

In this month's edition:

- [Ceramics to Coptic socks: National Museum of Scotland completes £80m gallery transformation](#)
- [Manchester Museum in unique collaboration to commemorate the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre](#)
- [NMDC exhibition and event highlights 2019](#)
- ['But What If We Tried?' – attempting \(and not quite succeeding\) to put a whole civic art collection on display](#)
- [Art UK publishes its first 1000 sculpture photographs online](#)
- [Weston Loan, Art Fund programme announces 2019 loans recipients](#)
- [ACE annual figures show museums' staff diversity in stasis](#)
- [CIF seeks sector leaders willing to speak in schools for the Creative Careers programme](#)
- [In brief: guidance and comment on Brexit](#)
- [Northern Lights: Sparking connections for arts and philanthropy in the North](#)
- [Parliamentary inquiry into lessons from the First World War Centenary](#)
- [National Army Museum returns locks of hair from Emperor Tewodros to Ethiopia](#)
- [New round of BBC commissioning to bring exhibitions and arts to a wider audience](#)
- [Art Fund launches £150k grant scheme for curatorial networks](#)
- [Welsh Government contributes £1m to new National Broadcasting Archive for Wales](#)
- [Royal Society and others call for a broad arts and science curriculum for all to 18](#)
- [The robots are coming \(and building their own museums\)](#)

...and much more.

Section headings | [Members' news](#) | [Collections – on show in new ways](#) | [Deeds not words? – the road to diversifying the cultural sector](#) | [Culture shaping cities and regions](#) | [Brexit](#) | [Events](#) | [Appointments](#) | [Surveys and networks](#) | [Museums, provenance, restitution and international politics](#) | [Funding](#) | [Sharing expertise](#) | [International](#) | [Awards](#) | [Education](#) | [Humanising the digital – embedding the robots](#) | [Jobs](#) | [And finally...](#)

Members' news



An ancient Egyptian Coptic sock, dated to c.300 - 600AD and now on show at the National Museum of Scotland. It is divided at the big toe to be worn with sandals. Image: c. Stewart Attwood.

Ceramics to Coptic socks: National Museum of Scotland completes £80m gallery transformation

The National Museum of Scotland has opened its final three new galleries, completing a 15 year, £80m project to transform its Victorian building. The new openings include an Ancient Egypt gallery, featuring the Qurna burial – the only intact royal group outside Egypt, and also a striped woolly Coptic sock from 300 – 600AD showing remarkable preservation. The Exploring East Asia gallery focuses on China, Japan and Korea, while the Ceramics gallery follows the 30,000 year history of the material, encompassing both decorative art and modern technological applications. Together, the galleries contain 1,300 objects, 40% of which are on display for the first time in generations. The museum has also taken a very long view of the redesign itself – making it easier for future generations to recalibrate the space more easily 70 years from now. More immediately, Director Dr Gordon Rintoul is hoping that the final three galleries will increase visitor figures from the current 2.3m mark. He said *“we’re not making any predictions about how many extra visitors we are going to get, but both Ancient Egypt and East Asia are clearly topics that are of great public interest, so we’re expecting the new galleries to help increase visitor numbers. It would be good to hit three million.”*

[M+H](#), [NMS](#), [BBC](#), [Telegraph](#) (paywall), [Art Newspaper](#)

Manchester Museum in unique collaboration to commemorate the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

Manchester Museum has co-curated a unique exhibition with the Partition Museum, Amritsar to mark a century since the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. Opening this April, it describes how the events of 13th April 1919, when British troops killed hundreds after opening fire on peaceful Indian protestors, were a defining moment for the Independence movement, beginning a chain of events that eventually led to the demise of the British Empire in South Asia. The exhibition is part of the Manchester Museum’s commitment to making sure that voices from the Global South come through in our memory of Empire, which will also be reflected in its new South Asia Gallery opening in 2022. ‘Jallianwala Bagh 1919: Punjab under Siege’ includes audio-visual material giving eyewitness accounts of the massacre, photographs and official documents as well as featuring Punjabi textiles from the Whitworth and a new artwork about the massacre by the Singh Twins. [Manchester Museum](#), [Partition Museum](#)

Capital’s oldest skull to be displayed at the Museum of London

A skull bone washed up on the Thames foreshore has been radiocarbon dated to 5,600 years ago, making it the oldest ever to be found in the city. It is now on display in the Museum of London. MoL’s Dr Rebecca Redfern said the find is significant because very little is known about this period, when London was open woodland with a hunter-gatherer population. *“They didn’t really build and didn’t create rubbish. They were perfect for the ecosystem but archaeologically it’s very difficult to find out about them. It’s someone’s forehead really, but it gives us so much insight into this poorly understood time period for London.”* [Guardian](#)

NMDC exhibition and event highlights 2019

We have begun our annual list of highlights from NMDC member museums, including some major exhibitions and a wider range of events reflecting the eclecticism, audience development and creativity of the sector. A second list featuring digital highlights will be published in early April. You can see our evolving highlights list here: [NMDC](#)

Collections – on show in new ways

‘But What If We Tried?’ – attempting (and not quite succeeding) to put a whole civic art collection on display

Rochdale Council has put a significant proportion of its 1,600 strong arts collection on display in a project conceived by artist Harry Meadley. It was created in response to public disappointment that most of the collection is in storage and is entitled ‘But What If We Tried?’ Fitting as many pictures as possible into Touchstones gallery has involved tessellating wildly different pictures together to fill every inch of space, with sentimental Victorian images next to pop art and surrealism. Originally aimed at showing all 1,600 works, in the event about 360 have been squeezed into the space. Gallery owner Mark Doyle hopes that the show will also begin a conversation about the worth of civic art in an age of cuts. He said *“when you are getting lots of complaints from residents about bins not being collected it might feel like having a collection and spending money on it isn’t necessarily a priority. Times are tough. Rochdale has a lot of economic deprivation.”* However, although the Council has lost £178.1m from its budget in the past nine years, it has not attempted to sell its art collection and has even extended it with help from external funders, including The Art Fund.

