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Members' news



Trix the T Rex on loan from the Netherlands and showing in Glasgow until July. c. CGG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection.

The Art of Innovation: BBC and Science Museum join forces for new broadcast

The BBC and Science Museum Group are collaborating on a public programme exploring the relationship of art and science over the past 250 years. 'The Art of Innovation: From Enlightenment to Dark Matter' will include an exhibition opening on 25th September and a 20-part major BBC Radio 4 series, presented by SMG Director Sir Ian Blatchford and Head of Collections Dr Tilly Blyth. The radio series, which airs from 16th September, will be recorded in part on location at historic sites with relevant collections: beginning with a look at Joseph Wright's 1766 painting 'A Philosopher Giving A Lecture On The Orrery' at Derby Museums and later visiting Ironbridge Gorge and Paddington Station. Ian Blatchford said "*this bold project with the BBC is a timely exploration of the ways that artists and scientists have been driven by curiosity to make sense of what they see around them.*" [BBC Media Centre](#)

Artemisia on prescription: National Gallery £3.6m masterpiece on show at GP's in Yorkshire

The National Gallery acquired a self-portrait of the 17th century artist Artemisia Gentileschi in 2018 as part of its 'long-held dream' of owning more works by women. Now the painting continues to break new ground as part of an unusual touring programme and is currently on display at the Pocklington Group GP Practice in East Yorkshire. The painting adorns the waiting room, surrounded by interpretation panels. Managing partner at the practice Berni Judge said "*people are just really amazed to see such a painting in a setting like this and have asked why it's here. There is lots and lots of excitement. Everyone has taken time to go and have a look at her.*" Non-patients are also welcome to view the painting at set times. *Guardian* critic Jonathan Jones agrees that the work fits well in a medical practice, particularly given the painter's gruelling life experiences: "*her Self Portrait is the testimony of a woman who went through hell and survived. She looks back at you, feeling your sorrow, sharing hers. This is a great experiment that redeems art from its prison of rarefied irrelevance.*" The painting moves in mid-May to be shown at a girls' school and will later be on display as part of Waltham Forest Borough of Culture. [Telegraph](#), [National Gallery](#), [Guardian](#)

Also: The National Portrait Gallery's 'Coming Home' project has now begun, sending nine portraits of significant figures to the regions with which they are most closely connected. Dylan Thomas is currently on show at the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery in Swansea and King Richard III will be at the New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester from June. [NPG](#)

Images the month: Trix on the move

Kelvin Hall in Glasgow is currently home to a 39 foot long, 66 million year old real T-Rex female. Nicknamed Trix, the enormous skeleton is touring the world while her home institution, the Naturalis Biodiversity Center in the Netherlands is being redeveloped. The visit has also overlapped for five weeks with a visit from NHM's diplodocus cast Dippy, offering Glaswegians the opportunity for a major dinosaur binge. [Glasgow Live](#), [Glasgow Evening Times](#),

Awards

Museum of the Year shortlist – from a battleship to a Prince's court

The Art Fund's shortlist for Museum of the Year 2019 has been announced, with museums included from all four UK countries. The finalists are:

- The HMS Caroline in Belfast. The ship survived the 2016 battle of Jutland and has been restored in a £20m project with oversight from the National Museum of the Royal Navy.
- Nottingham Contemporary, which has achieved an audience of two million and a worldwide reputation since it opened a decade ago.
- Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford which has recently been rethinking how it offers access to objects and works with communities, evolving a museum first opened in 1884 to address modern concerns.
- St Fagan's National Museum of History, which tells the story of pre-industrial Wales and completed a £30m development in 2018 which added new galleries and workshops.
- V&A Dundee, which opened in September 2018 showing historic and contemporary design and providing a new popular civic space in the city.

The Guardian asked a group of well-known figures for responses to each of the five museums on the shortlist. Broadcaster Kirsty Wark said that at V&A Dundee “visitors have been phenomenal because people go to enjoy the building as well as see the exhibits...[it] has quickly become a valued place of community, identity and gathering”. Art historian Nana Oforiatta Ayim who has been involved in work to decolonise museum narratives praised the Pitt Rivers as “one of the first to be so constructive in trying to sow the seeds of a new kind of museum...[it] is engaging with people who represent the original context of the objects, for example those from Maasai communities, on equitable terms, rather than as one-off encounters”. Actor Matthew Rhys remembers visiting St Fagan’s as a child and is impressed by its newly recreated 13th century Prince’s court, adding that “the way that the museum has engaged with Welsh history means an inordinate amount to the country and how it sees itself”. The winning entry will be announced on 3rd July. [Guardian](#), [Art Fund](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Investing in regional museums

Hull City Council plans to invest £10m to improve maritime museum and attractions

