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The value of culture

Culture Secretary gives 'Value of Culture' speech at British Library

Maria Miller has given a speech at the British Library emphasising valuing culture as a source of private enjoyment, in nation and identity shaping, and in strengthening international ties. She argued that making economic arguments for culture did not lessen her commitment to the central purpose of the arts, twice quoting Steve Jobs as an example of the balance her department is seeking:

"It is in Apple's DNA that technology alone is not enough. It's technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our heart sing."

She explicitly referenced the reception of her speech given at the British Museum in April 2013 in which she highlighted economic impact. She said *"but then one strand was extracted, extrapolated and amplified until the message sounded like the only justification for supporting the arts is its value to the economy."*

She added that the arts need to be a core part of every child's education, and should be a priority in the curriculum alongside science, technology, engineering and maths: *"I agree with those who say an A belongs in STEM. Culture and creativity play a central role in any well-rounded child's education and rather than shying away from that - we should talk about it, promote it and emphasise the importance of STEAM."* She pointed to £300m invested in cultural education, and in forging relationships between schools and cultural organisations. [Gov.uk](#) (full text of speech), [Gov.uk](#) (press release), [Museums Association](#)

ACE seeks international views on the intrinsic value of culture

Arts Council England has made an international call for contributions of literature on the intrinsic value of culture. It is asking members of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA) to take part. ACE says *"much research has been conducted on the 'instrumental' value of the arts and culture (their ability to achieve economic, social, and health related outcomes), yet we believe that public investment in culture is rarely motivated by those considerations alone. Rather, we believe that arts and culture have a direct impact on the people who experience them, which is of value in and of itself."* [IFACCA](#)

Local government

Volunteers may run libraries, parks and museums warns local government chief

Writing for the *Daily Telegraph* the Chairman of the Local Government Association Sir Merrick Cockell warns that it will be impossible for local councils to keep paying for all the services they currently offer as cuts increase. He writes *"with half of local government's savings still having to be found before April 2016, and more cuts promised thereafter, it will no longer be possible to keep slicing away at budgets without services suffering or, in some cases, disappearing completely."*

"We now need to be asking whether people are prepared to take a direct role in providing other services like the running of local museums, sports classes, the upkeep of parks and green spaces and the management of allotment sites." The Telegraph reports that the LGA estimates that local councils will have to find a further £10bn savings from their budgets, on top of the £10bn cuts already made. [Telegraph](#) (Sir Merrick's article), [Telegraph](#) (commentary)

Bristol Council retreats from four museum closures

Following a public consultation Bristol Council has changed plans which may have seen the closure of four museums. The revised budget now says, *"this saving is removed from the budget, however a fundamental review of museums and heritage buildings is needed. To secure the long-term future these attractions can remain open while we review a report by externally-funded consultant about the options."* The Council is planning wider budget cuts across all its services of around £90m.

[Museums Journal](#)

Somerset and Devon set up independent charity to protect culture

Somerset and Devon County Councils have set up a new body, the South West Heritage Trust, to take over heritage services run by the Councils. It will have £10m in funding over the first five years of its life. Heritage Alliance says it is one of a number of models being trialled across the country as local authorities face financial pressure. They add, *"the two Councils will retain statutory responsibility for the heritage collections and assets, but through a long-term lease the new Trust will care for the millions of historic documents and museum objects on their behalf."* [Somerset Council](#), [SWFed](#)

Huge new arts centre for Manchester

A £25m new arts centre called HOME will be opening in Manchester in 2015. It will include a 150 seat theatre, a gallery space, five cinema screens and a digital production facility. Manchester arts venue Cornerhouse and the Library Theatre Company will merge to run the new building. Film-maker Danny Boyle who is patron of the project said *"To have this wonderful expansion of arts facilities outside London, especially at a time of sustained pressure on arts funding, is such a shock. But it's what you would expect from a visionary city."* [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only), [Cornerhouse](#)

'Be loved to avoid cuts'

Writing for the *Guardian*, a collective from the Artists Information Company argue that collaborating with the public and getting their support is vital for the survival of regional arts. They write *"recent revelations in Greece explain why. When recession hit Athens, all cultural funding was cut. The arts community protested, but the government ignored them. The arts community then asked for public support in their battle with the politicians, and there was silence."* They also argue that being more embedded in communities will make arts more sustainable as businesses and therefore less vulnerable to funding cuts. [Guardian](#)

Free ICT diagnostics for Welsh tourism businesses

The Welsh Government still has 30 places left for tourism and heritage businesses which attract visitors in Wales who would like a free Information and Communications Technology diagnostics. This covers everything from visibility to customers to safeguarding against e-crime. [Welsh Government](#)

London and the regions: the debate continues

Parliamentary Arts Council review

More details have been announced of the Parliamentary Select Committee's short review of the work of the Arts Council of England. The review will look generally at ACE's 'scope, scale and remit' and specifically at the geographical distribution of funds. The Committee is inviting submissions to be sent by 24th February.

