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Collections



The Beamish Museum adapts to the snow by getting out its sleigh.

'Why collect?' makes the case for more funds for new acquisitions

The Art Fund and Wolfson Foundation have published a report 'Why Collect? – a report on museum collecting' by historian Sir David Cannadine. He found that although most museums have acquired new objects in the past five years, this is often 'passive' collecting through bequest, rather than a planned approach to developing collections. However, the number of museums with a written strategy is increasing. In 2010 at least half of museums did not have a budget for collecting, and 60% of acquisitions were through acceptance of donations and bequests. Except for nationals, collecting is a marginal activity for most museums, though case studies show it can be transformative.

The report references the growing unaffordability of works of high art as individual paintings sell at auction for dizzying prices, notably £333m recently paid for Leonardo da Vinci's *Salvator Mundi*. Even so, the eleven case studies at the end of the report show how tiny fractions of this sum can allow museums to invest in new acquisitions that resonate with their audiences, and how larger investments result in huge public interest. Studies include:

- Manchester Museum's acquisition of a refugee's life jacket.
- Ferens Art Gallery's purchase of Pietro Lorenzetti's 'Christ between Saints Paul and Peter' (c1320) for £1,612,940 in February 2013 with help from the Wolfson and the Art Fund. The acquisition was the centrepiece to the gallery reopening in 2017, and led to high footfall and a swathe of news coverage.
- Glasgow Museums used £100k from the Art Fund in 2011 to acquire a new collection of South Asian art, including three brightly painted truck backs painted by Jarnail Singh obtained for £935, attracting significant community interest.
- The acquisition of the Staffordshire Hoard, valued at £3.285m brought in packed audiences. £900k was raised from public, the largest ever donation from the general population towards a museum purchase.
- The report also looks at two cases of disposals, and how these can be a healthy part of a museum's collections strategy, as at IWM, or widely condemned, as with the disposal of Sekhemka by Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

Cannadine's report is unusual in taking a very long view of museums and collecting – beginning in 1832 when Sir Robert Peel supported a new museum building for the National Gallery on the grounds that it would promote social cohesion. Cannadine argues that *"while many museums and galleries seem stable parts of the perpetual and immutable ordering of things, with their robust buildings and their permanent collections adorning their walls, the reality is that they are for the most part relatively recently established, and throughout their existence they have almost always been in a state of flux"*.

While the report frequently confronts unsettling questions – in a digital age, will museums go the same way as shopping malls? – Cannadine argues that people will continue to wish to see museum objects in the flesh, and that increased investment in curators and collecting is needed for continued relevance. He concludes that *"policy initiatives, and constantly tinkering with so-called 'delivery bodies' are no substitutes for the increased government support for our museums and galleries that is belatedly required and urgently needed, and that other countries undoubtedly provide."* [The Art Fund](#), [The Art Newspaper](#), [Parliament.uk](#), [M + H](#)

Taskforce report calls for a 'brave approach to collections management'

The Museums Taskforce, convened by the Museums Association in 2016, has produced a new brief report on the issues facing museums. It focuses on relevance, funding and collections, with a particular step change in tone in discussing collections. It comments that *"it is well understood that many museums have full stores, collections acquired inconsistently and gaps in collections knowledge. It is necessary to break the cycle of having too much material that is not being used or delivering public benefit."* The report recommends a 'brave approach to collections management' which may mean a more 'radical' approach to disposal, in order to protect the core collections of museums. The Taskforce now intends to work with stakeholders to realise its recommendations and will report to the MA conference in November. [Museums Journal](#), [Taitmail](#)

Export bar for Julia Margaret Cameron photograph album featuring Charles Darwin

An export bar has been placed on one of the ten surviving photograph albums created by the Victorian photographer Julia Margaret Cameron. It includes pictures of Charles Darwin, Alfred Lord Tennyson and John Herschel. The asking price is £3.7m and the initial export bar is in place until 5th May, with a possible extension to 5th September. Arts Minister Michael Ellis said *"as well as containing extraordinary depictions of some of the most famous faces of the age, this wonderful album is of outstanding aesthetic importance and significance to the study of the history of photography. I would be delighted to see this unique album on display in the UK, where the public can enjoy and admire it."* Gov.uk

Also: 'The Destruction of Pharaoh's Host' by John Martin (1789 – 1854) has also received an export bar until 21st May with a possible extension to 21st September. The watercolour, which is dominated by a red sun and wild seascape, shows the Biblical story of the drowning of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. The asking price is £1,509,102. Gov.uk

Brexit

EUCLID assesses EU contribution to arts and creative industries at £40m each year

EUCLID has carried out research for ACE measuring the extent of EU funding received by arts, museums and creative industries. It found that £345m was awarded to 1385 projects between 2007 – 16, or roughly £40m each year.

- Sources of funding include European Structural and Investment Funds, Interreg, Creative Europe, Erasmus +, Europe for Citizens and Horizon 2020.
- Museums are estimated to have received £32.8m over the period, a similar figure to music, but substantially more than most other artforms. However support for Creative Industries dominates the figures at £193.8m.
- Museums received the most funding of any cultural activity type from agricultural and rural funding streams. Museums were also the third highest recipient of research funding (at £10.8m) after music and literature.
- Arts Professional has carried out further analysis on the EUCLID statistics, showing that EU culture spend per person tended to be higher in Leave voting regions, particularly in the North. The largest spend per head was £21.91 in the North East and the lowest £3.87 in the South East. However this is not a consistent correlation: London, which was the region with the lowest average Leave vote in England, at 40%, received the third highest investment at £13.28 per head and the East of England (56.5% Leave) received £4.12 per head, the second lowest investment.