Hull City Council is preparing to make a major investment in maritime attractions in the city, including its Maritime Museum, North End Shipyard and two historic ships. It hopes that the work will bring an extra 300,000 visitors to the city, generating £2.9m each year. The whole scheme will cost £27.5m which it hopes to largely cover with a grant application to NLHF plus £10m from its own funds. The City’s Director of Regeneration, Mark Jones said “we are determined to drive forward further regeneration, making Hull a better place to live, learn and work”. [ALVA](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Also: Three theatres and a museum belonging to Worthing Borough Council have charitable trust. The decision comes at the end of a five-year development programme which led to a growth in footfall and audiences. [Arts Industry](#)

Invitation to picnic on the ‘Costa del Wakefield’ as new garden opens at the Hepworth

Meanwhile the Hepworth Wakefield has opened a new 4,000sq m garden on vacant land adjacent to its site. The project, which cost £1.8m was paid for in part through winning Museum of the Year in 2018 as well as with £500k from ACE. The designer is Tom Stuart-Smith, who took advantage of ‘Costa del Wakefield’s’ relatively arid climate when planning the garden which includes a mixture of oaks, cherry trees, magnolias and sumac shrubs. It will also feature a changing group of sculptural works and picnics will be encouraged on the grass. Smith praised the Hepworth for conceiving the project saying “it’s pretty rare that there is an example of an institution that’s prepared to stick its neck out like this and improve a bit of public realm and offer to curate it as well.” Hepworth Director Simon Wallis said that the new area will be one of the largest free gardens in the UK and also create ‘a world-class green space in this post-industrial part of the city’. [Guardian](#)

Kirklees Council plans new Huddersfield Museum as part of town centre regeneration plan

Kirklees Council is planning to turn Huddersfield and its surrounding area into an arts and heritage hub in a £70m regeneration plan which will include a new town museum. In 2016 the council closed Red House Museum in Gomersal and Dewsbury Museum following budget cuts: the new plan now being discussed by an advisory group will consider all remaining museum sites, including Tolson Memorial Museum which has had an uncertain future since the 2016 closures. The Council is hoping that a £25m bid to the Government’s High Street Fund will kick off the project. Kirklees’ Director of economy and infrastructure Karl Battersby said “this is an opportunity we had to grasp with both hands... Bringing better culture and leisure experiences to the town centre is crucial to increasing footfall and attracting more visitors. Town centres can no longer rely on retail alone.” [Museums Journal](#)

Events



c. CGG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection

Learning from the new RA: one year on

In 2018, the Royal Academy completed what it describes as the biggest transformation in its 250 year history. As well as a capital project opening up new spaces, it also developed an exhibition and activities around its first free collection, digitised its historic holdings and created a learning programme. The RA is now inviting sector professionals for a free afternoon to learn from its experience, including workshops, a panel discussion, tours and a drinks reception. The event takes place on 21st May from 2.30pm, pre-booking is essential. [RA](#), [RA](#) (RA250 overview)

View from the Top: senior managers discuss commercial challenges

The Association for Cultural Enterprises is holding its annual 'View from the Top' event, at which senior managers from cultural attractions discuss their financial challenges, successes and plans for the future. Speakers this year include DG Diane Lees, describing how IWM is repositioning itself as a charity rather than a national museum; Tank Museum senior management discussing how to increase visitors against a background of lower funding and 'Brexit-related tourism issues' and Nick Merriman on addressing diversity and financial security at the Horniman Museum. The event takes place at the Wellcome Collection on 21st May. Tickets range from £120 for members to £275 for non-members. [Association for Cultural Enterprises](#)

Arts in health 'Framing the Future'

To mark the 60th anniversary of Paintings in Hospitals the organisation is holding a panel event 'Framing the Future' exploring the past, present and future of arts in health. Speakers include Dr Val Huet, CEO of the British Association of Art Therapists and former Culture Minister Ed Vaizey MP. The event takes place on 13th May at the Royal College of Physicians, tickets are £15. [Paintings in Hospitals](#)

York Festival of Ideas

York Museums Trust is among the partners in the York Festival of Ideas, which brings together partners from across the region including the university, arts organisations and historic sites, blending art, science, history and modern civic concerns throughout June. Festival focus days, which group events around a single theme include 'Toleration - an outdated concept?' (9th June), 'A date with history: fashion, food and feminism' (15th June) and 'The Poetry and Music of Science (16th June). Participants can also be bathed in Newtonian light at St Mary's Church and learn more about the Periodic Table through the medium of macrame. [York Festival of Ideas](#)

GEM Conference 2019

GEM's 2019 conference is on the topic of 'forging dynamic and lasting partnerships with communities'. The conference takes place from 11th – 13th September at Torquay Museum. Tickets range from £100 - £490. [GEM](#)

Artists and museums working together

'The Artist Researcher: artists and museums working together' looks at the opportunities for smaller museums in particular to build and manage relationships with contemporary visual artists. It draws on recent experiences of residencies, including one at the Horniman Museum. The event takes place at the Foundling Museum on 7th June. Tickets are £20. [Artquest](#)