[Guardian](#), [Contemporary Forward](#), [Lancashire Life](#)

Art UK publishes its first 1000 sculpture photographs online

Art UK, which is in the process of photographing all 150,000 sculptures in public ownership in the UK by the end of 2020, has published its first 1,000 pictures. The set shows how various the form is – from statues of Victorian gentlemen, to Elizabeth Frink’s ‘Boar’ or Yinka Shonibare’s ‘Untitled (Dollhouse)’ and from outdoor statues of wood and stone being gradually abraded by the elements to objects for interior decoration. Around 20,000 of the total are in museums or other buildings. [Art UK](#) (sculpture image set), [Art Newspaper](#)

Also: Historic England has published some of the more appealing and unusual structures that gained listed status in 2018 – including a statue of Robin Hood in Nottinghamshire, the Florence Mine in Cumbria and a bus stop that is also a war memorial in Osmington, West Dorset. [Historic England](#)

Weston Loan, Art Fund programme announces 2019 loans recipients

The Weston Loan programme with the Art Fund has announced the 12 museums which will this year receive support to help them display loans from other institutions. The three-year funding programme offers grants from £1k - £25k to cover expenses such as transport and conservation. Some of the loans this year include:

- Wakefield Museum will host Ancient Egyptian mummies and artefacts from the British Museum for ‘Gateway to Eternity’, an exhibition exploring burial, taboo and death rituals.
- JMW Turner’s landscapes will tour museums in the North of England including Tullie House, in an exhibition investigating the Romantic artist’s relationship with the region.
- The Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle is receiving works from Tate, V&A and National Museums Liverpool for its exhibition ‘The Enchanted Interior’ exploring works in which Victorian women are the main ornaments in a ‘gilded cage’. These works are complemented and critiqued by new works from contemporary female artists.

There will be a further third round of this fund, with works going on show in 2020. [Museums Journal](#), [NMDC 2019 Highlights](#) (Laing exhibition), [Art Fund](#)

Avoiding the ‘exhibition shuffle’ – an overview of innovative exhibition design

The Art Newspaper has published a long essay on good and bad exhibition design at various galleries, looking at issues such as how to get visitors to properly look at smaller objects, avoiding ‘exhibition shuffle’ with large crowds trapped in a queue, and how the right architecture can be a positive disruptor, sending visitors on a non-linear journey. It praises Tate Modern’s recent ‘Picasso 1932: Love, Fame, Tragedy’ as among the quirky and innovative shows ‘whose elements stick in the mind long after they have closed.’ Elsewhere, Scottish museums have been increasingly adding digital immersive elements to exhibition design, and a one-day MA conference ‘Amazing Spaces: New Thinking on Exhibition Design’ looks to the options for the future. [Museums Journal](#) (Exhibition design event), [Experience UK](#) (Scottish immersive museums) [The Art Newspaper](#)

Darwin's handwritten pages from 'On the Origin of Species' and other works receive export bar

Arts Minister Michael Ellis has imposed an export bar on hand drafted pages from works by Charles Darwin – one from 'On the Origin of Species' and two from 'Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals'. Reviewing committee member Peter Barber said "*handwritten drafts of Charles Darwin's books are of the greatest rarity. The few surviving sheets, touched by and written on by him, with evidence of pauses for contemplation, or spurts reflecting the rapid flow of thought, bring one closer to the man and his process of creation than perhaps anything else.*" The three pages are valued separately from £137k - £490k plus VAT and have an export bar until 7th May with a possible extension to 7th September. Gov.uk

Also: Other works to receive export bars this month include John Singer Sargent's FWW painting 'In the Austrian Tyrol' with an asking price of £5.75m + VAT. Gov.uk

Meeting point: developing contemporary artworks in historic settings in the North and Midlands

Arts&Heritage runs projects helping museums and heritage sites to collaborate with contemporary artists. Its new website contains a project section, complete with atmospheric photographs showing how artforms can bring alive the spirit of a historic place. At the Lion Salt Works, visitors were invited to put on a VR headset to watch a dance piece set inside a salt pan, capturing the physicality of the manufacturing process; the Georgian ice house at Norton Priory Museum was home to a large experimental bell made of ice, which released objects and made sounds as it melted. The programme is extending from the North to small and medium sized museums in the Midlands from April, with two upcoming briefing events on 28th March and 8th April. Contact info@artsandheritage.org.uk to express an interest and for details of new opportunities. [Arts&Heritage](#), [Arts&Heritage](#) (current round of commissions)

Caithness Horizons museum closes, but with some chance of being saved

Caithness Horizons museum, based in North East Scotland has closed because of financial difficulties. Last year, it lost its manager and halved curator hours after cuts from Highland Council. It would need an extra £100k to keep going this year, but no definite help has emerged, leading the museum to seek advice on dispersing its collection, which includes Pictish stones and a control room from Dounreay nuclear power complex. However, discussions with the Council continue, and stakeholders still hope to find a way to reopen the museum on a sustainable basis. [Museums Journal](#), [Caithness Horizons](#), [BBC](#)

Deeds not words? – the road to diversifying the cultural sector



The new Exploring East Asia gallery, courtesy of National Museums Scotland.

