



Welcome to this month's NMDC newsletter which contains an update on our activities and the latest news from the museum sector in the UK and beyond. www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

NMDC News

From Access to Participation: Cultural Policy and Civil Renewal

On 27 March, David Lammy launched IPPR's new publication: *From Access to Participation: Cultural Policy and Civil Renewal*, by Emily Keaney. This is the culmination of the Culture, Community and Civil Renewal research project, in which NMDC was a partner along with Arts and Business, English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund, Nationwide Platform for Art and London Underground. NMDC's participation in this project was led by Lindsay Sharp, then Director of NMSI. The project was based on a series of seminars in early 2005.

The Culture, Community and Civil Renewal project was a response to government interest in issues of social capital (defined by Putnam as 'the networks of trust, solidarity and reciprocity that exist in a well functioning community') and civil renewal (the development of strong, active, empowered communities, in which people are able to do things for themselves, define the problems they face and tackle them in partnership with public bodies). The project explored the ways in which public participation in cultural activities could improve social cohesion, increasing social capital and leading to civil renewal. The project focussed on active community participation through volunteering and through involvement in decision making and governance, rather than passive participation through visiting, relating to a wider government programme to encourage active citizenship.

The IPPR research concluded that active participation in cultural institutions, such as museums, fosters increased trust in fellow citizens and public organisations, resulting in improved social capital, and ultimately civil renewal. This is based on evidence that:

- Countries with higher levels of cultural engagement also have higher levels of social and institutional trust.
- People who participate in cultural activities are more likely than the average UK citizen to believe that other people are fair, helpful and can be trusted, and to have trust in the police, legal system, politicians and Parliament.

These relationships remain even after controlling for other factors including income and education. However, it is not culture per se, but rather particular kinds of cultural activity that make the difference.

The report examines examples of cultural participation across the sector. The Imperial War Museum North's volunteer programme is cited as an example of cultural participation providing tangible skills. *Living it Up: The Tower Block Story* exhibition at the Museum of Liverpool Life is included as an example of cultural participation helping to create positive community identities.

Speaking at the launch, David Lammy described the growing importance of "encounter culture", in which cultural organisations have a unique and important role to play in building opportunities to encounter those from a background different from your own, fostering an encounter culture through empowering individuals and communities.

He said: "Our cultural institutions must stand ready to adapt to the changing circumstances in which they find themselves today. This means confronting the test of moving from a cultural framework that guarantees the right to access to one in which regular and sustained participation is the norm. ... Building this culture of participation will mean a change in mindset. It means ensuring that the framework for our investment supports bottom-up innovation rather than top-down dictation."

Summary of Findings

From Access to Participation: Cultural Policy and Civil Renewal includes proposals for changes in both government institutions and cultural organisations in order to facilitate an increase in active participation in cultural organisations from all sectors of society.

The publication proposes two main goals in moving policy forward:

- Embedding the thinking about social capital and civil renewal into the heart of cultural policymaking.
- Translating that thinking into practical steps on the ground - in particular, making sure that people from all walks of life participate in all levels in the cultural sector.

IPPR suggests four questions that cultural bodies need to ask themselves:

- Has our organisation reviewed how it could contribute to civil renewal? Could we benefit from a strategy to promote social capital and active citizenship? Are we missing opportunities to boost public engagement in civil life?
- Should we be developing strategies to promote greater community or amateur involvement in cultural activity? Are we engaging people just as visitors, viewers and listeners or are we encouraging them to become practitioners? Are we maximizing the use of volunteers, supporting them, and making good use of their time?
- Are we doing enough to engage the public in the governance of our body? Are we giving them a chance to make their voice heard? Are our governors drawn from beyond the usual suspects? Could we make use of new democratic processes – citizen's juries, web-based forums – to inform our decisions and make ourselves accountable?
- Are we doing enough to promote civil renewal among disadvantaged and marginalised groups? People from socially excluded groups and communities have most to gain from arts and heritage activity, but do we have strategies to engage them in our work and governance?