The Arts Council will be publishing an additional tranche of research later this year on direct and indirect grants that cultural organisations receive through grants to universities. [ACE](#) (press release), [ACE](#) (full report), [Arts Professional](#), [ACE blog](#)

ACE Brexit report conveys arts sector views

Arts Council England has published a second report assessing the impact of Brexit on arts and culture. 992 cultural bodies receiving ACE funding gave views, although of the 74 museums included only ten were MPMs and national museums were not included. Results for museums may not therefore be representative of the sector as a whole, including the finding that museums are less concerned with the specific rather than general effects of Brexit compared to other art forms. Issues addressed in the report included funding, touring, trade, artistic exchange, workforce and talent, legal and regulatory frameworks and collections. It found that:

- One in seven respondents receive direct funding from the EU, but 30% have indirectly benefited, often through being part of a consortium. However, 93% are concerned about how economic uncertainty will affect arts and culture.
- 67% of organisations took part in international activity in the past two years, which was most likely to be within the EU.
- A large minority employ EU nationals, but this rises for larger and London-based organisations. The average is 48% in London and 27% elsewhere. An article published by *Museums Journal* this month indicates a high EU workforce at some national museums, including 20% at the Natural

History Museum, 15% at the British Museum and 11% at the Science Museum Group – institutions like these are not factored into ACE's report.

- A majority of arts organisations could not name any advantages to Brexit, with 95% saying they had not received benefit from the fall in value of the pound. However, a few looked forward to increased tourism.
- Asked about major priorities after Brexit, arts organisations in general were most concerned about individuals being able to work abroad for short periods (21%) and replacing EU funding (15%). The museum sector is most concerned about legal and regulatory frameworks (23%) and facilitating easy transport of collections to the EU (14%).

[ACE](#) (full report), [ACE](#) (press release), [Museums Journal](#)

Sir John Major speaks to the Creative Industries Federation on Brexit

Sir John Major has given a speech to the Creative Industries Federation about how Brexit will affect the sector and his own views about leaving the EU. He said that creative industries are worth £35bn each year and that 10% of the workforce is in the sector, is predominantly young, and working in small units. He said that it faced a number of threats from Brexit, which 'has been the most divisive political issue of my lifetime' and would decrease the UK's international stature. He said that the government had cornered itself by announcing red lines that pointed to the hardest and least beneficial Brexit to the disquiet of business and academia. He argued that although government was obliged to negotiate a Brexit following the referendum, it is not obliged to accept any Brexit in the face of growing evidence of the negative effect on the country. He pointed to the shifting demographics of the population towards Remain, and argued that many of the consequences of Brexit would have serious economic effects that had not been fully put to the electorate – with tariffs on exports from 10% (cars) to 36% (dairy). He said 'this isn't project fear, it's project know your history' pointing to the evisceration of some areas of the country after losing their industries. Responding to questions, Major said he hoped it would be made attractive for EU nationals to remain working in the UK in the creative industries. [Creative Industries Federation](#) (speech begins c. 17m) [CIF](#) (full text)

Irish Museums Association calls for an audit of the costs of Brexit

A document published by the Irish Museums Association and Ulster University says that EU funding has been significant for museums in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and is urging museums to carry out an audit of how Brexit will affect a number of issues from funding to partnerships. Loan agreements, touring arrangements and the working lives of staff who travel across the border are all specific concerns. IMA's Director Gina O'Kelly said "*over the last 20 years there has been so much work put into developing these really strong collaborations, that we don't want anything to put them at risk.*" [Museums Journal](#)

Civilisations



The Horniman Museum crowdsourced images of its buildings and gardens in the snow - this happy alpaca was captured by Ben Cook.

Enduring objects, contested meanings: Civilisations launches on BBC2.

The Civilisations television series has begun on BBC2, featuring star objects from museums across the UK as well as filming across the world. It is accompanied by a museums festival considering many of the topics raised by the programmes, particularly the plurality of 'civilisations' and how multiple perspectives have overtaken the world view of Clarke's 1960s series. The BBC's arts commissioning editor Mark Bell said *"what we wanted to show was that these cultural artefacts are, some of them, very long lived, but also quite fragile, and also quite contested—what they mean to different people is slippery and that's interesting."*

Two of the three presenters, Simon Schama and Mary Beard launched the festival with an event at The National Gallery (still available on BBC Arts). They discussed their differing views of what Civilisation is, and to what extent 'the barbarian is within'. They also explored hard questions about how world collections came to the UK and the claims of restitution. Mary Beard said: *"Do we want to live in a world where every object stays where it was made. No. Do we want to live in a world where art is looted from those who own it – we also feel that that is not desirable. And that is one of the reasons why these are such deeply contested objects. Art in its long history is about power... There are wonderful, difficult and complicated stories which you can't just airbrush out by saying let's just send it back."* Critical reactions to the series have been generally positive with the Telegraph describing the filming as 'as jaw-dropping as anything on Blue Planet II'. [Telegraph](#), [Guardian](#), [TES](#), [The Art Newspaper](#), [BBC](#) (all programmes), [National Gallery](#) (link to launch event stream)

President Macron plans restitution of museum objects to Africa

The French President Emmanuel Macron has announced a sea change in policy, and the return of museum objects to Africa. He said *"I am from a generation of the French people for whom the crimes of European colonialism are undeniable and make up part of our history...In the next five years, I want the conditions to be created for the temporary or permanent restitution of African patrimony to Africa."* Writing for *The Art Newspaper* and *Le Monde* Professor Bénédicte Savoy asked what this might mean in practice, pointing to at least one unruffled museum leader, Quai Branly Museum President, Stéphane Martin, who says *"nowadays we cannot have an entire continent deprived of its history and artistic genius"*. Savoy suggests that conversation between interested parties, partnerships and 'unprecedented legal arrangements' may all be part of the way forward. [The Art Newspaper](#), [Frieze](#), [Hyperallergic](#)