Contemporary art in the heritage experience

The two-day conference 'Contemporary art in the heritage experience' looks at placing contemporary artistic works at heritage sites and the effects on audiences and the producers themselves. Speakers include John Orna-Ornstein, Director of Culture and Engagement at the National Trust and Jenny Waldman, Director of 14 – 18 NOW. Early bird tickets are £150 until the end of May (£60 for freelancers and students). The conference takes place at Newcastle University on 29th – 30th July. [NCL](#)

Durham Commission lecture series on creativity in education

The Durham Commission on Creativity in Education has been running since 2017, is expected to produce a report this autumn, and is holding a related lecture series in the run up to the launch. Sir Nicholas Serota's talk 'The Creative Opportunity' has already taken place and is now available online, while Professor Bill Lucas will be discussing 'Creativity – what is it – does it matter – how can schools teach it – can it be assessed?' at Durham University Business School from 6pm on 16th May. Tickets are free. [Durham University](#) (Lucas lecture) [Durham Commission](#) (full Serota lecture)

Connecting Culture: Europe – exploring commercial partnerships and opportunities

The DTI and Experience UK are hosting a conference bringing together museum professionals, designers and the companies that help create museum attractions to consider opportunities across Europe. The Touring Exhibition Group's Charlotte Dew will be leading a panel exploring how to develop international partnerships. Other speakers include Brad Irwin, Head of International Partnerships at NHM and Maren Krumdieck Head of Cultural and Commercial Partnerships at the Science Museum. DTI representatives will be on hand to offer country-specific advice for nations across Europe. The conference also marks the launch of 'MuseumINSIDER; a publication listing 70 museum and heritage capital projects happening across Europe in the next seven years which may offer opportunities for UK talent. The event takes place at the Natural History Museum on 14th May. Tickets are £130 - £150. [Experience UK](#)

Philanthropy

V&A collaborates with Sir Elton John on long-term photography collections project

Sir Elton John and his husband David Furnish are beginning a long-term collaboration with the V&A, including making a significant donation. V&A's photography gallery which opened in autumn 2018 gives access to its 800,000 strong collection, while Sir Elton owns a collection of 7,000 photographs spanning from the early 20th century to the present. The partnership will include an exhibition from Sir Elton's collection as well as new acquisitions and commissions. Gallery 101 in the Photography Centre will be renamed 'The Sir Elton John and David Furnish Gallery'. Sir Elton said "*for me and David, this commitment to education and mission to celebrate the medium, presents a perfect partnership. The new Photography Centre, along with the 2022 extension, will not only elevate photography but it will help foster new artists, patrons and collectors, like myself.*" [M+H](#), [ALVA](#), [Guardian](#)

Stagecoach withdraws as Turner Prize funder after one day

Stagecoach withdrew as funder of the 2019 Turner Prize one day after its support was announced, following criticism of the anti-gay rights politics of Stagecoach founder Brian Souter. Tate said "*the Turner Prize celebrates the creative freedoms of the visual arts community and our wider society. By mutual agreement, we will not proceed with Stagecoach South East's sponsorship of this year's prize.*" Stagecoach said it was 'absolutely committed to diversity in our company' but that it did not want to distract from the celebration of the Turner Prize and its artists. [Arts Industry](#), [Art Newspaper](#), [Art Newspaper](#), [Guardian](#)

Developing the cultural sector workforce



c. CGG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection

New Parliamentary Group launches to promote diversity in the creative sector

Former Culture Minister Ed Vaizey MP is chairing a new Creative Diversity All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) to 'identify and tackle obstacles to diversity in the creative sector'. It has come at a time when reports continue to track the stasis in diversifying the creative sector, despite many initiatives aimed at opening up opportunity. [Arts Professional](#)

Film shows Cornwall museums opening up the sector through new recruitment

Cornwall Museums Partnership's NPO programme has created 20 jobs, five apprenticeships and five internships as well as a Citizen Curators scheme, all aimed at diversifying the staff of Cornwall museums and giving new routes into the profession. This work has developed in response to ACE's 'Character Matters' report. CMP has now produced a short film interviewing many of those involved, showing the benefits for museums, their volunteers and employees. Bennath Jewell is a Customer Services Apprentice at the Museum of Cornish Life and says 'I feel like I'm contributing more if I'm working alongside learning as well'. Her boss Annette McTavish says 'she has helped us think who comes to the museum and the welcome we give them'. It's evident throughout the film that for museums it has brought in perspectives of both previously unengaged younger and older people, with impacts on interpretation and plans for attracting visitors. [CMP](#) (six minute film), [ACE](#) (Character Matters report)

Can you help? Waltham Forest seeks placement opportunities for its Cultural Leaders programme

Waltham Forest is the first ever London Borough of Culture and will hold the title throughout 2019. Alongside cultural events it is running a Cultural Leadership Programme, which will help 100 Waltham Forest residents aged 16 - 25 from diverse backgrounds gain the skills to become the next generation of cultural leaders. The programme plans to give opportunities to those under-represented in the creative industries, particularly BAME groups, women and those from working class backgrounds. The Borough is now seeking learning opportunities for their cohort within a reasonable commute from Waltham Forest. These could include work experience placements, shadowing opportunities, places on existing courses, skills workshops, artist talks or mentoring opportunities. If your museum or gallery can help with any of this - or if you would simply be prepared to have a further chat, please contact Sharie.Omoragbon@walthamforest.gov.uk or Michael.Christov@walthamforest.gov.uk.