A summary of the research findings outlining the relevance of the 'civil renewal' agenda to cultural policy and the contribution that cultural participation does or could make to civic life is available on the IPPR website at:

www.ippr.org/uploadedFiles/research/projects/Arts_and_Culture/Culture%20briefing.pdf

The speech given by Minister for Culture, David Lammy to launch the report can be read at:

www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2006/lammy_ippr_speech.htm

Members News

Invest To Save Budget Funding for National Museums

£12 million from the Treasury's Invest to Save Budget (ISB) has been allocated to Arts, Culture and energy efficiency projects. The Invest to Save Budget encourages new ways of working by funding projects that develop innovative ideas, bringing together organisations in partnership to deliver more efficient and effective public services. National Museums are involved in the following successful bids:

Victoria and Albert Museum: National Museums Online Learning Consortium (£1.75 million): a collaboration between ten national museums and galleries to encourage better use of their websites, especially by schools and lifelong learners. It will encourage people to engage effectively and creatively with the extensive online content, promote consistent provision across the websites and develop teaching resources.

Natural History Museum: Carbon Emissions Reduction "Masterplan" for the South Kensington Cultural and Academic Estate (£2.895 million): This project will develop and implement a masterplan to deliver cost and carbon reductions, identify long-term opportunities for savings and options for migrating to a zero carbon operation. Over the next three years the partners aim to reduce carbon emissions by 7-10%. The project will develop a programme to inform staff and visitors of the implications of climate change and encourage reduced energy use. www.nhm.ac.uk/about-us/news/2006/mar/news_7895.html

Tate Modern: An Eye on the Future: London Cultural Quarter Group (£1.8 million): This project will bring together arts organisations and local authorities to give every young person in the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark the opportunity to experience and take part in cultural activity. It will demonstrate how cultural organisations can contribute to improved educational attainment, development of training and employment opportunities and increased confidence in young people.

The ISB is also funding **MMM Programme - Mission, Models, Money (£250,000)** run by the Jerwood Charity, which aims to create a more sustainable arts and cultural sector, by addressing the challenges faced by cultural organisations and their funders in developing mission-led and financially sustainable businesses. www.missionmodelsmoney.org.uk
www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2006/

New Treasure Responsibility for British Museum

DCMS is seeking comments on the proposed transfer to the British Museum of a number of administrative responsibilities currently undertaken by the DCMS in relation to treasure in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The BM currently provides technical advice, storage and other support relating to treasure throughout the treasure process and has responsibility for all cases before inquest. Following the transfer, it will take on some of the administrative responsibilities currently fulfilled by DCMS, such as providing administrative support to the Treasure Valuation Committee. The Secretary of State will, however, retain all her statutory functions in respect of treasure. This transfer is designed to improve both delivery and the efficiency of the treasure process.

www.culture.gov.uk/global/consultations/2006+current+consultations/cons_ta_cop.htm

John Murray Archive at the National Library of Scotland

The John Murray Archive has arrived at National Library of Scotland and will be available to researchers from May 2006. The John Murray Publishing House, established in 1768, had an impressive list of authors, including George Elliot, Jane Austen, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Darwin. The archive contains more than 150,000 items, including an important collection of Byron's work.

From May until September 2006 access to the archive will be by appointment. It will be fully available to researchers by October 2006. A permanent exhibition is due to open in summer 2007, there will be travelling exhibitions, outreach projects and events, and a digitisation project will make thousands of items from the archive available on the internet. A campaign is under way to raise the additional £6.5 million funding required.

www.nls.uk/jma

Jodi Award Winners 2006

i-Map: The Everyday Transformed, a website developed by Tate Modern to make modern art accessible to blind and partially sighted people. has won the 2006 Jodi Award for Excellence, awarded for practical and imaginative online cultural and learning resources that are accessible to disabled people. The judges were unanimous in their choice and described the website as setting the standard for best practice. www.tate.org.uk/imap/imap2

The Jodi Award for Excellence with Low Budgets was awarded to *Speaking Volumes* by Wakefield Library and Information Service, which allows blind and partially sighted site users to chat about books and audio book readers. www.speakingvolumesonline.org.uk/

The judges awarded a 'Commendation for Excellence in user involvement' to: *The History of Wolverhampton*; Wolverhampton Arts and Museums Service. www.wolverhamptonhistory.org.uk/

The awards are developed and sustained by MLA, 24 Hour Museum and the British Museum.