Creative Climate Census published

The arts and environment group Julie's Bicycle has published the latest installment of its Creative Climate Census which captures attitudes to tackling climate change in the cultural sector. Overall, the survey attracted 476 responses from organisations with a cumulative turnover of £1.1bn. 83% said they had benefited from their environmental practice. The report also found that since 2014, the impetus for change had shifted from middle to senior management. However, only 6% of respondents, or 28 organisations in the survey were museums. Hence, although support is very high in this group, with 88% having an up to date environmental policy, this is likely to represent the most committed museums, rather than reflect the whole sector. [Julie's Bicycle](#) (overview), [Julie's Bicycle](#) (Museums report)

Consultations

Local Government Association call for information on Brexit

The Local Government Association is seeking views from area leaders on the impacts of Brexit. It has suggested four broad areas for response:

- Economy, including the general response from LEPs and the effect of import and export.
- Workforce, including risks and opportunities exiting the EU presents for service delivery.
- Funding priorities for local growth funding and the role of local authorities in allocating and awarding funding.
- EU regulatory frameworks – are there existing frameworks that should be changed or kept?

There is no deadline for responses and any queries should be sent to brexit@local.gov.uk. The *Guardian* has published data already received: of 185 respondents only 12% thought Brexit would be positive and 26% thought it would be neutral. 68% though local government is receiving insufficient support from central government over Brexit. Details of the 'shared prosperity fund' promised in the 2017 Conservative manifesto to replace EU regional funds are yet to emerge. The LGA is also seeking 'urgent clarity' about how government will replace EU structural funds. [LGA](#), [Guardian](#)

Civil Society Inquiry: call for evidence

Minister for Civil Society Tracey Crouch has launched a new Inquiry into Civil Society, seeking views on how charities, businesses and community groups working in this area can be better supported. It defines Civil Society as engagement with areas from environmental protection, to helping disadvantaged people, to offering access to arts and culture. It seeks to discover how government can work to:

- Support people, including the young, to play an active role in building a better society.
- Unlock the potential for public and private sectors to support social good.
- Make communities better places to live and work in.
- Build strong public services.

There will also be a conversation on social media at #CivilSocietyStrategy. The consultation will last for 12 weeks. [Gov.uk](#)

Also: Nesta has been highlighting the Parisian app 'Madame Mayor I have an idea!' which allows the local population to make suggestions about how a funding pot of €500m should be spent over six years, thus increasing the direct civic influence and engagement of the public. [Nesta](#), [Madame La Maire](#)

Future of the Common Agricultural Policy after Brexit

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has launched a consultation on the future of the agricultural policy in England, after the UK leaves the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). There is a paper offering proposals as a basis for discussion, which addresses topics including bees, environment, wildlife and rural communities as well as farming. It also highlights the creative industries' use of rural locations, particularly as settings for film and television and the presence of heritage sites in farming areas. The consultation may be of interest to heritage and rural cultural organisations, and museums with a wider interest in issues such as environment and climate change. The deadline for responses is 11.45pm on 8th May. Meanwhile the Museum of English Rural Life is hosting a conference on 14th April – 'British Agricultural Landscapes, Past, Present and Post-Brexit'. [Gov.uk](#), [Museum of English Rural Life](#)

Also: Research and polling by IPPR, a progressive think tank, found that there are large public majorities for retaining EU standards for issues ranging from vehicle fuel emissions to renewable energy targets and working hours. [IPPR](#), [Guardian](#)

HLF consultation on its five-year plan

HLF's consultation on its plan for the five-year period 2019 - 24 continues to 22nd March. It is seeking to decide how to spend a smaller income at a time of increasing bids for support. HLF has consulted with communities which both do and do not currently engage with its work. It is also exploring loans for some capital projects, and asks if some "could be funded through loans or a blend of loans and grants, depending on the end use of the building or site". A pilot 'impact fund' of a kind already tested by Nesta, will also distribute repayable finance. [NMDC](#), [Arts Professional](#), [HLF](#)

Feeding Festivals

Contribute to a virtual 'History of the North in 100 objects'

Museums in the north of England are invited to contribute images and descriptions of objects to a website telling the 'History of the North in 100 objects'. The site will complement the Great Exhibition of the North and tell the story of the creativity and innovation of the region. It will also demonstrate the variety of museums and collections. The project is being led by Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums and is funded by HLF. Museums can nominate up to five objects, however only one will be selected from each institution. The deadline for inclusion is 5pm on 19th March. Contact Lucy Deprez at 100objects@twmuseums.org.uk with any questions. [Museum Development NW](#)

Great Exhibition of the North programme is launched

The full programme of the Great Exhibition of the North has been launched. Much of the Great North Museum will be transformed with high profile loans including Stephenson's Rocket and Helen Sharman's spacesuit. Elsewhere the Discovery Museum's Little Inventors 2030 programme will invite children to design new things and The Life Sciences Centre will host Science Museum Group's acclaimed 'Robots' exhibition. The festival also makes use of virtual and augmented reality to imagine the home of the future with walls that expand as a household grows. Meanwhile, The Urban Sciences Building is offering an 'Immersive Hybrid Reality Offshore Wind Turbine' experience, heroically marketed without using the phrase 'you'll be blown away'. There will also be art, design and innovation trails criss-crossing Newcastle-Gateshead, and a launch featuring an 80m long water sculpture and the Kaiser Chiefs. The BBC will be broadcasting a number of programmes from the festival, which runs from 22nd June – September 9th. [Get North 2018](#), [Great North Museum Hancock](#), [BBC](#), [BBC](#) (broadcasting announcement)