ACE annual figures show museums' staff diversity in stasis

ACE has published its fourth annual report tracking the diversity of staff at organisations in its 2015 – 18 National Portfolio. Overall, it shows the cultural sector behind the national average in employing a broad range of people, and the museum sector significantly behind the cultural sector average on some measures, particularly in the employment of BME staff. Statistics include:

- 95% of museum staff for whom data is available are white, with BME staff increasing from 4% to 5% since the last report. (This excludes 19% of the museum workforce for whom there is no data.) Across the cultural sector at large, the BME workforce has risen from 11 – 12%. 15% of cultural sector board members are from BME background, compared to 3% in museums.
- The number of disabled workers in museums is static at 4% against a background of around 20% of the whole UK workforce identifying as disabled. There has been a decrease from 4% to 2% of disabled people on museum boards. ACE also continues to receive a high number of 'data unknown' returns on this characteristic.
- LGBT employment in museums is on a par with the UK workforce as a whole at 2% and at 4% in the NPO workforce. However, this is an area with among the largest data gaps, ranging from 40 – 70%.
- Women form a majority of the workforce across the cultural sector: the 2016 – 17 figures for museums are 51% female, 32% male, 13% unstated and 3% prefer not to say. The number of women increases among contract workers and volunteers and also rises to 60% among managers, declining again at Director level.
- At Chief Executive level, there has been a steady rise in female representation across the cultural sector: from 40% in 2015 – 16 to 51% in 2017 – 18. There is a shift, but more imbalance for the post of Chair. Here, the male-female ratio is 59:37.

Writing for the *Guardian*, Clive Nwonka, a fellow in film studies at LSE criticised the 'hyper celebration of the latest initiative' on diversity in the cultural sector and voiced the suspicion that the "diversity agenda [is] performing as a marketing strategy rather than a method of structural transformation." In his introduction to the report, Sir Nicholas Serota said "we recognise the scale of change we want to achieve will take time, but we would like to see the pace of change accelerate so that both the sector and the Arts Council better reflect the diversity of local communities we serve up and down the country." ACE has created a culture change toolkit, offering best practice and case studies to help future recruitment. [M+H](#), [ACE](#) (full report), [Guardian](#), [Museums Journal](#), [ACE](#)

(culture change toolkit), [ACE](#)

Also: ACE is also seeking to broaden the diversity of its own staff with changes including asking people to describe the most relevant experience they have for the job, rather than listing where they went to school or university. It will also offer an interview to any disabled person meeting minimum criteria for a post and broaden the places where posts are advertised. [ACE blog](#)

Culture Club: London Transport Museum bucking the 'who you know' culture in the creative industries

A report entitled 'Culture Club' published by the think tank Centre for London shows similar imbalances in the London creative industries scene which it says continues to be shaped by 'who you know, not what you know' and a disproportionate scarcity of working class and BAME employees. It recommends payment for interns and relationships between industry and educational institutions as a route to a more representative sector. However, the report also praises organisations including London Transport Museum and the Roundhouse which have recognised the problem and created schemes giving young people jobs and training. LTM's programmes include the Young Freelance Programme for degree holders, an apprenticeship programme for those without a degree, the Route into Work scheme for 16 – 25 year olds to help them to prepare to meet employers and the Young Volunteers Programme offering short, meaningful work experience projects. [The Stage](#), [Centre for London](#) (full report), [Arts Industry](#), [LTM](#) (Route into Work)

CIF seeks sector leaders willing to speak in schools for the Creative Careers programme

The Creative Careers Programme is a new initiative with starter funding from DCMS aimed at giving two million young people advice on pursuing a career in the creative industries. The Creative Industries Federation is among the delivery partners and is now seeking sector leaders willing to give time to speak in schools. Those already signed up include actor Toby Jones, Sharon White, Chief Executive of Ofcom and Kenneth Olumuyiwa Tharp, Director of the Africa Centre. There are also opportunities for institutions to open their doors to young people as part of a new national week and spotlight existing work with young people. Email caroline@creativeindustriesfederation.com to discuss the options. [CIF](#)

Culture shaping cities and regions



The new Ancient Egypt gallery, courtesy of National Museums Scotland.

New DCMS economic analysis measures cultural sector growth by region

DCMS has produced a new analysis of its Economic Estimates of GVA for 2017, estimating the size of economic activity and the rate of growth across the sectors which it oversees. The figures for the cultural sector, which includes radio, film and TV as well as museums, libraries and historic buildings show that:

- London is by far the largest region for culture, accounting for 68.1% GVA or £20.1bn. Three fifths of this is the film industry.
- Regions outside London range from the South East with 7.9% of the overall sector contribution to GVA, to Eastern England at 3.5%, 1.6% in Wales and 0.8% in the North East and Northern Ireland.
- However, the strongest growth is in the North West region, which accounts for 4.3% of the sector, with GVA increasing by 48.4% since 2010. London is just behind on growth at 48.1%, but from a much higher baseline.
- Northern Ireland is the only region to shrink since 2010, by 11.7%.

[Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Reports explore how to create thriving cities through culture in the UK – and globally

Cultural and city leaders have produced the 'Cultural Cities' report which asks how cultural assets can be used to drive the inclusive growth of cities. Cities take up only 9% of the landmass of the UK, but produce 60% of jobs and 63% of economic output. It is now acknowledged that culture draws talent to urban areas, improves liveability and can transform a city's tourist economy. For example, since Liverpool was City of Culture in 2008 the number of overnight visitors has doubled. It's also associated with stronger communities and better educational outcomes. The report has several recommendations to build on this trend:

- A 'Cultural City Compact' bringing together partners interested in enhancing the civic role of culture, from businesses and the NHS to the culture sector and universities. Together, these groups can plan projects with measurable outcomes ranging from attracting tourists and international students, to establishing creative clusters and evolving talent.
- Generating investment, with innovations ranging from more contactless giving points, making it easier for the public to instantly donate, to Corporate Social Investment Funds based in cities and making it easier for business to see its corporate giving having measurable local outcomes.
- Money might also be raised by tax reliefs or a tourist levy (the latter has been considered by many cities including Bath, but has not yet been implemented in the UK)
- Creating a portfolio of cultural assets and making sure returns are recycled into the city's cultural ecosystem.

Late last year the World Cities Culture Forum, convened by the Mayor of London published the 'World Cities Culture Report' – an overview of 45 major cities across the world from Lagos and Montreal to London and Dublin, which all see culture as central to city planning. Culture is at the heart of projects to promote community in diversifying cities, revive dull city centres or 'left behind' districts through art, promote opportunity and justice, and prevent rising costs of living and gentrification from squeezing out creative talent. These two reports complement each other in showing the range of strategies being employed, as well as a range of ways in which museums can plug into wider city ecosystems. [Core Cities](#), [Heritage Update](#) (scroll for summary), [World Cities Culture Report](#)

Also: Edinburgh City Council has voted by a large margin to implement a tourist tax, to pay for the impacts of mass tourism. It is hoped it will raise between £11.6m - £14.6m. However, the tax is dependent on the Scottish Parliament passing enabling legislation, which is unlikely to happen before 2020. [BBC](#)

Brexit

Bids for EU funding may end after this month in the event of a No Deal Brexit

The Creative Europe Desk UK has updated its advice about seeking EU funding, given the possibility that the UK will crash out of the EU with No Deal at the end of this month. If the UK reaches a deal with the EU, then bids for EU funding can continue to December 2020 and the successful ones will be underwritten by the UK Government. However, in the event of No Deal, it seems unlikely that any further UK bids will be successful and the Government will not provide alternative money to cultural organisations for bids that they cannot progress. [Arts Professional](#), [Creative Europe Desk](#) (regularly updated advice on Brexit scenarios)

In brief: guidance and comment on Brexit

More detail and comment on Brexit relevant to the cultural sector has emerged this month, including:

- A one-minute film highlighting the issues that the arts and cultural sector should consider when planning for Brexit. [Gov.uk](#)
- The EU has published two documents – one covering travel and tourism post-Brexit, including extra checks on UK nationals, and another advising member states against bilateral trade agreements with the UK. [EU](#) (notes on trade agreements), [EU](#) (travel)
- The Tourism Alliance points to EU regulations around 'package' breaks which it believes have unintended consequences, arguing these could become more flexible under post-Brexit UK legislation. [Tourism Alliance](#)
- However, Womad Director Chris Smith said it is getting harder 'each year' to book acts for the music festival because of Brexit. He said "*lots of artists are finding they can get to Europe but fear taking the next step to the UK, particularly if there is no passport union.*" [Guardian](#)
- Art dealers and UK institutions are rushing to ship artworks well ahead of 29th March to avoid Brexit delays, including The British Council which is sending works for the Venice Biennale. [Art Newspaper](#)
- The House of Commons voted to back a motion by Conservative MP Alberto Costa, calling for the rights of 4.5m citizens whose status is uncertain because of Brexit to be considered separately from the withdrawal agreement. These include 1.5m UK citizens living in Europe and 3m EU citizens in the UK. However, Brussels has rejected this approach. A spokesperson for the European Commission said "*the best way to protect the rights of these 4.5 million people concerned is through the withdrawal agreement. We will not negotiate mini-deals because negotiating such mini-deals outside the withdrawal agreement would imply that the negotiations have failed.*" [Independent](#), [Europe Street News](#)
- The MA has also reiterated its concern for the effects of a No Deal Brexit on the sector. [Museums Journal](#)

Events



Close up in the new Ceramics gallery, courtesy of National Museums Scotland.