British Library Opens Enhanced Business & IP Centre

The British Library has launched its enhanced Business & IP Centre, which supports small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The upgraded Centre includes a networking area - without the usual Reading Room regulations - where entrepreneurs can collaborate and exchange ideas and seminar rooms where users can attend workshops run by British Library and its business partners. The Centre was awarded £1 million by the London Development Agency to help fund the transformation.

Business & IP Centre users have free access to company, business and industry information and a wide range of information resources to help set up, develop and run a business.

The Library is also setting up an advice network where successful business people and professional advisers will give advice to aspiring entrepreneurs. www.bl.uk/bipc/

National Slate Museum Seeks Memories of Migration

In the nineteenth century many mining families left North Wales looking for a better life and settled in up state New York. National Slate Museum, Llanberis, part of Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales, is 'twinning' with Slate Valley Museum in Granville, New York and both museums have launched an appeal to learn more about the migration and the people who left for America.

www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/news/?article_id=202

New Children's Gallery at Walker Art Gallery

The Walker Art Gallery has opened a new gallery dedicated to children: *Big Art for Little Artists* will allow children to discover art through looking, touching, listening and doing and provides a starting point for discovering the rest of the gallery's collections. The gallery has been specifically designed for children up to age eight and features objects from the Walker's collection, including paintings, sculptures, toys, ceramics and costume.

Big Art for Little Artists aims to demonstrate how museums can work in partnership with teachers, carers, parents and young children to develop creative play and learning provision for very young children and their families. www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/about/news/newsarticle.asp?id=526&venue=0

'Scottish Salon' in New York

The National Galleries of Scotland is exhibiting paintings from Scotland's National Collections in New York. The exhibition is part of the 2006 Tartan Week programme which celebrates and promotes Scottish culture and business in the United States. The display includes twenty works of art, including works by David Allan, Gavin Hamilton and Allan Ramsay and the well-known painting The Revd Robert Walker Skating on Duddingston Loch. The exhibition will be shown at Christie's 67th Street Gallery.

www.nationalgalleries.org/pdf_files/tartan.pdf

Swansea's National Waterfront Museum Wins Design Award

The National Waterfront Museum, Swansea has won a Civic Trust Award, which recognises good architectural design. The Museum, which has attracted more than 85,000 visitors since it opened last October, was given the award for making an outstanding contribution to the quality and appearance of the environment. The museum, which is part of the Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales family, was designed by Wilkinson Eyre.

www.civictrust.org.uk/cta%202006/awardpages/awardswansea.htm

British Museum Returns Tasmanian Cremation Ash Bundles

The British Museum is to return two Tasmanian Aboriginal cremation ash bundles to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre in Australia. The bundles, which contain ash from a human cremation site, are wrapped in animal skin. They entered the British Museum collection in 1882.

After taking independent advice, the Trustees decided that the cultural and religious importance of the cremation ash bundles outweighed any other public benefit that would have flowed from their retention in the collection. The objects have been studied, photographed and published.

Their return to Tasmania was made possible by the change of legislation in the Human Tissue Act 2005, which enabled national museums to deaccession human remains.

www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/news/tasmania.html

New Medals for Royal Marines Museum

The Royal Marines Museum has acquired a significant group of medals, from the last serving Colonel Commandant of the Royal Marine Artillery at Eastney, Lieutenant General Picton Phillipps CB, CMG, MVO, to add to its Medal Collection. www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk

Archive Awareness Short Story Competition

The experiences of Victorian children have been brought to life by schoolchildren across the UK as part of a short story competition organised by Archive Awareness Campaign. 1000 children aged 7-11 years wrote stories inspired by a range of Victorian source material at www.victorianvoices.com.

Winning pupils and schools received books and software. Certificates were presented to the winners by Minister of Culture, David Lammy, at the Wellcome Trust in London.