EU settlement scheme toolkit for employers

The Government has published a toolkit aimed at employers of EU nationals who may be interested in applying to the EU Settlement Scheme. Citizens of EU and EEA countries plus Switzerland need to apply if they wish to preserve the rights they currently have post-Brexit. There will be no change to the rights of EU citizens living in the UK until 30 June 2021. [Gov.uk](#)

£3m second round of Elevate fund open to non-NPO museums

ACE has opened a second round of its 'Elevate' fund which encourages the creation and development of organisations run by BAME and disabled people. The fund is open to non-NPO museums and galleries, which can apply for between £75k - £100k. The deadline for expressions of interest is 23rd May. [Arts Industry](#)

Coasts to countryside: programming for universal reach

Bridging 'them and us' – exploring the success of FWW commemorations

The thinktank British Future has published a report 'Crossing Divides – how arts and heritage can help bring us together'. It focuses on the 14 – 18 NOW programme, arguing that its work to commemorate the First World War was exceptional in bringing together people across social and political divides in an otherwise increasingly polarised country. It argues that *"it is near impossible for the arts to build bridges while practitioners and audiences are drawn heavily from the wealthier and more educated sections of society... 14 – 18 NOW did reach new audiences."* One partner organisation wrote *"the Poppies had huge popularity from the Tower installation, so when they came here on tour there was genuine excitement and pride that the artwork was sited here. Local press and word-of-mouth meant that we had very high visitor numbers, many of whom weren't conventional exhibition goers."* With other festivals and commemorations on the horizon, it suggests a number of lessons to be learned:

- Many events were free, there was a wide range of artforms and a 'real commitment to fill gaps in geographic coverage', with 81% of events taking place outside London. The national story was complemented by creating events with local connections.

- Local partner organisations worked with schools and communities and promotional material resonated with people less likely to engage with the arts.
- Consultation before the programme allowed partners to consider the risks – for example, that the programme might promote jingoism and increase exclusion. Instead, events were created that put ordinary people at the heart of the story, and which pointed to the contribution of soldiers from the Empire. This again helped shape a narrative which involved everybody. One participant from the study's Leicester focus group said "*The older generation of Sikhs, they were aware of it, but the younger generation not so much. I didn't learn it from my grandparents... it was recently through social media I started seeing people posting all these things that had happened in the FWW and it was like 'oh my gosh, I never knew that.'*"
- Much of the work provoked communication between strangers, such as the costumed soldiers at railway stations for Jeremy Deller's 'We're Here Because We're Here' – a project that attracted the help of 2,000 volunteers. Other works like 'PROCESSIONS' and 'Pages of the Sea' required active participation by the audience.

By using the principle of taking time, working with local partners and building trust, it was possible for 14 – 18 NOW to create positive events in Northern Ireland where the potential for counterproductive consequences was high. With 74% of those surveyed agreeing that 'British society is divided' the report argues that "*the experience of 14 – 18 NOW was that culture could confidently explore themes of war, peace and social change in ways that found common ground between our identity tribes. Rather than fighting this 'culture war' we could choose instead to make the deeper connections needed to defuse one.*" [British Future](#)

Liking it beside the seaside: cultural regeneration from Brighton to Thanet

A new House of Lords report 'The future of seaside towns' has emphasised the importance of culture as a means of regeneration. It describes Brighton as the nation's most successful seaside town, noting how it reinvented itself after decline in the 70s and early 80s with a USP as a 'culture city with creative businesses.' More recently Thanet grew its creative businesses by 84% from 2013 – 2016, following deliberate investment in the arts. The report acknowledges that no single change will transform a seaside town, and many struggle with 'end of the line' poor transport links and bad housing, the latter often multiple occupancy housing lived in by a transient population of people squeezed out from everywhere else. However, ACE is among the bodies supporting regeneration and has given £64m to projects in seaside towns in its 2018 – 22 portfolio. [Arts Professional, Parliament.uk](#) (full report)

Also: The Government has announced recipients of the fifth round of the Coastal Communities Fund and third round of the Coastal Revival Fund, together worth £36m. Museums have been among those receiving support, including Blackpool Museum and Fleetwood Museum. [Museums Journal](#)

Interested audiences but thinner infrastructure: ACE publishes a statement on rural arts

ACE has launched an updated position statement on the rural arts, which will shape its policy for a year until its new ten-year plan is launched. It draws attention to some of the factors shaping rural communities as well as offering a short directory of partnerships in place to improve current provision:

- 17.6% of the population live in rural areas. There is less social mobility and in general people over 45 are moving to rural areas, with largely only 17 – 20 year olds, typically with higher educational attainment, deciding to move out to urban areas.
- There is a relatively low number of rurally based NPOs and thus less cultural infrastructure. However, the resources that are there are well used – rural people are around 5% more likely to be involved in creative activity and arts attendance, and visit museums a similar amount to urban and suburban audiences.
- Local government spend on the arts, which is under pressure everywhere, is even lower in predominantly rural areas with cuts of 32.7% compared to 25.5% cuts in urban areas.
- The document lists many of the multi-partner initiatives operating across rural regions, such as the Rural Diversity Network set up by Cornwall Museums Partnership.

[ACE](#) (blog), [ACE](#) (revised position statement)

Climate: exhibitions and activism

Environmental leadership accelerator programme: second round now open

ACE and Julie's Bicycle have launched the second round of their environmental sustainability Accelerator programme for cultural organisations. The selected cohort of ten organisations will work from April 2020 – September 2021 to turn ambitious ideas into practical projects, backed up by a training programme, expert mentoring and one-to-one support. Currently the first group is developing projects with topics including new goods created from festival waste, green tourism, city-wide carbon reduction and working with artists within a circular economy. Applicants for the second round undertake a three-stage process: an expression of interest by 7th June, a half day workshop in July and a full proposal by 14th October. Simon Curtis of the Manchester Arts Sustainability Team, which is part of the first cohort said "*Accelerator is enabling MAST to embark on our biggest project: the zero-carbon future of culture in our city and region. The wealth of experience and encouragement from the Julie's Bicycle team is brilliant, as is our connection to the other cohort members as we learn and develop together.*" [Julie's Bicycle](#)

Also: Black Country Living Museum has chosen a design for its new £6m visitor centre that emphasises sustainability and low energy demand. Features include daylight penetration, rainwater harvesting and recharging points for electric vehicles. [M+H](#)

From aquariums to the 'aroma of extinct plants': the rise of climate in US museum exhibitions

The New York Times reports that there is a growing trend for US museums and galleries to stage exhibitions framed around the climate, with a number of groundbreaking shows opening this summer. These include the New York Historical Society's 'Hudson Rising' which will show aquariums, political leaflets, music and video alongside works of art; the University of Colorado Art Museum addressing the topic through the work of 30 contemporary and historic artists and a show about the science, art and design of stopping climate change simultaneously on at the Cooper Hewitt in New York and Cube Design Museum in the Netherlands. The latter includes the live and growing 'Tree of 40 fruit' by artist Sam van Aken and by contrast a 'smells series' by a trio of olfactory artists, recreating the aroma of now-extinct flowers, which they drew from specimens at the Harvard University Herbaria. Erin Espile of the University of Colorado says that art museums can be an ideal venue to begin to grapple with pressing issues of climate, "*bringing people together outside political affiliation and into a different environment that allows for more empathy.*" [New York Times](#), [New York Historical Society](#), [Tree of 40 Fruit](#), [Colorado Art Museum](#), [Cooper Hewitt](#)

Museums among cultural sector bodies declaring a climate emergency

In early April a wave of museums, arts sector bodies and individuals joined the newly formed 'Culture Declares Emergency' movement; with many participating in a march through London. Early signatories included Battersea Arts Centre, the Museum of Liverpool, National Theatre Wales, Shakespeare's Globe and the Happy Museum. Pointing to the IPCC's statement that there is a 12-year window to make 'urgent and unprecedented changes' Happy Museum said "*there is increasing interest in the potential for museums and cultural organisations (encompassing arts, science, heritage & place) to catalyse civic engagement and place-based activism in this frame.*" The MA has also signed up. Director Sharon Heal said "*museums have a threefold role to play. We can use our natural history and science collections to highlight the impact of climate change; we can use our spaces to involve and activate our communities; and we can be greener ourselves.*" [Happy Museum](#), [M+H](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Museums Journal](#) (MA signs up)

Also: The National Trust has also reiterated its commitment to working towards a goal of zero emissions by 2050, and has joined 'The Time Is Now', a 'mass lobby for climate and environmental action' with a major event planned on 26th June. Practically, the Trust is planting new woodlands, protecting existing carbon stores such as mudflats and peatlands and has made the 50th renewable energy installation at its properties. It says "*the path to net zero emissions is untrodden. But we are walking it shoulder to shoulder with many businesses, local councils, cities and countries.*" [National Trust](#), [Guardian](#)