Heritage dot: linking digital horizons and cultural heritage

The University of Lincoln is holding an inaugural conference 'Heritage Dot' exploring how emerging digital technology relates to cultural heritage. It will emphasise how partnership between researchers and the cultural sector is increasingly important for success. It will cover topics including tangible and intangible heritage and VR. Speakers already announced include Diane Lees, DG of IWM and Professor Chris Speed, Chair of Design Informatics at the University of Edinburgh as well as representatives of the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Early bird tickets are £120 and there are some bursaries available to cover ticket costs. The event takes place at the University of Lincoln from 3rd – 4th June. [Heritage Dot](#)

Wellbeing, good practice and autism: spring workshops from Kids in Museums

Kids in Museums has announced two new workshops as part of its 2019 programme. Young people and wellbeing has a line up including mental health practitioners and young participants from past programmes, with case studies from Historic Royal Palaces and The Hepworth Wakefield. The event takes place in London on 30th April and tickets are £91. A second event at the Museum of Liverpool on 9th May looks at welcoming people with autism and their families to museum spaces. Tickets are also £91. [Kids in Museums](#) (wellbeing), [Kids in Museums](#) (autism)

Northern Lights: Sparking connections for arts and philanthropy in the North

A one-day conference led by Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy seeks to answer the question 'what does a radical future look like for philanthropy in the arts in the North of England?' Cultural giving is concentrated in London – the conference will ask how to get donors excited about giving in the North, what can be learned from other sectors and how to tell better stories. ACE Chair Sir Nicholas Serota will give an opening speech and there will be a pitch event, where organisations can put their ideas to funders and philanthropists and get feedback. The event is free and takes place at the Stoller Hall in Manchester on 13th March. [Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy](#)

Webinar on changes at the National Lottery Heritage Fund

Last month the Heritage Lottery Fund changed its name to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and announced a series of changes in funding – from simplifying grant processes to regionalisation and an increased interest in parks and nature. Museums + Heritage is offering a free webinar talking through the detail of these changes, with an opportunity to ask questions. It takes place on 11th April from 10.30am. [NMDC](#) (overview), [M+H](#) (overview), [M+H](#) (webinar)

Museums at Night: dates for two festival periods outside London

Culture24 has announced the 2019 dates for its festivals of Lates. There will be two seasons of Museums at Night outside London and in the capital a new Otherworld festival, aimed particularly at 18 – 30 year olds and designed with a view to piloting a sustainable, profitable model. The dates are as follows:

- Spring Museums at Night, 15th – 18th May (outside London)
- Otherworld, 27th – 28th September (London)
- Autumn Museums at Night, 31st October – 2nd November (outside London)

Otherworld is arranged in 'circuits' of five London areas, with participants buying a wristband to attend at multiple venues. [Museums at Night](#) (registration), [Otherworld](#) (how to take part)

GEM spring programme

GEM's spring event programme includes its six-session foundation course, aimed at giving participants a solid grounding in skills for museum learning. It takes place at museums across Manchester from 25th April – 28th June, costing £650. GEM is also running an Essentials of Leadership course at the Discovery Centre, Leeds on 9th April. Tickets are £125 - £160. [GEM](#) (Essentials of leadership), [GEM](#) (museum learning foundation course)

Appointments

ACE has appointed Tonya Nelson as its first ever Director of Arts and Technology Innovation. Nelson co-authored the Culture Is Digital paper for DCMS. [The Stage](#), CHECK ACE

Surveys and networks

Wikisurveys: finding consensus outside the traditional survey structure

Wikisurvey is a frame for finding consensus among a large group of people, in which instead of direct argument, users post statements on a given topic and then other participants vote them up or down. Eventually, popular and unpopular ideas emerge – and users can post new ideas in response to the nuances arising in a conversation. This is a less rigid approach than traditional surveys, allowing respondents as well as the initiating person to set the agenda. Nesta makes the case that Wikisurveys could be used as a route to digital democracy, benefiting from a structure that does not allow disagreements to descend into a Twitter or Facebook-style shouting match. But the tool has a much wider application for any organisation seeking to discover a balance of opinion, or evaluate in new ways. [Nesta](#)

Redefining the museum – what has changed in the 21st century?

Museums have 'transformed, adjusted and reinvented themselves' so much in the past few decades that ICOM no longer believes that its current definition of a museum reflects reality. It is therefore inviting all interested parties to submit their own definition by 20th May. Submissions are being published online – anonymously, but with a note of the countries they came from, which already include Yemen, Mozambique, Serbia, Canada, Poland and Mexico.

- An Italian suggestion is the briefest: 'a mechanism for distilling visions'.
- Elsewhere, in a piece on the evolution of museums Experience UK suggests "*the museum of tomorrow will be an extension of their communities and will put a greater emphasis on delivering value to the groups that they serve through the provision of improved educational, civic and leisure spaces. With the current policy emphasis on reinvigorating the high street, museums are uniquely placed to bring their civic role closer to the communities they serve.*"

- Writing for the Art Fund Museum co-ordinator William Tregaskes anticipates further change: “we have the potential to define museums for a generation. Museums are changing fast; networks are forming across the sector, many are advocating for seismic changes in how we operate and value people.”