Online Tutorial Praised

Documents written between 1500 and 1800 may look illegible to the modern reader, but a new online tutorial - developed by The National Archives in Kew in partnership with the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies at University College, London - gives practical tips on how to read old handwriting. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography

Last month a group of international judges described the palaeography tutorial as an exemplar for the museum education community. *Palaeography: Reading Old Handwriting* received the Honourable Mention in the Best Educational Use category at the Museum & the Web 2006: The International Conference for Culture & Heritage Online. The results can be viewed at:

www.archimuse.com/mw2006/best/education-win.html

Exploring the Sea Floor

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales' Marine Biodiversity department has been working with the British Geological Survey on a project based on biological and geographical data collected from surveys of the Bristol Channel sea bed. The results have been put on a CD-Rom, Exploring the Sea Bed, which allows users to explore marine habitats, food chains and marine conservation issues. The CD-Rom has been distributed to schools in Wales. www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/283/

Nominate an Artist for the Turner Prize

Members of the public are invited to nominate an artist who they would like to see win the Turner Prize. Qualifying nominees entered on the Turner Prize microsite before 21 April 2006 will be considered by the Jury for inclusion in this year's shortlist. www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize/

Current Issues

Museum Learning Survey 2006

MLA is undertaking a survey to capture the current learning capacity and activity of museums throughout England. The survey results will enable a comparison between the museum sector today and the baseline data collected in the original 1994 survey, which led to the influential report *A Common Wealth: Museums and Learning in the United Kingdom*. Data from the survey will demonstrate the impact of two major museum education programmes – Renaissance and Strategic Commissioning - and describe the effectiveness of work to develop the museum sector's learning activities in both formal and informal education and learning. The survey is available to complete online at surveys.mattersoffact.co.uk/Museum Please respond by Friday 21 April at the latest.

Arts Council England Plans to Restructure National Office

Arts Council England has announced plans to restructure and refocus the organisation's national office. The organisation will focus on four main areas: policy and innovation (including art-form specialists), performance and programmes, advocacy and communications, and resources.

The new structure is designed to reduce areas of duplication with the Arts Council's nine regional offices and to deliver cost savings. Under the current plans there will be a reduction of 42 posts from the national office, a 21% cut in permanent staff. The resulting saving in salary and associated costs is approximately £2 million per year.

The Arts Council is now entering a formal period of consultation with the national office staff and unions, before any plans can be implemented. An additional review of staff numbers and the structure of shared services (eg Finance, HR, IT) will occur in 2007 following the implementation of IT improvements. www.artscouncil.org.uk/pressnews/press_detail.php?browse=recent&id=611

The need for improvement of the national office, making it a more streamlined body, was one of the findings of the Arts Council Peer Review published in December 2005. www.artscouncil.org.uk/peerreview

Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy: Demos Report

Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy, a report by John Holden, Demos, argues that the cultural sector has become too focused on fulfilling the objectives of funding bodies at the expense of satisfying audiences and that politicians are too timid about showing their passion for culture, at a time when the evidence points to increasing public engagement with and enthusiasm for the arts. Arts professionals need to gain greater legitimacy and support for what they do by finding new ways to engage with the public.

Developing the theory of cultural value, John Holden argues that we need a new alignment between culture, politics and the public and that the solution must start with cultural professionals building greater legitimacy directly with citizens. Creating legitimacy depends on institutional innovation that engages the public in understanding and contributing to the creation of cultural value.

The report argues that the traditional approach to setting policy goals, and funding the arts and culture, will never succeed in creating deeper legitimacy for cultural activity, which is a precondition for securing a larger and more secure place for culture in our wider public life. To gain the same unquestioning political support for culture that exists for health and education, there needs to be a more broadly based and better articulated democratic consensus about the value of culture.

www.demos.co.uk/catalogue/culturallegitimacy/

The report was launched by the Culture Minister David Lammy MP. His speech can be read at: www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2006/lammy_demos_speech.htm

New Interim Chair of the Arts Council of Wales

Professor Dai Smith has been appointed interim Chair of the Arts Council of Wales (ACW) to lead the organisation through the review of the Council's role and funding arrangements. Professor Smith joined ACW in 2004. Culture Minister Alun Pugh announced the appointment as part of an announcement on the Terms of Reference for the Review of the Arts Council.