Also: BAE systems has withdrawn as a sponsor of the Great Exhibition, after two artists said they would not perform and a petition was launched because of the arms firm's involvement. Before BAE withdrew from the festival, Iain Watson, Director of Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums told *Museums Journal* "We acknowledge the concerns raised in connection to sponsorship of the Great Exhibition of the North. Funds from ACE, HLF, Newcastle City Council and Newcastle University are supporting TWAM's activity and exhibition programmes. We are not in receipt of funds from BAE Systems." [BBC](#), [FT](#), [Museums Journal](#)

NMDC member highlights 2018



The Royal Albert Memorial Museum celebrates its 150th anniversary this year with a carnival through the streets of Exeter. Photo: Tim Pestridge

We have brought together a selection of highlight exhibitions and events from NMDC members for 2018. The importance of music to regional identity is reflected in the National Museum of Scotland's 'Rip it Up: The Story of Scottish Pop' and M Shed's 'Bristol Music: Seven Decades of Sound'. National defence is central to both the National Army Museum's major exhibition 'Special Forces: In the Shadows' and 'Silent and Secret' at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, marking fifty years since the first patrol of the Royal Navy's first Polaris SSBN patrol.

Some museums are marking major anniversaries – the RAF museum will be celebrating a century of the RAF with several new galleries and facilities; the Royal Albert Memorial Museum is marking its 150th birthday with a carnival through the streets of Exeter in collaboration with carnival experts, Shademakers. It will also be offering events in its new African gallery for everyone from small children to those with dementia and students of African art. The Science Museum Group explores the dark and light side of science with its Frankenstein Festival and celebrates new technology as the Power UP interactive gaming event returns for a third year.

The Sir John Soane Museum is recreating a party from 200 years ago, complete with 'decadent cakes' and light installations; The Great North Museum is at the centre of a modern festival of design and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History tells the story of the new science of the deep past with 'Settlers: Genetics, Geography and the Peopling of Britain'. All of this just scratches the surface of a programme which also encompasses art, design, furniture, eighteenth century beer jugs, working class queens of industry, a spacecraft and at least two independently touring dinosaurs. [NMDC highlights](#)

New apps and websites

BBC Civilisations Augmented Reality app launches featuring 30 museum objects

The BBC has launched a new Civilisations Augmented Reality app, which allows users to 'see' thirty museum objects in the context of their own surroundings. Featured objects include a 14th century Italian sculpture of Madonna and Child from the National Museum of Scotland, an ancient Egyptian mummy from the Torquay Museum and the Rosetta Stone from the British Museum. An 'x-ray' function allows users to see inside the object and use a 'magic spotlight' to uncover annotations, audio and images. There is also an inbuilt globe to explore objects by place of origin. Users can download by searching for 'Civilisations AR' in the app stores for Android and iOS (please note that the app will not work on some older operating systems, and needs at least iOS 11). [BBC](#) (press release) [BBC](#) (1 min demo film)

IWM offers 25,000 hours of digitised film through upgraded website

The website of the IWM film collection has been upgraded with new keywords and filters to make it a powerful research tool for professional users. It now contains 25,000 hours of material, including unedited combat film, newsreels and documentaries. Registered users can also receive notifications when new footage is digitised and becomes available online. [IWM](#)

National Gallery and National Archives take forward new projects based on 'Culture is Digital'

DCMS has published a report on its 'Culture is Digital' consultation, during which over 150 individuals and organisations contributed to an online discussion about the intersect between the cultural sector and digital businesses and innovation. Themes drawn from the consultation include:

- 50.4m people in the UK are online, 76% of adults have a smartphone and 80% use the internet daily or almost daily. This offers the opportunity for the cultural sector to develop new 'hooks' into its work, and reach underrepresented audiences. Collection, analysis and improved sharing of data should help with this.
- The organisations benefiting most from digital are those which are 'digitally mature' with technologies embedded across departments from creative output to ecommerce.
- Cultural organisations are particularly weak around data analysis and intellectual property, limiting the chances of exploiting digital content and developing sound business models.
- The report references many major digitisation projects in museums and archives, but adds *"throughout this project there have been calls for a more strategic and coordinated approach to enable more connections and curated content to be available across multiple digitised collections, across sectors and to improve discoverability for audiences."*
- The immersive reality market is currently worth around £100bn globally, with the UK attracting about 5% of this market. There are examples of cultural sector excellence, with pioneers including the Royal Opera House, but the creative industries have less easy access to R&D funds than some other sectors, which leads to less experimentation and access to technical skills.

The report ends with a number of commitments, involving sector development and funding bodies to help the cultural sector's digital evolution. These include:

- ACE will invest £1.1m over two years in a Digital Culture Network, working across the regions to share good practice, broker partnerships with technology organisations and increase digital maturity.
- The Intellectual Property Office will work with the British Library's Business & Intellectual Property Centres to develop training for cultural organisations.
- HLF will offer a £1m fund over two years to attract projects which will expand the sector's digital capacity. Digital will also be a focus of its Business Transformation Programme, especially around upskilling staff.
- National Archives will work with other cultural sector bodies to develop a strategic approach to digitisation of cultural objects.
- The National Gallery will work with partners such as Nesta to create an Innovation Lab for museums, to develop both the visitor experience and creative content.

[Gov.uk](#)

Also: The French Government is giving all 18 year olds €500 to spend on culture via an app - from live events including concerts and theatre, to 'cultural goods' such as books, records and films.