ICOM will publish its own revised definition in early September. [NE-MO](#) (overview and submission form), [ICOM](#) (suggestions so far), [Experience UK](#), [Art Fund](#)

Survey: employment of deaf and disabled people in museums

Accentuate UK, which has run a number of projects in the cultural sector to tell the stories of deaf and disabled people, is planning a work placement programme for disabled people who would like to pursue a career in museums. The most recent ACE diversity figures show that only 4% of museum staff are disabled, against a background figure of 20% in the wider workforce. Accentuate has created two five-minute surveys:

- A survey for all museums and heritage sites – asking if and how your institution is approaching this issue (and what would help if not). [Accentuate](#)
- A survey for deaf and disabled people working in the museum and heritage sectors, whether as staff or freelancers. [Accentuate](#)

Responses are anonymous and the deadline for both survey is 15th March. [Accentuate](#), [AIM](#)

Museums and Climate Change Network begins international conversation

The Museums and Climate Change Network has hosted its first 24 hour, international conversation (on the Slack platform) discussing how environmental issues can best be presented in museum exhibitions. It plans to run further events and discussions to share good practice. The group is convened by Jenny Newell, a collections manager at the Australian Museum. You can email her to express an interest at mccnetworknews@gmail.com. Meanwhile think tank IPPR has issued a report ‘This is a Crisis – Facing up to the age of environmental breakdown’. It says that a radical shift in perception needs to take place across political and policy communities. [IPPR](#) (report), [Guardian](#), [BBC](#), [MCCN](#)

Parliamentary inquiry into lessons from the First World War Centenary

The Parliamentary Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee has launched an inquiry into the lessons from the four year commemoration of the First World War, with a particular focus on the arts and education initiatives which aimed to connect young people to those events, rather than the more traditional approaches to commemoration. Written submissions are invited, with a deadline of 15th March at 5pm. [Parliament.uk](#)

British Council APPG opens inquiry into education, culture and relationships with Europe

The British Council All Party Parliamentary Group has opened a new inquiry into the ways that culture and education can be used to maintain and strengthen the UK’s relationships in Europe and in supporting soft power. It is particularly looking to gather evidence of work being done to strengthen bilateral ties in Europe from those expert in the area. The deadline for submissions is 7th April. [British Council](#)

Museums, provenance, restitution and international politics

Museums respond to growing debate about provenance and repatriation

Museums Journal reports that growing numbers of museums are dedicating resources to provenance research and making clear how objects have been acquired, including V&A, Pitt Rivers and the National Museum of Scotland. Meanwhile Manchester Museum is reframing narratives during its refit to reflect more voices from the Global South and there are talks underway about creating a new museum in Glasgow, to examine Scotland’s role in colonialism and the slave trade. Neil Curtis, Head of museums at the University of Aberdeen and member of the MA’s ethics committee reflects on the shift in opinion and argues that “Western moral outrage and simplistic arguments may push repatriation on people faster than they would like, and drown out the subtler – yet powerful – challenges to museum practice made by indigenous people.” He says museums must not ‘deny the legacies that we inherit’ and deal with each request for repatriation as unique rather than with ‘rigid procedures’. [Museums Journal](#) (overview), [Museums Journal](#) (Neil Curtis)

Museum Boards in the age of social media

Focusing on the US, Adrian Ellis, chairman of the Global Cultural Districts Network says that scrutiny of museum boards has increased in an age of social media – with issues including drugs, climate and the political opinions of Board members – all of which have led to protest aimed at museums. He argues: *“effective museum leaders absorb and reconcile contradictory pressures, make and communicate decisions that can secure the assent of their stakeholders and funders, and thereby allow their institutions to pursue their missions. Such tensions are inescapable and managing them is what you do as a museum director.”* He says that these challenges are unlikely to go away, as a culture war plays out ‘with a battle front running right through the museum entrance lobby’. [Art Newspaper](#)

National Army Museum returns locks of hair from Emperor Tewodros to Ethiopia

The National Army Museum will send back locks of hair belonging to the Ethiopian Emperor Tewodros, following a request from the Ethiopian Embassy in 2018. Hair is not regarded as ‘human remains’ under UK Government guidance, but the museum decided to return it because it is ‘an opportunity to do something positive diplomatically with Ethiopia’ – which it is also able to do as NAM can deaccession, unlike some major museums. The hair was cut from the Emperor a few hours after his suicide in 1868 after he lost the battle of Maqdala and was gifted to NAM in 1959. The Ethiopian embassy describes the return as an ‘exemplary gesture of goodwill’. It is uncertain whether the hair will be displayed in the short term on its return to Ethiopia, but ultimately it will be buried with the remains of the Emperor at the Mahabere Selassie Monastery in Qwara. [The Art Newspaper](#)

Funding

New round of BBC commissioning to bring exhibitions and arts to a wider audience

The BBC led commissioning project, The Space, which helps cultural organisations reach a wider audience through digital or broadcast, has opened a new round for 2019. There are two strands:

- The Low Cost R&D strand is supported by ACE and aims to increase the digital reach of arts and collections. Participants can try out experimental approaches and acquire new skills. Museums can apply if the project is ‘primarily arts focused’. Projects will generally be in the region of £5k - £15k, with the organisation providing 25% match funding.
- The Capture strand is a partnership with the BBC to broadcast live arts events. Museums can apply with an arts-centred project and budgets are likely to be in the region of £75k - £120k. Projects are intended to build production and audience development skills in the participating organisations.