Climate protesters stage 'die ins' at museums across the country

During April, museums across the country became sites for 'die ins' by branches of the protest group Extinction Rebellion. The protests lasted around 20 minutes in the Hintze Hall at the Natural History Museum, outside Tate Modern, where the focus was on bee colony destruction and at Kelvingrove Art Gallery, where protesters used Dippy the Dinosaur as a backdrop to highlight the danger of extinction, holding signs asking 'are we next?' Tate responded by correcting XR's misconception that its founder Henry Tate had built his fortune on slavery, but added that it is committed to reducing its environmental impact and *"is a public space and we support the right to peacefully protest there, so we support protestors this weekend drawing attention to critical issues such as colony collapse."* [Art Newspaper](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Glasgow Evening Times](#)

Funding



c. CGG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection

UK local authorities spend less on culture than 'almost any country in Europe'

Data produced by the Budapest Observatory measuring cultural spend since 2004 shows that the UK spends one of the lowest proportions of GDP on culture compared with 29 other European countries and is bottom in terms of local authority spend. Figures show:

- The UK spent around 0.3% of GDP on culture in 2014 – 17 – with only Cyprus, Ireland, Portugal and Greece investing less.
- In the last few years 11 post-communist EU countries have invested at a significantly faster rate than the West with Hungary, Latvia and Estonia at or exceeding 1%. The report suggests that this is partly for historical reasons – culture is important for nation building, and partly because in a country with lower GDP the state has to invest more to achieve the same effects as in the most prosperous parts of Europe.
- The UK's local authority budget for culture is just over 1%, compared with over 6% in Latvia and over 4% in France, making the UK's spend the lowest in Europe. In most countries, local authority funding has grown faster than central spend, but in the UK it has fallen from €4bn in 2004 to just under €2.8bn in 2017.
- The report also expresses concern about Greece, also towards the bottom for investment on most metrics, asking *"how can all those Greek museums, excavation sites, theatres and festivals*

etc. be run with a constant 0.1% of GDP?"

The report acknowledges that an 'efficient' spend can be as important as the actual amounts invested and that 'bureaucracy, protocol...prestige projects and other nonsense' can sometimes mean that more is less. [Arts Professional](#), [Budapest Observatory](#)

Also: *The Guardian* has also gathered together statistics published in reports from the past two years emphasising the extent of the cuts to museums outside London, especially those run by local authorities. Ian Watson, libraries and museums manager at Lancashire county council said *"there's no statutory requirement for local authorities to have a museum, so it can make them an easy target when cuts need to be made, but we need to have a wider understanding of what museums are for – they contribute massively to the community and quality of life. They are not just buildings full of stuff. Otherwise museums close, as has happened here."* Meanwhile, figures published by the SNP reveal that Scotland's spending on culture has fallen by almost 3% in three years since 2016. [Guardian](#), [Arts Professional](#)

'Austerity is not yet over for the arts' despite report showing the importance of the sector

ACE has published a new report showing how the arts sector continues to grow in size and importance. It is estimated to add £10.8bn to the economy based on data from 2016, making it bigger than the agricultural sector, or about the same size as the economies of Liverpool or Sheffield. However, at the same time around 74% of arts organisations have been affected by public funding cuts. Reported effects include:

- 37% of organisations said they had become more risk averse
- 54% had been unable to compensate for the loss of public money, with many reducing staff or freezing wages.

Speaking as the report launched ACE Chair Sir Nicholas Serota said *"there comes a point when you cannot live without some form of investment and both local authorities and national government need to find ways of making that investment. The prime minister declared that austerity was over: austerity is certainly not over yet for the arts and I hope that we'll see some change."* [M+H](#), [ACE](#) (press release), ACE (full report), [Guardian](#)

Towards a ten-year plan – ACE's evolving policy

ACE suggests that the museum sector needs to develop sustained engagement beyond annual visits

Speaking at the 2019 Ideas Summit, ACE's Simon Mellor has outlined some of the issues shaping ACE's new ten-year strategy, to be published this autumn. These include:

- to receive funding, high quality work alone will not be enough, instead *"relevance is becoming the new litmus test...you will need to be able to demonstrate that you are also facing your stakeholders and communities in ways they value."*
- Less than 50% of museum and library visitors attend regularly, with most at the level of 'once or twice a year'. Mellor argued that this would need to change to retain a strong case for public arts funding by 2030.
- Other factors shaping the strategy include the rise of VR, loss of public trust in the establishment, arts education and diversity issues, the importance of place-making and developing less fragile business models.

ACE emphasises that it has not yet developed specific criteria for funding, which will be unveiled later in the year. [The Stage](#)

ACE argues arts are essential to an 'outstanding' education

ACE has argued that Ofsted should not award a 'good' or 'outstanding' rating to any school that does not show a commitment to the arts. It made the proposal as Ofsted seeks responses to its new inspection framework. [Arts Professional](#)

Making the case for culture: ACE publishes new toolkit

ACE has published a new three step toolkit to help cultural organisations make the case for culture – to the traditional media, on social media and to MPs, local authorities and LEPs. [ACE](#)

Historic sites at risk

France will need an 'army of specialists' as it restores Notre Dame after devastating fire

The French government is assessing the huge task of restoration after Notre Dame Cathedral was seriously damaged by a fire during April, which incinerated the wooden roof. It is still uncertain what started the fire, but at one point the building was within '15 to 30 minutes' of complete destruction, only averted by firefighters risking their lives to remain inside the building and protect the bell towers. The symbolic nature of the building has led to promises of significant philanthropy from some of France's most wealthy families with money raised heading towards the \$1bn mark. *The Art Newspaper* comments that "*this promise of huge sums for a public project is highly unusual in France where billionaires are more likely to spend money on their own private ventures than on state-run initiatives.*" However, the scale and speed of the giving has led to a backlash in some quarters from people pointing both to humanitarian causes and the state of other heritage buildings elsewhere in France.