[Ministry of Culture, France](#)

'Every Museum Podcast in One Big List'

Museum podcaster Hannah Hethmon has helpfully drawn together 'Every Museum Podcast in One Big List'. Ranging internationally and through museums of all sizes, it includes '21 Revolutions' from Glasgow Women's Library (women writing in response to collection items, Voices of the First World War from IWM and the Sauropodcast (advertised by a diplodocus with headphones) from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Hannah will also be leading a discussion on museum podcasting on twitter @museumhour on 12th March from 8pm. [Museums in Strange Places](#)

Funding

Fifth round of Coastal Communities funding opens for bids

The fifth round of the Coastal Communities Fund is now open, with £40m now available for the period April 2019 – March 2021. All projects must demonstrate that they will create regeneration and economic growth in coastal areas. The minimum bid is £50k, but 'portfolio projects' where several small organisations come together, are welcomed. The fund is also particularly looking for projects which 'address seasonality' – drawing in tourists outside holiday months and creating distinctive market niches in the visitor economy. The first closing date for applications is 2nd April. [Gov.uk](#)

Darren Henley hopes that National Lottery receipts will stabilise

In a long interview with Civil Service World, giving an overview of work at Arts Council England, Chief Executive Darren Henley said that he is optimistic that after a period of lower receipts, funds from the National Lottery will stabilise. He said *"the vibrancy and the health of the National Lottery is really, really important to the Arts Council and to the arts and culture so we do need to see a strong National Lottery. Camelot has undertaken a strategic review and I'm hopeful we see that back in growth. That is where we need to get to."* He also described how new technology has saved ACE £1m in grant management, and emphasised the importance of reaching under 25s who access 'their entire world is through a phone or something in their hands'. [Civil Service World](#)

National Portrait Gallery closes for fashion show

The National Portrait Gallery closed all day on 19th February to accommodate a commercial fashion show. A spokesman for the Gallery told *The Art Newspaper* that *"The gallery is a charity and has to self-generate over 70% of the funds needed. A key income stream is hiring out gallery spaces. Every effort is made to ensure that this activity does not impact on public access, but sometimes due to the nature and complexity of an event some closure is necessary."* [The Art Newspaper](#)

Dr Bendor Grosvenor continues campaign to abolish fees for museum images

Writing for *The Art Newspaper*, art historian Dr Bendor Grosvenor describes his ongoing campaign to abolish fees for the use of museum images. He argues that net profits from images are low and questions whether profits significantly reimburse administrative costs elsewhere. [The Art Newspaper](#)

National Museum of the Royal Navy to invest £33m over two years

The National Museum of the Royal Navy will be investing £33m in the next two years in major new exhibitions and interpretation as well as finalising existing infrastructure projects. This includes £1m for a new exhibition on Coastal Forces from LIBOR funds as well as £18m invested in the new Royal Marines Museum and a new collections space Storyhouse 12: The Navy Unlocked. There is also continuing work on HMS Victory and HMS Warrior. [Historic Dockyard](#)

Local councils, money and museums

Edinburgh City Council reinstates seven day opening at city museums

Edinburgh City Council is supporting six museums with £100k of extra funding to open seven days per week. The museums had previously reduced their opening hours following council funding cuts, but it was discovered that the £82k savings in staff costs led to a 21% drop in visitors and a £75k drop in retail sales and donations – almost eclipsing the sums saved. Edinburgh City Council will review the increased funding in six months, which will be dependent on museums' targets for raised income being met. Councillor Donald Wilson said *"this will give consistency and confidence regarding opening times that I have no doubt will increase footfall and income over the year."*

[Museums Journal](#)

Brighton City Council pauses plans for museums trust

Brighton City Council's plans to bring forward the creation of a Trust formed from the city's museums and Brighton Dome and Festival Ltd were challenged last month by the GMB union, with museum staff considering a strike. In response, the Council has paused its plans and will now appoint an independent expert, agreed upon by the staff and union to look at all of the options for the future of the museum service. It will report in the autumn. [Museums Journal](#)

Funding cut confirmed at the Towner Art Gallery

Eastbourne Borough Council has confirmed plans to cut its funding to the Towner Gallery by £200k in the next financial year, with a view to eventually reducing its support by 50%. Art Fund Director Stephen Deuchar was among those to intervene on behalf of the gallery, writing that planned cuts are so severe that they could 'even threaten [Towner's] existence'. However, the Council has already lost half of the £10m a year it received from central government in 2010 and faces a further £1m reduction in April. Its leader David Tutt said *"continuing to support Towner to the tune of £800k is no longer a viable proposition."* [The Art Newspaper](#)

Stirling Council rescinds cuts to gallery after petition and central government funding

Stirling Council has withdrawn plans to reduce its £242k funding to the Smith Art Gallery and Museum by 90%, which would have led to the closure of the museum within two years. Council Leader Scott Farmer said it had listened to local opinion after 9,500 people signed a petition. Over the same period, Stirling Council was also among the beneficiaries of Scottish government top-up funding to local councils, receiving an additional £2.8m. Overall Scottish local authorities will receive an additional £159.5m in resource funding over two years. [The Times](#) (paywall), [Museums Journal](#)

A 21st century education

Waltham Forest becomes first London Borough of Culture

Waltham Forest has been named at the first London Borough of Culture, under a new scheme created by Mayor of London Sadiq Khan. Its year will begin in 2019, followed by Brent in 2020. Each winner will receive £1.35m to stage cultural events and make culture an integral part of the borough's future. £250k for each borough will be specifically dedicated to helping young people of diverse backgrounds get involved in creative projects. Waltham Forest, which involved over 12,000 young people in its bid, is home to the Vestry House Museum and William Morris Gallery. [Rhinegold, London.gov](#)

Durham Commission on Creativity and Education

The Durham Commission on Creativity and Education is a joint project between the Arts Council and Durham University. It will collect evidence about the connection between creative thinking and cultural education, and explore whether there are gaps in current educational provision. 18 commissioners have been appointed including former ACE Deputy Chief Executive Althea Efunshile, Children's Laureate Lauren Child and architect Sir David Adjaye. The commission will research nationally and internationally, and draw evidence from schools, arts organisations and businesses. It invites organisations and members of the public to register an interest on its website. A report is expected in the summer of 2019, which will feed into ACE's next ten-year plan and 25-year creative talent plan. Durham's Vice Chancellor Professor Stuart Corbridge said *"The Durham Commission will explore how creativity and creative thinking can be cultivated across the curriculum from nursery school through to higher education and beyond."* [University of Durham](#), [ACE](#)