The 2019 deadline for applications is noon on 4th April. [The Space](#)

Also: Facebook has announced that it will be introducing new tools to make fundraising easier for non-profits, by including a donation sticker on Instagram Stories. [Facebook](#)

Art Fund launches £150k grants for curatorial networks

The Art Fund has opened a new programme to offer Subject Specialist Networks and other curatorial networks grants to develop and share knowledge and skills. There will be two categories: small grants of less than £5k and large grants of more than £5k. The total pot is £150k. The first deadline for large grants is 24th April – small grants can be applied for at any time. [The Art Fund](#)

Welsh Government contributes £1m to new National Broadcasting Archive for Wales

The Welsh Government has confirmed that it will contribute £1m to a £9m plan to create a National Broadcasting Archive for Wales. The National Library of Wales will now make a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) backed by this support. It is hoped that the archive will also have four public hubs at Aberystwyth, Wrexham, Carmarthen and Cardiff, giving access to 1,500 digital clips dating back to the 1930s and covering events from the Second World War to the miners’ strike and sporting victories. [Wales.gov](#)

Sharing expertise



The new Ceramics gallery, courtesy of National Museums Scotland.

GEM receives NLHF funding to help it offer better heritage learning support

GEM has received £68.5k from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) as part of its Resilient Heritage programme. The funds will allow GEM to transform its governance, create a business plan and improve relationships across all four UK countries. Over the next 18 months it will be consulting its members and is looking to develop new partnerships. GEM's Chair Caroline Marcus said "a *strengthened GEM will be better positioned to support everyone delivering learning programmes in museum and heritage settings*". [GEM](#)

RSA encourages everyone to become 'evidence champions' as it publishes a new handbook

The RSA has published 'The Cultural Learning Evidence Champion's Handbook', a short overview aimed at everyone working in the field. It explains how to gather useful evidence when running a cultural learning event and back it up by reading existing research. RSA argues that evaluation work should not be left only to specialists, but should be seeded across practitioners at all levels. [RSA](#), [Arts Professional](#)

AIM offers new support for Chairs and Vice Chairs of museums

AIM has announced that it will be offering 30 free one-year memberships of the Association of Chairs to AIM member museums in England and Wales which have annual incomes of less than £5m. In Scotland there will be the opportunity for museum Chairs to get support from the Association of Chief Officers of Scottish Voluntary Organisations (ACOSVO). AIM Director Emma Chaplin said "the role of Chair is vitally important to the success of independent museums, so we are delighted to offer Chairs of AIM members this excellent support that is tailored for their role." [AIM](#)

International

'Uncertainty is the new norm' – cultural and international development sectors working together

A new think piece published by the British Council describes how the previously discrete fields of culture and international development are finding common ground. 'Arts, Culture and Development – the Tricky Balancing Act' describes how society as experienced by both sectors is becoming more complex and unpredictable, with 'ripple effects' of events felt across the globe and a 'sense from communities that they are losing control over local affairs'. Meanwhile both cultural institutions and development charities are shifting from a model of being the experts offering decisive interventions (whether that's a museum exhibition or deciding where to dig a well) to more collaborative activity with communities. The piece argues that culture can usefully be harnessed for development ends, helping 'large scale organisation to shift the balance towards a more flexible, mutual and sustainable model'. [British Council](#)

Becoming an international brand: National Gallery plans retail strategy for the US

The National Gallery is laying plans to sell a variety of goods in the US branded with its identity, both through ecommerce and in shops. It has appointed a New York based licensing agency, The Wildflower Group to develop this. TWG founder Michael Carlisle said *"The National Gallery offers a unique heritage brand with deep assets and priceless authenticity."* [ALVA](#)

Awards



Grand Gallery, courtesy of National Museums Scotland.

Hearts for the Arts celebrates local authorities which support the arts

The Campaign for the Arts has announced the winners of its annual Hearts for the Arts awards, which celebrate local councils and their officers who are overcoming financial problems to support good arts projects. Winners include:

- Torbay Council's 'Tattoo Tales' project, which was awarded Best Local Authority Arts initiative. The project collected stories about Torbay's tattoo culture from local residents, complementing the exhibition 'Tattoo: British Tattoo Art Revealed' at Torre Abbey Museum.
- Middlesbrough Council won Best Arts Project Encouraging Community cohesion with 'Erimus' – a dance performance created with Southpaw Dance Company and featuring 75 people from the local community.
- Mayor David Budd from Middlesbrough Council and Officer Kirstie Wilson from Kirklees Council's library service also won individual awards.

[Campaign for the Arts](#)

Beamish staff member on the shortlist for Visit England's Tourism Superstar

Visit England is inviting votes for its Tourism Superstar 2019, with a shortlist of ten presenters, guides and front of house staff across English visitor attractions. Emily Hope, Project Officer (and occasional Edwardian suffragette) at the Beamish Museum and Ryan Sanders, Visitor Experience Assistant at Brunel's SS Great Britain are among the shortlist. The vote is open until 2nd April.