The Minister also announced that the Chair of the Review Panel will be Elan Closs Stephens, Professor of Communications and Creative Industries at the University of Wales Aberystwyth and outgoing Chair of S4C. The Review is due to report before December. www.wales.gov.uk/newsbysubject/index.htm

Northern Ireland: Review of Public Administration

The Review of Public Administration (RPA) in Northern Ireland has concluded, with a restructure aimed at reducing the number of public bodies from 81 to 53, and improving accountability.

A new regional library authority will have responsibility for libraries across Northern Ireland and the capacity to develop the service beyond purely educational needs, providing a valuable resource for the wider community and recognising that the library has cultural, recreational and community roles.

The functions of the Northern Ireland Museums Council will transfer to local and central government and those of the Public Records Office will transfer to their parent central government department. Some of the funding currently administered by the Arts Council and the Sports Council will become the responsibility of local government, as will some of the functions of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Invest Northern Ireland. National Museums Northern Ireland is not affected by the changes.

A new agency to delivery environmental functions, including those currently undertaken by the Environment and Heritage Service, supported by the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, the Historic Buildings Council and the Historic Monuments Council, is likely to result from a review currently under way. www.rpani.gov.uk/bettergovernment.pdf

Britons Lead Spending on Culture and Recreation

Britain spends more per household on recreation and culture than other developed countries, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) factbook, which compares economic data, including population, the labour market, the environment, education and, for the first time, quality of life, in developed countries.

In the UK, the average household spending on recreation and culture as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) is 7.9%. This figure, which has risen from 6.5% in 1991, puts the UK at the top of the table, ahead of France and Germany, who spend 5.2% per household and 5% respectively, and above second-placed Australia at 7.2%.

However, UK government spending on recreation and culture is just 0.6% of GDP. Iceland is the most generous, spending nearly 3% of its GDP on culture and recreation. Luxembourg, Denmark and Spain allocate between 1% and 2% of GDP.

The study looks at what residents of developed countries spend their disposal incomes on, which includes computers and cameras, CDs and DVDs, toys, pets, sports and gardening, as well as tickets to cinemas and theatres, newspapers, lottery tickets and other forms of gambling. In general, the richer a country is, the higher its percentage household expenditure on recreation and culture.

lysander.sourceoecd.org/vl=4028553/cl=19/nw=1/rpsv/factbook/10-02-02.htm
arts.guardian.co.uk/news/story/0,,1743738,00.html

Museum Admissions

Annual visitor figures to DCMS funded museums and galleries show a 66 per cent increase in visits to national museums that used to charge for entry, since fees were dropped in December 2001. Visits to the national museums which have always been free such as the British Museum, National Gallery and Tate, rose by 2 per cent over the same period. Outside London, visits to national museums increased by 72 per cent since December 2001.

There has been an 11% drop in visits to all DCMS sponsored London Museums following the July 2005 bombings. Total UK museum visitor numbers were down by almost two million in 2005, but attendance numbers are now rising again. www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/

[Table 1: Number of visits to the former charging museums and galleries \(PDF 43kb\)](#)

[Table 2: Number of visits to the always free museums and galleries \(PDF 50kb\)](#)

[Table 3: Total visits to the former charging museums and the always free museums \(PDF 34kb\)](#)

Budget Summary

Charities: HM Treasury is to undertake a *Review of the Future Role of the Third Sector in Social and Economic Regeneration*. The review, overseen by a cross-departmental ministerial group, will take a cross-cutting approach to the long-term priorities for the sector. The review will be informed by the largest consultation ever undertaken with the third sector, to be launched at a conference in May.

An *Office of Charity and Third Sector Finance* will be established in HM Treasury, working with the Active Communities Directorate in the Home Office, the DTI's Social Enterprise Unit and the HMRC Charities Unit. This will link the work of HM Treasury across the range of third sector issues to provide strategic coordinated engagement. A third sector advisory panel will be set up to advise the Office.