President Emmanuel Macron has called for the cathedral to be rebuilt 'within five years' but specialists are sceptical that this will be possible and are suggesting a decade (or two) as a more realistic timescale. Meanwhile, substantial offers of technical and practical support have flooded in, both from conservation and heritage charities and from members of the UK's Historic House Association offering centuries-old trees to rebuild the wooden roof. An international competition has also been announced to build a new spire 'adapted to the techniques and challenges of our times' and it is likely that a billion-point 3D laser scan of the cathedral taken by an American in 2010 will be invaluable in the reconstruction. Ian Morrison, Director of Policy for Historic England said "*all the water that went into the Notre Dame fire will be a big issue ... The French heritage sector has some of the best craftspeople in the world, as do we. Until they've assessed the damage properly, it'll be difficult for them to come to any conclusions about the skills they require. We're offering whatever's needed.*" The British Council notes that Notre Dame has had some near misses in the past but has survived: Robespierre decapitated many of its statues and Hitler ordered it to be blown up – this sense of being bound up with French national history will strongly assist the recovery process. [Heritage Alliance](#) (scroll), [IIC](#), [Guardian](#), [Dezeen](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (spire competition), [Atlantic](#) (3D scan), [Telegraph](#) (interviews with Paris Fire Brigade), [Art Newspaper](#), [Museums Journal](#) (old trees for new roof), [Art Newspaper](#) (artefacts removed to Louvre), [Art Newspaper](#) (letter to Macron), [British Council](#), [BBC](#) (reactions to fundraising), [Art Newspaper](#) (philanthropists)

Palace of Westminster 'caught fire 40 times' over five years

MPs have pointed out that the Palace of Westminster is at credible risk of the same fate as Notre Dame. The building caught fire 40 times between 2008 – 12 and is awaiting a multi-billion pound repair programme, due to begin in the 2020s. Labour MP Chris Bryant said "*watching Paris...reminds me of the responsibility our generation has for the Palace of Westminster, especially Westminster Hall, which dates from the 11th century. We have taken far too long already putting our fire safety measures in place... God knows, we've had enough warnings.*" [Guardian](#)

Also: *UK Fundraising* has written about the psychology of fundraising in the light of the Notre Dame fire, pointing both to the extraordinary amount raised in a very short time, and public criticism of philanthropists for their choice of causes. It argues that people give more quickly where there's an emotional connection, that time bound campaigns are more effective and that major gifts are rarely only philanthropic, but will generally have benefits for the giver. In the case of Notre Dame two of the largest gifts came from wealthy business figures with a long-standing rivalry. [UK Fundraising](#)

Collections

More than half of objects receiving export bars saved for the nation in 2017 – 18

The annual report on Export of Objects of Cultural Interest for 2017 – 18 has been published. It records that:

- 12 objects, together worth £61.6m received an export bar, of which seven were saved for collections in the UK. However, considered by value £3m of items were saved and items worth £58.5m (or 95% of the total value) were exported.

- Items retained in the UK included a pre-1760s Palladian baby house, now at the Museum of Childhood, a bronze Roman figurine now at Chelmsford Museum, and a Surrealist sofa and telephone by Salvador Dalí now respectively at the V&A and National Galleries Scotland.
- Items not saved included 'Ehrenbreitstein' by JMW Turner and Sir Peter Paul Rubens' 'The Head of an African Man Wearing a Turban'.
- Overall 10, 858 licenses were applied for in the period, the vast majority of which were granted.

[DCMS](#)

Opportunity to join the Reviewing Committee on Export of Works of Art

The Reviewing Committee on Export of Works of Art is currently seeking to appoint two art specialists to the committee. The posts are unpaid, but expenses are provided. The deadline for applications is 29th May. [Cabinet Office](#)

Almost 300 manuscripts and notebooks belonging to Sir Charles Lyell receive export bar

Three works of art and a scientific collection have received an export bar in the last month. These are:

- a collection of 294 notebooks and manuscripts once owned by the Scottish geologist Sir Charles Lyell (1797 – 1875). These include letters he received from Charles Darwin about his theory of evolution. The asking price is £1.44m and the bar is in place until 15th July with a possible extension to 15th
- a drawing by Lucas van Leyden (1494 – 1533) has an asking price of £11.4m. 'A Young Man Standing' is one of 28 surviving drawings by the artist and the only one not in a museum collection.
- a German Renaissance 'Kunstammer' casket from 1565 with an asking price of £750k.
- an Italian Baroque cabinet made by Giacomo Herman in the late 17th century, valued at £3.3m.