[Mirror](#), [Beamish](#), [Taitmail](#)

Education

Royal Society and others call for a broad arts and science curriculum for all to 18

A broad range of interest groups including MPs, the Royal Society, CBI and Edge Foundation are calling for a radical rethink of secondary school education, with some suggesting abandoning GCSEs at 16 – described as a hangover from the time when that was the presumed school leaving age - and replacing them with a much broader based Baccalaureate at 18 encompassing arts and sciences. Royal Society President Venki Ramakrishnan said *"I am a scientist so you would expect me to say that everyone should be studying science and maths through age 18, but they need to sit alongside subjects like English, history, geography, modern languages and the arts as part of a new style of education that is available to everyone."* Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's Chief Inspector of Schools recently argued against a narrowing of subjects before 14. She said *"it really does pain me to think about how many potential historians, artists, linguists, musicians and designers we've lost because we made them drop subjects almost before they'd begun, so they may never have discovered their talents in them."* However, she defended the Ebacc and the importance of a 'core curriculum' of academic subjects. [CLA](#), [CLA](#), [Gov.uk](#) (Amanda Spielman speech), [Royal Society](#)

Humanising the digital – embedding the robots

Let's Get Real 6 looks at democratising museums' digital space

Culture24 has published a report on the sixth round of its Let's Get Real programme in which cultural organisations ask a question on a digital theme and then answer it by running practical experiments. This sixth round looked at 'connecting digital practice with social purpose'. The resulting report does not focus on 'statistics and benchmarks', but is fascinating in charting how the practice of institutions is evolving in line with broader social change. Ideas discussed in the report include:

- 'Digital democracy'. This has a very broad range of interpretations and is coloured by the rise of online activism. For participating museums, projects included experiments in letting go of control of digital platforms to give more interactivity to users. For example, the Barbican and Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft offered their Instagram platforms for the discussion of socially important questions. The Barbican received a 'phenomenal response' to the prompt 'if I could change one thing in the arts...' and is now considering how to action the often emotional and in-depth feedback. Similarly, the Wellcome Collection giving a platform to disabled people so that they could share their priorities.
 - Digital can be used for place making, for example the Bristol ParkHive app, which offers a guide to the city's 200 green spaces helping people to make better use of natural world around them.
 - Digital can also be used as social connector – the National Gallery used the Meet Up platform to encourage people who might not usually attend to come for events mixing fun, looking at art and conversation. It evolved the work drawing from ideas from the Campaign to End Loneliness.
- However, the report also looks at how digital can exclude people in ways that 'privileged, able, confident users of technology can sometimes miss'. It is estimated that 4.3 million adults have 'zero

basic digital skills' and a further 11.2m lack core knowledge necessary to benefit from the web. This includes 3% of 15 – 24 year olds. For example, Reading Museum commented that for a project "we had to plan around Looked After children not having access to social media themselves." [Culture24](#)

The robots are coming (and building their own museums)

The design for the new Robot Science Museum in Seoul has been unveiled and appropriately, much of the structure will be built by robots. As well as moulding, welding, assembling and polishing much of the building they will also 3D print the concrete landscape around the museum. Drones will also be used to control robotic construction vehicles. Architect Melike Altınbilek said that the new museum would "not only... exhibit robots, but actually from the design, manufacturing to construction and services robots will be in charge. The Robot Science Museum will start its first exhibition with its own construction by robots on site". The museum is planned to be completed by 2022 – there is currently debate about whether robot workers will save 'time and money' compared with human workers, or if pursuing such novel technology will slow the build. [Dezeen](#), [Smithsonian](#)

ArtsPay survey shows that senior staff in cultural organisations are remote from digital

Data gathered as part of the ArtsPay 2018 survey tracked the job content of senior staff in developmental roles at cultural organisations. It found that 76% were involved in fundraising, 73% in HR and half in marketing, but that only 17% had web or digital work as part of their job. This may reduce effectiveness in embracing opportunities: in a Nesta survey published in 2017 only 19% of all respondents to the survey felt confident that senior management are knowledgeable about digital. Digital workers themselves tend to be better paid than average for their seniority, but only 6% of sector jobs are full time digital specialists. [Arts Professional](#)

Also: DCMS has announced the creation of new higher degrees in AI at 16 centres based at UK universities. The plan is to eventually produce thousands of graduates in AI technology. Digital Secretary Jeremy Wright said 'we want to keep up this momentum and cement our reputation as pioneers in AI.' [Gov.uk](#)

Some Glasgow museums remortgaged by the City Council to settle bill in equal pay dispute

Glasgow City Council will make compensation payouts of £548m shared between 12,500 mostly female staff after it was ruled that they received lower pay than men in similarly graded roles over a 12 year period. The Council intends to find the funds for this by remortgaging a number of buildings belonging to the city including Riverside Museum and Glasgow Museums Resource Centre. However, historically significant buildings including Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum will not be remortgaged. [Museums Journal](#)

Jobs

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

- [Programme Manager: Collection - The British Museum](#)
- [Assistant Director and Head of Operations - Museum of Science and Industry](#)
- [Senior Digital Transfer Adviser - National Archives](#)
- [Deputy Head of Learning and Engagement \(Health and Wellbeing\) - National Galleries Scotland](#)
- [Archivist - National Railway Museum](#)

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

And finally...

I feel the earth move under my feet...

Two contrasting interactive maps show us the persistence of the intangible - and the impermanence of everything. *The New York Times* has produced maps to show the regional home of dialect words in the US and UK and Ireland – asking, for example, whether you use baby, sprog or nipper, and does the child play it, tag or tig?

Eventually of course, with migration and the turnover of generations, these groupings of words will shift. A second interactive reminds us that the same applies to the ground beneath our feet. Put your

postcode into 'Ancient Earth' and watch as your address shifts from somewhere on Pangaea land or its vast ocean 750 million years ago, dances around the hemispheres, paddles in shallow seas or perches on top of mountains, before temporarily settling down to the quiet suburban existence of now. [Smithsonian](#) (Ancient Earth), [New York Times](#) (UK and Ireland dialect map)

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