CLA briefing paper says 'arts make us employable'

The Cultural Learning Alliance has released its second briefing paper on arts education, this time in collaboration with The Edge Foundation. 'Employability and Enterprise' is subtitled *"Why the arts make us more employable, and why the creative industries are our international economic life-raft"*. The four-page document gives a succinct summary of recent evidence in favour of an arts education. It points to the strength of the creative industries sector, which is growing jobs at four times the rate of the rest of the economy and is worth £92bn. One in 11 jobs is in the creative economy and there are already skills gaps. By 2020 it is estimated there will be more freelancers in the UK workforce than those working in the public sector: the creative industries already has a 47% freelance workforce, and hones skills to flourish in that landscape. Jobs with creative skills are also the most likely to survive mechanisation: decision making, fluency of ideas and active learning, all judged by Nesta to be primary skills for the future workforce, are strongly connected with an arts education. Edge Foundation Chair, Lord Baker of Dorking says *"the UK's future workforce will need technical expertise in areas such as design and computing, plus skills which robots cannot replace – flexibility, empathy, creativity and enterprise."* CLA argues that the UK must continue to invest in arts education to keep its advantage. [Cultural Learning Alliance](#)

Review of Full Time Social Action impacts on young people does not yet recommend expansion

There has been a review of the impact of taking part in Full Time Social Action (FTSA) by young people aged 16 – 25. FTSA is defined as spending 16 hours or more for six months or more in a voluntary scheme. Although FTSA's are associated with greater social inclusion and social mobility, the report found that many young people do not know about the possibilities, or if they take part, struggle financially and are unaware of exemptions from job seeking. To improve take up of FTSA, the report recommends cross-governmental work, including integration with the new Civil Society strategy. The report also compared the undeveloped UK situation with more evolved schemes in France, the USA and elsewhere. In Germany the 'Voluntary Social Year' is recognised as military service and gives participants the status of a trainee. [Gov.uk](#)

Weston Jerwood bursaries give students from low income backgrounds a route into the arts

Museums + Heritage has reviewed the £1m Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries, which are currently helping forty young people get year-long paid placements in the arts, to challenge a situation where unpaid work favours the financially secure. Jonny Goode previously worked in BT Customer Sales, but is now an audience development assistant at Turner Contemporary. He said *"attempting to enter the arts workplace since graduating has been extremely difficult and opportunities like these are few and far between. But by breaking down the socio-economic barriers that recent graduates like myself are facing, Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries grants us the opportunity to make an impact within the industry."* [M + H](#)

Appointments and resignations

Manchester Museum has appointed Esme Ward as its Director, the first woman to hold the role in the Museum's 125-year history. She has been Head of Learning at the museum and also at the Whitworth since 2010. [Manchester Museum](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Maggie Appleton, CEO of the Royal Air Force Museum, has been appointed new president of the Museums Association. She takes up the role on 1st April. [Museums Journal](#)

Joanne Orr has resigned as CEO of Museums Galleries Scotland after 13 years in post. John McLeish, Chair of the Scottish Tartans Authority will be interim CEO until a permanent replacement is recruited. [MGS](#)

Judith McNicol has been appointed as new Director of the National Railway Museum. She has been Acting Director since Paul Kirkman left the post in July 2017 and has previously worked for 14 years at NRM. [Museums Journal](#)

Events



The Science Museum is hosting 'Mystery in Frankenstein's Lab' by Atomic Force Productions, part of a festival celebrating 200 years since Mary Shelley wrote Frankenstein.

International symposium on climate change and museums

Manchester Museum is hosting a major international symposium on climate change and museums. The three-day programme is still being finalised, but speakers will include:

- Jonathan Lynn, Head of Communications at the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)
- Miranda Massie, Director of The Climate Museum, New York
- Dr Emlyn Coster of North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, who will explore nature-focused museums in the Anthropocene.
- Professor Fiona Cameron of the University of Western Sydney who will discuss how museums can be provocateurs and change agents on climate action.
- George Marshall of Climate Outreach UK, describing how museums can reach new audiences and avoid polarisation with narratives of shared values.

There will also be a workshop where participants will learn how to customise a climate exhibition to work in any context. The event takes place from 11th – 13th April, and tickets are £200 for three days, or £100 for students. Email the organiser, Henry Mcghie (henry.mcghie@manchester.ac.uk) if ticket price is a serious impediment to attending. [Nature Manchester](#) (conference site), [Booking website](#)

Culture Geek 2018

Culture Geek brings together leading organisations from around the world to share how they are adapting to the changing digital landscape. Catherine Allen, a BAFTA award winning immersive media specialist will be joined by speakers from V&A, RSC, LSO, Van Abbemuseum, Bristol Culture and National Museums Scotland at this one day conference focussing on digital technologies in the cultural sector. Culture Geek takes place on 9 May 2018 at the Royal Geographical Society in London. [Culture Geek](#)

MuseumNext Europe

The 10th MuseumNext Europe conference is taking place from 18-20 June, also at the Royal Geographical Society. The three day conference on the future of museums includes over 20 speakers from around the world together with multiple opportunities for networking with international peers and visits to a wide range of London museums. [MuseumNext](#)

Money and Medals Network conference

The Money and Medals Network is holding a conference to cover the work of MMN over the last three years. There will be themed sessions on collections mapping, display, local numismatic networks and the use of numismatics in education and outreach projects. Some travel bursaries may still be available, email MMN@britishmuseum.org for details. The event takes place at the British Museum on 23rd March and is free. Booking is essential by 16th March. [British Museum](#)

