who are NEET today have never had a job, up from 4 in 10 in 2005. This interim report summarises the discovery phase of Milburn's work, assessing the increase in the number of young disabled people and those with a health condition who are NEET. The final report due later this year will explore solutions to the problem. Access to work experience is covered in the discovery phase which notes the shift in responsibility to parents and carers to find suitable work experience for their children which often relies on who their parents know. [Gov.uk](#), [BBC](#), [Guardian](#)

### Art Fund funded student opportunities

The Art Fund offer grants of up to £10,000 to enable museums to offer paid opportunities for students, benefiting both museums and students. The programme enables students to explore an interest in the arts alongside future career options, while providing organisations with extra capacity which is skilled and accountable. They will fund the costs associated with paying students for the time they spend supporting your organisation in delivering projects. This is based on the current national and London living wage rates. Please note, the grants cannot be used to cover:

- Core staff costs
- Costs relating to ongoing overheads.

The next deadline for applications is 26 June. [Art Fund](#)

### Sign up to take part in Kids Aloud this summer

Art Fund are asking museums and galleries to register their interest by the end of June and upload your family-friendly exhibitions and events to their website. They will then be promoted as part of the UK-wide Kids Aloud campaign. [Art Fund](#)

**Also:** National museums in England report 10% decrease in young visitors, [Museums Association](#)



## Continuing Professional Development and staff wellbeing

### Burnout in the cultural sector

In May, Dr Laura Crossly produced a research report on the impact of burnout in the sector which challenges leaders to reimagine their organisations as conscious, caring environments where staff and creativity can genuinely thrive. The report explores how those working in the sector define burnout; factors that cause burnout; and impacts of burnout on people and organisations, before putting forward recommendations for future practice that can prevent and reduce burnout amongst cultural sector workers. In particular it highlights leaders and staff feeling the impacts of factors including crisis management, bullying, long hours, and pressure to deliver beyond capacity. Challenges that have exacerbated the problem in recent years include the impacts of Covid-19, cost of living crisis, loss and lack of funding, and the climate emergency. There are also a number of recommendations for Funders, Policymakers, and Sector support Organisations in combatting the issue. [Clore](#) (introduction), [Clore](#) (report, pdf, 52 pgs)

### UK Curators in Venice 2026 with Art Fund and the Association for Art History

Together with the Association for Art History, Art Fund is offering up to 8 fully funded places for UK museum and gallery curators who are at an early-to-mid-stage in their career to attend a four-day professional development programme focused on the Venice Art Biennale in September 2026. As part of a small peer network, participants will gain international insight, build sector-wide connections and deepen their curatorial practice, at a key moment in their professional development. Applications should be submitted by midnight on Sunday 12 July 2026. [Art Fund](#)



Horniman Museum and Gardens - Kusuma Nature Play. Image credit Horniman and Louisa Rechenbach (photographer).



## Funding opportunities

### Museum Future Funds from Museums Galleries Scotland

The Museum Futures programme offers a suite of funding and other support and services to both Accredited and non-Accredited museum organisations in Scotland. The programme of essential support has been developed in direct response to the significant and ongoing financial and capacity challenges faced by the sector. The Unlocking Potential Fund has a rolling application date closing in January 2027, with grants of up to £100,000 to help prepare the way for strategic development of your museum by addressing issues that are currently preventing you from moving forward. The Innovation Fund has grants for up to £250,000 to develop activity that will improve the financial position of the museum. Activities can include adapting your space to be suitable for leasing, innovation to your catering offer, including pop-up cafes, and new tourism offers. This is also a rolling fund closing in January 2027. [MGS](#)

### NHM Generation Hope grants

Part of the Natural History Museum's Fixing Our Broken Planet programme, there are three Generation Hope grants to be awarded of up to £2,500. The funding is to support costs related to delivering events and programming on the planetary emergency aimed at a youth audience for activities taking place before the end of March 2027. The deadline for this applying is 6 July. [NHM](#)

## Conferences and events

### Digitising Film Archives

The Rural Museums Network are running this online seminar on Thursday 11 June at 3pm-4.30pm. It will share experiences of three projects digitising their moving image archives, preserving them and making them accessible to the public. The session will include contributions from Brónagh McAtasney, Northern Ireland Screen, Jen Patterson and Hannah Silver doing a BFI funded project at The Museum of English Rural Life (MERL). This session is on Zoom, it is free for members (institutional and individual) of the Rural Museums Network, AIMA and BAHS, and £5 for non-members. [RMN](#)

### Heritage Carbon Reduction Webinars

Historic England are hosting a number of free webinars, open to all, to support you in your journey to reduce emissions. On Thursday 18 June they are hosting a session on digital emissions from 1-2pm. Claire Marchetti, Carbon and Sustainability Manager for Historic England, will discuss how the organisation is addressing the environmental impact of its digital activity, they will also look at practical steps heritage organisations can take to reduce their digital carbon footprint. [Historic England](#)

### Call for papers for the Museums+Tech Conference

You have until Monday 29 June to submit a paper for the 2026 Museums+Tech Conference which will be on 27 November at M Shed in Bristol and online. This year's theme is 'Using our spaces for authentic interactions'. The three key themes are:

- Place: Where the museum is and the space it contains, and how digital connects with that
- Authenticity: The sector's role in digital authenticity, as an experience and source of trust.
- Interaction: How audiences interact with the museum, the collection and each other.