Abuse of tax relief for charities: Three measures are being introduced to protect current tax relief to charities and ensure that only charitable activity has access to tax relief:

- *Restrictions on Company Gift Aid:* from 1 April 2006 measures which prevent a donor receiving a large benefit from a charity in return for a donation will be extended to apply to all companies, and not just "close" companies as at present
- *Non Charitable Expenditure:* tax exemption for trades that are wholly charitable will be extended to trades that are only partially charitable. Exemption will be available in respect of the profits on the part of the trade that is charitable. This measure is implemented with effect from 22nd March.
- *Substantial Donors:* these measures are aimed at preventing exploitation of charitable relief by people seeking to avoid paying tax rather than to benefit good causes, by imposing restrictions on a charity's tax exemptions where it participates in certain transactions with substantial donors.

Draft clauses for the new measures can be viewed at: www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/aa-legislation.htm

The Charity Finance Directors' Group has produced a summary of budget announcements that affect charities: www.cfdg.org.uk/cfdg/includes/downloadfiles/news_060322_budget_briefing.doc

Science and Innovation: The next steps in the Science and Innovation Framework 2004-2014 were published along side the budget. These include improving the supply of scientists through raising the profile of science in schools; improving the quality of science teachers and increasing progression rates to science A-Levels. The Chancellor announced that the additional £585m for schools in 2006-8 would include funding for a nationwide pilot of 250 after school science clubs for Key Stage 3 pupils. www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_06/assoc_docs/bud_bud06_adscience.cfm

Youth action and Volunteering: A new independent charity has been established to take forward the recommendations of the Russell Commission. The charity will be launched in May with over £10 million private sector funding raised to deliver step change in youth volunteering. The Year of the Volunteer 2005 achievements will be taken forward through a responsible business conference to be held later in the year.

Regeneration: The Government has published an analysis of the role that cities play in enhancing regional economic performance and announced in the Budget that it will review the effectiveness and efficiency of economic development and regeneration interventions in local areas, cities and regions, in preparation for the Comprehensive Spending Review. www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_06/assoc_docs/bud_bud06_adcities.cfm

Comprehensive Spending Review: In preparation for the CSR, Budget 2006 announces:

- plans for a national debate about how public services should respond to the long-term challenges facing the UK;
- a series of reviews that will inform the CSR in areas where cross-departmental collaboration and innovative solutions are required to meet these challenges, including the Leitch Review of Skills which will set out the skills profile that the UK should aim to achieve by 2020.
- further details of the next phase of the Government's value for money programme, including progress on asset disposals and a review of opportunities for transforming service delivery across government, looking at how the channels through which services are delivered can be made more efficient and responsive to the needs of users; and
- early spending settlements for the Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue and Customs, Cabinet Office and HM Treasury which see their Departmental Expenditure Limits fall by five per cent in real terms over the CSR period, releasing over £1.8 billion in total for re-investment in front-line public services. To meet the transitional cost of transforming these departments, the Government is setting aside a modernisation fund of over £800m.

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_06/budget_report/bud_bud06_repindex.cfm

Reminder about Gift Aid Changes

From 6 April 2006 museums and other charities will only be able to claim Gift Aid on daily admission tickets if visitors donate at least 10% more than the standard admission fee. Gift Aid is claimable on the whole amount, not just the 10%. The Attractions Gift Aid Liaison Group has developed a standard logo and wording to highlight an attraction's participation in the scheme. For more information on the changes and how they might affect your museum, visit: www.museumsassociation.org/12098

Also, from 1 April 2006 trading subsidiaries that are wholly owned by one or more charities will be able to donate their profits to those charities using Gift Aid.

Search for MLA Trustees

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is looking to appoint 14 trustees to the National Board of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council to set the strategic direction for the sector. The Board will comprise nine regional chairs / trustees and five national trustees with particular expertise. The drive to appoint a new Board stems from the formation of the MLA Partnership, encompassing the national agency and the nine independent regional agencies.

All trustees will have some understanding of sector issues, a track record of strategic thinking, senior level change management experience, a collaborative approach to problem solving and commitment to public service values. The closing date for applications is 21st April 2006.

Further information at: www.culture.gov.uk/public_appointments/current_vacancies

Faith and the Arts Website

Arts Council England and its partners are launching a new website www.faihandthearts.com which explores the relationship between religion and culture.

Sensitivities about the representation of faith in the arts have been highlighted by recent events. Faith and the Arts provides an overview of faith beliefs and practices for artists and producers, and explores the impact of faith on programming, audience development and accessible venues.