Leadership programme for those working in gallery education

Engage is again offering its in-depth leadership programme for those working in gallery education, including freelance workers. The course includes nine hours of mentoring, two three-day residencies and a structured group enquiry segment. The programme is open to mid-career professionals and aims to increase the number of learning and education staff entering senior management, where they are currently under-represented. 14 places are available in total; ten for candidates in England, three for Scotland and one for Wales. The cost of the course is £800, which includes all hotels and meals for the residential segment. The deadline for applications is 10am on 3rd April. [Engage](#)

Foreign exchange? University museums and international engagement

University Museums Group has announced the first details of its 2018 conference, which will focus on international engagement. It will explore how university museums' work can contribute to, and even lead, the work of universities internationally, and how small as well as large museums can participate. The event will take place at the University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge on 3rd July. A full programme and booking details are to follow. [UMG](#)

Debunking Innovation and other Nesta Sparks

Nesta is running a series of two-hour early evening events in London, Nesta Sparks, to share some of its findings about research, innovation and the future of society with a wider public. The first is 'Debunking Innovation', which explores how many of the assumptions made about innovation over the last two centuries have been wrong. The event takes place from 5.30pm at 58 Victoria Embankment on 28th March. Tickets are free, but please register to attend. [Nesta](#)

Fifth year of Fun Palaces

The Fun Palaces Festival, which encourages communities to share their own skills over a weekend, is now open for registrations. The events take place on 6th - 7th October. Anyone can create a Fun Palace, and registering an event now is a good way to draw in more people in the same area with science, artistic, dancing, tecchie, performance or knitting skills. In 2017 there were 362 Fun Palaces created by 13,750 Makers with 126,000 people taking part. Fun Palaces are now international with the Palace map extending to Europe and Australasia and encompassing 11 countries. These events reach where others do not: nearly 40% of events in 2017 took place in the top 20% of geographical areas for deprivation. All kinds of venues were used with libraries at the top at 55% and museums and heritage sites forming 7.46% of the total. Kate Smyth of Oldham Libraries Fun Palace said *"you get a lot of people who are maybe crafting on their own at night somewhere, or building or hacking or doing digital stuff on their own: it's about bringing those people together, finding like-minded people, skill sharing and everyone getting together and being like the heart of the community."* [Fun Palaces](#) (4 min film), [Fun Palaces](#) (register for 2018), [Fun Palaces](#) (2017 report)

A Culture of Lates: how do museum Lates build audiences and generate income?

Following its publication last month of three reports exploring how museum Lates have grown since the turn of the century, Culture24 is organising a conference to further discuss and share good practice. Speakers include Sam Bompas from experience designer Bompas & Parr, Kate Rolph, Head of Events at the National Gallery, Abigail Daikin, Events Director at Time Out and Tim Ross an Australian comedian who will explain how he uses comedy to create original heritage interpretation events. Attendees are also invited to take part in 'egg timer talks' – five-minute platforms to describe projects that have worked. The event takes place on 1st June at the National Gallery. Tickets are £89 – £109. [Culture24](#)

Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy free online training courses

Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy has received funding from Arts Council England to offer a number of its courses for free online, beginning on March 12th. Topics include short courses in Asking People for Money and Trustee Leadership in Fundraising, as well as a more in depth course from the University of Leeds, Effective Fundraising and Leadership in the Arts. [Arts Fundraising](#), [AF](#) (short course signup), [Future Learn](#) (UoL course)

Call for papers: Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities conference

The National Archives and Research Libraries UK invite submissions for this year's Discovering Collections Discovering Communities (DCDC) conference, which takes place on 19th – 21st November in Birmingham. The theme is memory and transformation and the conference will examine how through developing new points of entry to collections (from digital approaches to particular thematic searches), archives, libraries, museums, galleries and academic organisations can work collaboratively to meet strategic ambitions. Organisers are calling for papers or workshops from cultural and heritage organisations, as well as the academic community. The deadline for abstracts is 27th April. [DCDC](#)

Museums and ageing: unexpected encounters conference

A conference on the ways museums can support living and ageing well will take place at Manchester Museum on 25th – 26th April. The event has emerged from the action research project 'Encountering the Unexpected: People, nature and natural heritage collections' and will particularly focus on how natural heritage can be used in work with older people. The cost for both days is £45, with a limited number of free tickets. [University of Leicester](#), [UoL](#) (booking)

GEM Foundation Course: Museum Learning 2018

GEM is offering a Foundation Course for those new to the museum and heritage learning sector, aimed at increasing skills and helping participants gain confidence. It includes six days of formal training, site visits and a work-based assignment that will practically benefit the participant's organisation. There will be a course director, a group of like-minded peers, and a professional mentor within the sector. The course takes place from April – July in Manchester and costs £650 to attend, which includes tuition spread over a four-month period, course materials, refreshments, and mentoring. [GEM](#),

Also: GEM's Learning and Sharing Centre conference takes place on 29th March at the National Army Museum. It will look at the future of the programme set up with ACE funding. Tickets are free, but registration is essential. [GEM](#)

Tate Workshops: Sharing Works of Art

Tate is offering a programme of free workshops on sharing works of art, taking place in venues across the UK from April 2018. Facilitated by Tate Registrars, the training will be delivered across two days and will aim to explore a deeper understanding of the principles of collection management. The workshops will be a forum for discussing the sharing of collections in all ways imaginable; through lending and borrowing, acquiring, transfers between collections, sharing ownership and making collections accessible through documentation. Workshop participants will be eligible to apply for bursaries for strategic loans from Tate's National Collection of British Art. For full details of how to apply and a list of venues and workshop dates, write to RSVPsharingart@tate.org.uk. The deadline for applications is 26th March.