[Gov.uk](#), [Gov.uk](#) (Lyell), [Gov.uk](#) (Kunstammer casket), [Gov.uk](#) (Baroque cabinet)

Also: The British Museum has received 73 drawings by Damien Hirst under the Cultural Gifts Scheme. The pictures are all sketches of the artist's former business manager Frank Dunphy, created as they breakfasted together at the Wolseley in Mayfair. Dunphy donated the sketches to the BM. Last year he gave works to the Pallant House Gallery, also under the Cultural Gifts Scheme.

[Evening Standard](#)

Culture Secretary rules out deaccessioning objects from national museums

Following a period where calls for the restitution of museum objects have intensified internationally, Culture Secretary Jeremy Wright has told *The Times* that he opposes any change of approach. He said "*never mind the argument about who owns this thing, let's argue about how it gets to be seen... There is a huge cultural benefit to the world in having places in the world where people can see these things together.*" He favours international loans and cultural co-operation. Currently many UK national collections cannot deaccession objects by law, with a few clearly defined exceptions such as human remains. In a blog, MA Director Sharon Heal argued that just saying 'no' is not enough and pointed to 'proactive and nuanced' approaches in France, Germany and the Netherlands.

[Museums Journal](#), [Museums Journal](#) (blog), [The Times](#) (paywall after 2 articles)

Tech

NLHF achieves greater transparency as it publishes first batch of Open Data

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has published its first batch of 'open data' – that is, a large accessible data set free to use by anyone for any purpose. The first set covers all the funding NLHF gave in a period from 2013 – 2019, but it has also published a few wider statistics as an example of how open data can be revealing. For example:

- From 1994 – 2018, 73% of grants were for £50k or less
- 58% of all grant requests do not succeed
- More than 50% of all grants have focused on intangible heritage and 37% of spend since 1994 has been spent on historic buildings and monuments.

NLHF hopes that this transparency will allow it to improve relationships, identify risks and show leadership – for users, it's an opportunity to see whether NLHF's ambitions and promises are working in practice. [NLHF](#)

18 organisations will track visitor attendance and satisfaction in major four-year study

A consortium of 18 attractions, including Tate, The British Museum, Horniman and IWM has commissioned a major piece of research into visitor behaviour, which will be tracked across the next four years. The group DJS research will use new tools to discover more about the experience and satisfaction levels of visitors. Participating institutions will be able to directly compare visits to their own sites with the experiences of other sectors – including leisure, tourism and retail sectors, not just comparable culture sites. [Arts Professional](#)

Finding Ctrl explores in 30 essays how the internet has shaped us and society after 50 years

This October the internet turns 50 and in response Nesta has produced the 'Finding Ctrl' web-based 'visions book' reflecting on the internet's history and future through essays by 30 people gathered from across the world. It charts how initial visions of something 'free and decentralised' have morphed into a system highly controlled either by governments (as in China) or dominated by a small number of companies. It asks who has shaped the internet, how it has changed society and what we may have lost by logging on. It also highlights forgotten models, like the 90s Russian kindergarten that was the internet hub for its local community and ended up teaching children to code, and asks if some of these versions of connectivity can be revived for the future. [Finding Ctrl](#), [Finding Ctrl](#) ('Why we must change our mindsets to change the internet')

Museum audiences to fly through space with Stephen Hawking from 2020

A new Stephen Hawking VR space experience, narrated by the physicist before his death last year will be launched at pop up sites across the UK in early 2020 before being distributed to museums. Lasting 20 minutes, users will be able to take self-directed journeys through space. Producer Anthony Geffen said 'the whole thing is from Hawking's mind and it's incredibly exciting.' [ALVA](#)

Second cohort of Creative XR projects is launched

Digital Catapult and Arts Council England have announced a second cohort of arts organisations and businesses to receive prototype funding. Many of the recipients are around theatre and interactive games. They include Mat Collishaw's 'Bedlam' – a recreation of Bethlem Hospital in the early 17th century, which involves haptic augmentation, so users can feel as well as see the virtual world around them. [Creative XR](#)

Jobs

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

- [Admin Assistant, School of Horticulture - Royal Botanic Gardens Kew](#)
- [Project Conservator, Objects - V&A Museum of Childhood](#)
- [Visitor Fundraiser - National Railway Museum](#)
- [Cross Trust Special Collections Internships - National Library of Scotland](#)
- [Project Manager, HMS Victory Conservation Programme - National Museum of the Royal Navy](#)
- [Environment and Sustainability Officer - Natural History Museum](#)

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

Also: our friends at National Lottery Heritage Fund are seeking to fill the role of [Senior Engagement Manager](#).

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