The website will also contain case studies, a contact directory and information about how faith relates to venues and funding. www.artscouncil.org.uk/pressnews/press_detail.php?browse=recent&id=605

Show Scotland

Show Scotland, an exciting weekend of events in museums and galleries across Scotland, will take place over the bank holiday weekend of 28th April – 1st May. Museums and galleries will be 'putting on a show' with a programme of events designed to use their spaces and collections in creative ways to capture the public's imagination. Show Scotland is inspired by cultural celebrations in Amsterdam and New York. www.showscotland.com

Museums & Galleries Month Events

Museums & Galleries Month will be launched on 27 April and the Month will start on Saturday 29 April with the Welcome Weekend, when museums and galleries will welcome visitors, giving them an opportunity to meet staff, see behind the scenes with special tours and take part in activities that showcase their work.

There is still time to register your Museums and Galleries Month events on the database at www.24hourmuseum.org.uk. More information at: www.mgm.org.uk

Fitzwilliam Museum Vases to be Restored

Ceramic conservator Penny Bendall has been appointed to restore three Chinese Qing Dynasty vases at the Fitzwilliam Museum that were damaged in January. She has worked on major oriental ceramics collections including The Royal Collection, Eskenazi in London and Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin.

The vases were broken when a visitor tripped and fell, with pieces of porcelain scattered over a wide area. Ms Bendall said that she was looking forward to working on their restoration and that she did not foresee any major problems. www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/news/index.htm

BBC News reports that the visitor responsible has been arrested on suspicion of criminal damage in connection with the incident. news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/cambridgeshire/4878850.stm

Did You Know?

DCMS devotes more of its funding than any other Department in Whitehall to voluntary and community groups and more people choose to volunteer in culture, media and sport sectors than any other.

Consultation on National Strategic Reference Framework

The Government is seeking views on its draft National Strategic Reference Framework, which is a requirement of the new EU regulations for the Structural and Cohesion Funds for 2007-2013 and will establish the broad priorities for future Structural Funds Programmes in the UK.

The consultation document also invites comments on the UK Government's proposals for distributing its Structural Funds allocations under the Competitiveness Objective; and on administrative arrangements for delivering the Funds in the UK during the next budgetary cycle.

The closing date for responses is 22 May 2006. www.dti.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-1601.html

Art Fund Appoints New Deputy Director

The Art Fund has appointed Andrew Macdonald as its Deputy Director. Andrew is a freelance film producer making current affairs documentaries for the BBC and Channel 4. He started his career at the BBC working on Panorama and was Senior Foreign Editor at Channel 4 News for 10 years. He will join The Art Fund in April 2006 where he will be responsible for the core activities of grant-giving and public affairs. www.artfund.org

Lords Discuss Acquisitions Fund

During the debate on the National Lottery Bill, the Lords discussed an amendment to create a national acquisitions fund. The amendment was withdrawn, but the issue is likely to be discussed again before report stage. www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld199697/ldhansrd/pdvn/lds06/text/60313-09.htm

Diversity Training

The MA has awarded seven bursaries to Black and other ethnic minority candidates to take part in the Diversify training scheme. The students will start masters courses in the autumn, followed by a placement in a museum. The aim is to help Black and ethnic minority people to compete on a level playing field for jobs.

63 people have enrolled on Diversify: seventy per cent are now working in museums. The remainder are completing the schemes, or have gone on to PhD level study. This round of bursaries is funded by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, which has put £500,000 into the Diversify scheme to date.

The Museums Association has also launched a Diversify Toolkit, which sets out the ways museums can organise positive-action training. www.museumsassociation.org/ma/9517

MLA to Develop EnrichUK

The Big Lottery Fund has awarded a grant of £98,000 to MLA for the management, maintenance and development of the EnrichUK portal till end of 2007. EnrichUK.net is a searchable portal linking 150 UK websites of cultural, heritage and community organisations that have been supported by Lottery money distributed by the New Opportunities Fund, as part of the digitisation of learning materials programme. The agreement to develop EnrichUK highlights the potential for it to become a significant access point for public sector content, extending its reach and helping to bring cultural collections to millions of people. www.mla.gov.uk www.enrichuk.net

The 2006 Chrsi Bailey Award: The National Children's Media Arts Award

The Chrsi Bailey Award highlights and rewards extraordinary educational work with children using photography, digital arts, video and animation, with the aim of drawing attention to the use of media arts as a creative, visual medium across a range of subjects and settings.