There will be up to two slots available for remote speakers. More details can be found on the Museums Computer Group website. [MCG](#)

## Emergency Planning Training

Running across three days from 7-9 July, Historic England host a Salvage and Disaster Recovery course which provides delegates the opportunity to put theory into practice so they are better equipped if they have to deal with a real emergency. The course provides hands-on experience of how to resolve an incident, working with Fire and Rescue Service teams. Historic England runs the course in conjunction with experts from the English Heritage Trust, the National Trust, and West Midlands Fire Service. The course fee is £725 per delegate. There are also dates for October 2026 and March 2027. [Historic England](#)

## Tickets on sale for the 2026 Collections Trust Conference

With a theme of 'Accountability for collections' the 2026 Collections Trust Conference will be held online on the 8 October from 10-4pm. With a mix of case studies, presentations and discussions, the conference aims to explore different perspectives on what it means to be accountable for collections, reflecting on both the day-to-day activities and the policy decisions that ensure a sufficient foundation of collections information, as well as the challenging questions we might ask ourselves about what it means to be accountable to the public. Early Bird individual tickets are prices from £34. [Collections Trust](#)



Celebrating 125 years of the Horniman Museum and Gardens, featuring the World Gallery which opened in 2018.

## Appointments

**Maria Balshaw**, who recently stepped down as director of Tate, has been named as one of six new members of the Fitzwilliam Museum's governing body. The Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate also welcomes **Naveed Chaudhry**, a Senior Leader in Climate Finance at Oxford Policy Management, **Alvin Jiang**, who worked for Goldman Sachs, **Natalie Parish**, who has expertise in public services, **Payal Wadhwa**, a design strategist, and **Alma Zev**, an art historian. [M+H Advisor](#)

Six new trustees have been added to the board at Tullie in Carlisle. Once operated by the former Carlisle City Council, the museum was transferred to a newly established independent charitable trust in 2011. The new appointments are: **Lord Inglewood** who has been a member of the House of

Lords since 1989, **Lisa Middleton**, Head of Marketing, Communications and Digital at National Museums Liverpool, **Joanne Orr**, previously Chief Executive of Museums Galleries Scotland, **Malcolm Rogers**, who brings financial and governance expertise, **Helen Smout**, Chief Executive of Culture Perth and Kinross and **John Stevenson**, Managing Partner at Bendles LLP. [Arts Professional](#)

The British Museum announced that **Neil Wilkin** has been promoted to Head of Research. He joined the museum in 2012 as Curator, Bronze Age Collections in the department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory, moving to the role of Curator, Early Europe in 2017. [LinkedIn](#)

Chiswick House & Gardens Trust, the independent charity that operates the 65-acre site in west London, has named **Lycia Lobo** as chair of their board of trustees. Lobo is currently Chief Operating Officer at the Design Museum, she also chairs trading boards for Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and Queer Britain Museum. [M+H Advisor](#)

Icon, the Institute of Conservation, has appointed **Michael Osbaldeston** as Chair of its Board of Trustees. Osbaldeston has more than 40 years' experience in technical education and skills development, he is currently Special Adviser and Skills Ambassador at the City and Guilds of London Institute. [ICON](#)

## Catch up

From bikinis to cat bowls: how museum gift stores became the place to shop, 31 May 2026, [Guardian](#)

Historian brands museum's Dickens guidance 'ludicrous', 1 June 2026, [BBC](#)

£1m reconstruction of 4,500-year-old building unveiled at Stonehenge, 27 May 2026, [M+H Advisor](#)

Inside the vicious campaign to cancel the Southbank's polarising boss, 24 May 2026, [Observer](#) / [Guardian](#) / [Telegraph](#)

Three Ironbridge Gorge sites reopen after National Trust takeover, 22 May 2026, [Museums Association](#)

## International news

Winners of Louvre's €135m overhaul contest revealed, 20 May 2026, [Architects Journal](#)

New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art to merge with Neue Galerie, 15 May 2026, [Bloolooop](#)

Berlin rewards eco-friendly tourists with museum tickets, free drinks, 15 May 2026, [Bloolooop](#)

Parliamentary report calls for major changes at French museums in the wake of Louvre heist, 14 May 2026, [Art Newspaper](#) (£) / [Artforum](#)

America's museums have a building problem, 7 May 2026, [ARTnews](#)

## Jobs

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport wishes to appoint a new Member to the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest. Application deadline is midday on 10 June 2026. [gov.uk](#)

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

- [Corporate Partnerships Accounts Officer - Tate](#)
- [Associate Executive Director - Commercial Operations - Royal Navy Museums](#)
- [Treasure Registrar - British Museum](#)
- [Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Western Art - Ashmolean Museum](#)
- [Assistant Conservator - Structural Conservation](#)
- [Project Manager - Tullie](#)



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