Surveys

Glasgow Women's Library launches diversity survey of Scottish museum sector

Glasgow Women's Library is conducting a survey of staff, freelance workers and volunteers in the Scottish museum sector to assess how organisations perform in relation to equality, diversity and inclusivity. All data is confidential. A second, more in depth survey will be launched on March 12th, focusing on individual experiences of working in the sector. [Museums Journal](#), [Glasgow Women's Library](#) (survey link)

Heritage Alliance survey on Brexit and heritage sector employees

The Heritage Alliance is asking businesses and heritage organisations to fill in a five minute survey so it can assess the likely effect of Brexit on employment in the sector. [Heritage Alliance](#)

Shaping tourist landscapes

And did those feet? – architects propose bold plans to make London a walking city

Zaha Hadid architects has proposed creating extensive pedestrians-only routes through London, in a plan which was on display during February at the London Building Centre. Its Walkable London research suggests building on existing plans to make Oxford Street a car free zone, should eventually create networks across the city. The plans encompass Exhibition Road; V&A Director Tristram Hunt has been among those calling for pedestrianisation of the area on the grounds that mixed traffic and pedestrian use is dangerous. Meanwhile, plans have been announced to make London the first 'National Park City' – a website has been launched describing how the public can get involved. [Dezeen](#), [National Park London](#)

Scottish Government gives £6m to support tourism boom in rural areas

The Scottish Government has given an additional £6m to councils in rural areas where the boom in tourism is putting strain on local infrastructure. The Highland Council will receive £300k from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund for visitor facilities at Glenbrittle pools and waterfalls. Orkney Islands Council will receive £80k for car parking at the Standing Stones of Stenness. Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said *"the tourism boom is great news for rural Scotland, bringing jobs and investment to communities. Yet we are also seeing pressures on services, facilities and transport, which is why we are taking action."* [Scottish Government](#)

'Blockbuster' exhibitions important to London national visitor numbers

The Art Newspaper reports that the number of 'blockbuster' exhibitions offered by London museums and galleries may be vital to maintaining visitor numbers, particularly visitors from the UK. In 2017, the National Gallery saw a 17% decline in visitors (from 6.3m to 5.2m) and the National Portrait Gallery's figures fell 35% from 1.9m to 1.3m. However, NPG held two blockbuster exhibitions in 2016 (attracting 288,000 people) but only one in 2017 (attracting 136,000). At other London nationals, a marked rise in figures is associated with a large temporary exhibition, such as V&A's Pink Floyd exhibition which coincided with a 26% increase in visitors. [The Art Newspaper](#)

New museums

'Queer Britain' – plans for substantial LGBTQ+ museum

Plans are underway to create a first dedicated LGBTQ+ museum in London. Organiser Joseph Galliano has assembled a board of trustees and advisers and has the backing of the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan. It is hoped that the museum, which will use VR and digital as well as artefacts, could be open as early as 2021. Organisers will travel around the country asking people to bring their stories and artefacts. Galliano said *"there's no point lacking ambition around this because it needs to happen and it needs to be as exciting as the community it's going to be about."* [Buzzfeed, Queer Britain](#)

Westminster Abbey creates new museum in loft space with 'best view in Europe'

Westminster Abbey is adding a £23m museum to its structure, in a loft-like space 70ft above the nave called the triforium. A tower made of stone, glass, lead and oak is being constructed to give access to the space. 300 objects will be on display, including the 14th-century Liber Regalis – a manuscript that explains the schedule for a coronation service. The new space will open in June. [ALVA, Westminster Abbey](#)

Also: *The Guardian* highlights other new and re-openings for 2018 including Being Brunel in Bristol, the D-Day Museum, Portsmouth and a new visitor centre at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. [Guardian](#)

Awards

Hearts for the Arts Award winners announced

The National Campaign for the Arts has announced the four winners of its annual Hearts for the Arts awards, which highlights local councils and their individual members of staff who have provided imaginative support for arts and cultural work, despite often squeezed budgets. The winners are:

- **Best Local Authority arts initiative: Plymouth City Council's I.AM.NOT.A.ROBOT installation which brought together artists with young people with an experience of care, to create a publicity campaign, encouraging more people in Plymouth to become foster carers.**
- **Best Local Authority Arts Champion - Councillor: Councillor Cliff Morris, Bolton Council. Bolton Museum received investment from the council during his tenure.**
- **Best Local Authority Arts Champion - Officer: Lorna Lee, London Borough of Waltham Forest. She oversaw the redevelopment of the William Morris Gallery. NCA comments "in total we believe that her work has attracted over £5m for investment in culture and 300,000 residents and visitors to the borough's cultural attractions and events each year. These generate over £1m in income each year, which is reinvested in cultural education and provision across the borough."**
- **Local Authority Arts Project Encouraging Community Cohesion: Denbighshire County Council, Lost in Art.** This project used the visual arts to decrease social isolation among those living with dementia.

NCA's Chair Samuel West said 'I can't wait to meet them and thank them personally.' [NMDC](#) (more on the local authority shortlist), [National Campaign for the Arts](#) (winners)

Museums among winners of VisitEngland 2017 awards

VisitEngland has announced the winners of its annual Visitor Attraction Accolades, which reward a wide variety of attractions that 'go the extra mile to provide a high quality day out'. Several museums received awards, including Beamish and Roman Vindolanda for 'Best Told Story', Abbott Hall Art Gallery and Birmingham Museum & Gallery for quality food and drink, and a Gold accolade for the Museum of Liverpool for all-round excellence.

[Visit Britain](#) (winners), [VisitBritain](#) (overview)

Jobs

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

- [Casual Duty Manager - Museum of Science + Industry](#)
- [Head of Research Infrastructure Services - British Library \(London or Boston Spa\)](#)
- [Librarian - Museum of London](#)
- [Project Archivist, Blythe House Project - V&A](#)
- [Photographic Studio Coordinator - Royal Museums Greenwich](#)

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

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