The Award is open to people who have worked with children aged 11 years and under with photography, animation, digital art or video in the last 18 months. The three Award themes are: History and Heritage, Identity and Environment. Winners will receive £1000 and a package of creative IT tools. The closing date is Friday 12 May 2006. Application information at: www.thechrisibaileyaward.org.uk

Channel 4 Archaeological Awards 2006

Entries are being sought for the Channel 4 Awards 2006, part of the British Archaeological Awards. There are three categories for the Channel 4 Awards: Broadcast programmes, Non-Broadcast films or videos, and ICT projects (interactive CD-ROMs, websites or multimedia packages).

Entries may be made for broadcast, education, promotion or site-specific purposes. To be eligible, they must be British-produced and have been completed or broadcast between 1 June 2004 and 31 May 2006. Winners will be awarded a prize of £750 and a BAA certificate.

The closing date for entries is 31 May 2006. Further information and entry forms may be downloaded at www.bufvc.ac.uk/c4awards/ or contact Cathy Grant Tel 020 7393 1507, email: cathy@bufvc.ac.uk

International Issues

Mobile Telephones as Audio Guides

USA Today reports that a growing number of arts organisations in the USA are offering visitors the opportunity to listen to audio tours of exhibitions on their mobile telephones.

At present many museums do not charge for the service, as some suppliers have provided free pilot schemes. Visitors using the service pay for their telephone call time and roaming charges or other costs that may apply.

Other museums are inviting visitors to download audio files from the museum website onto their iPods or other portable music players, to listen to while viewing exhibitions.

www.usatoday.com/tech/news/techinnovations/2006-03-19-cell-museum-tours_x.htm?POE=TECISVA

Metropolitan Museum Sets up International Office in Geneva

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has announced its first full-time representative office overseas, in Geneva, Switzerland. Mahrukh Tarapor, who is the Museum's Associate Director for Exhibitions, will be Director for International Affairs, Geneva Office.

In her new role Dr. Tarapor will expand and promote the Museum's relationships with museums and cultural ministries around the world, to ensure that the Metropolitan maintains a presence in a number of the world's leading cities. Dr. Tarapor will continue to supervise the Museum's Exhibitions Office and to work closely with curators on temporary exhibitions and permanent installations.

www.metmuseum.org/press_room/full_release.asp?prid={260C38F6-A038-4892-8F5E-9CBFB92E2A09}

Klimt Works on Display at Los Angeles Museum

Five paintings by Gustav Klimt that were taken by the Nazis and recently returned to the family of Maria Altmann by the Austrian government, are currently on display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). The temporary exhibition was organised by the museum after an Austrian arbitration court ordered the return of the paintings. www.lacma.org

Rijkswidget

The Rijksmuseum is offering a widget, a pop-up window that can be downloaded onto a computer, which displays a different painting from the Rijksmuseum each day. A click of the mouse provides more information about the work and the painter. www.rijksmuseum.nl/widget/?lang=en

Forthcoming Meetings

PR Group

Wednesday 26 or Friday 28 April (TBC), 11am,
National Maritime Museum

Learning and Access Committee

Friday 12 May, 2.30pm, National Portrait Gallery

Spoilation Working Group

Tuesday 23 May, 4.30pm, Tate Britain

HR Forum

Friday 9 June, 11am, venue TBC

Operations Committee

Friday 16 June, 11am, Science Museum

Marketing Group

Wednesday 21 June, 2pm, V&A

NMDC meeting

Friday 7 July, 11am, Imperial War Museum

Museum Copyright Group - Wider Group meeting

Friday 23 June, time TBC, National Portrait Gallery

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

Contact details for the NMDC Secretariat:

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If you have any comments on the NMDC Newsletter or would like to contribute to a future edition, please email: nmdcnews@iwm.org.uk