The Museums Association is inviting its members to give feedback on ACE before they submit their own response to the committee. Welcoming the enquiry, ACE Chief Executive Alan Davey said *"The arts ecology of England is complex and interrelated and there are inherent and long standing challenges in achieving our ambition – in reaching all parts of the country, rural and urban, cities and the suburbs and in reaching people from many different communities. To do this well, we need a strong and nationally connected arts infrastructure in our capital city as much as we need an equally strong and vibrant arts infrastructure in the regions"*. [Parliament](#) (info on how to make submissions), [Museums Association](#), [Arts Council](#)

MPs speak for more cultural funds for their rural constituencies

Shadow Education secretary Tristram Hunt has joined the debate about whether London receives a disproportionate amount of funding for the arts. The MP for Stoke on Trent, he writes in the *Stoke Sentinel* complaining that the multi-prizewinning Gladstone Pottery Museum was at risk of closure and now has shorter hours, while money is 'funnelled into London'. He argues that while the devolved administrations in Wales and Scotland support museums across their regions, English regional museums are suffering. He adds,

"For me, the final indignity is the government's decision to allocate £30 million of public money to fund a 'garden bridge' across the River Thames. This scheme is a lovely idea which I hope goes ahead as a symbol of the capital's remarkable revival. But the funds could easily come from the Mayor of London or City hedge funds. Whilst we worry about keeping a potter at the Gladstone, this government can punt £30 million on a London prestige scheme."

Meanwhile Tory MP Jesse Norman follows a very similar line of argument in the *Telegraph*. He praises the record breaking visitor numbers at the British Museum and says that free entry has become a vital ingredient of the success of museums in the UK. But he adds:

"It's been estimated that two thirds of the country lives outside the readily affordable range of "national" cultural organisations, and this zone is steadily shrinking as transport costs continue to rise." He adds that local larger arts organisations in Herefordshire are 'broke' or 'on a shoestring' threatening the wider arts ecosystem of the region. [Stoke Sentinel](#), [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only), [Telegraph](#)

Parliament and the arts

From STEM to STEAM – campaigning for the arts in the core curriculum

Last year the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport committee supported the idea that Arts subjects should be added to the 'STEM' subjects (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) which are strategically important to the UK, and provide an important performance measure for schools. They made the recommendation in their report about the Creative Economy. The Committee has called a Westminster Hall debate on 13th February to debate this and other recommendations in their report. The Cultural Learning Alliance are encouraging people to write to their MPs asking them to participate in the debate.

As reported above, in her recent speech Culture Secretary Maria Miller indicated that she agreed with those who would like to see arts included in STEM. [Cultural Learning Alliance](#), [Parliament](#) (announcement of debate), [Parliament](#) (CMS committee's third report)

The Lobbying Bill

Following news that the Lobbying Bill will become law, the NCVO has published initial thoughts on the results of the legislation on non-party organisations. They say that the re-negotiated thresholds for registration of £20k spend on campaigning in England and £10k in Scotland mean that the vast majority of small organisations engaging in campaigning will not be affected. The thresholds apply to spend on campaigning for the 7.5 months before the 2015 General Election. NCVO will be publishing more detailed guidance over the next two months. [NCVO](#)

Improving museum learning for older people

As we reported last month, one of VisitEngland's predictions for the next decade is a growing number of older people who would like to visit museums. Now a pan-European working group is looking at ways to improve interpretation and learning opportunities for this group. Groups from Germany, Malta, Poland, Italy and the UK will take part, with the SS Great Britain Trust leading for the UK. The 'Heritage Interpretation for Seniors' programme will run for the next two years. [SS Great Britain](#)

Creative Industries: financial powerhouse?

Earning £8m an hour: the success of the Creative Industries

New figures released by DCMS reveal that the Creative Industries are earning £8 million every hour for the UK, or £71.4 billion every year. The figures have been calculated using a new formula developed with NESTA over the past two years. They include the film, television and music industries and show that:

- Gross Value Added of the Creative Industries was £71.4bn in 2012 or 5.2% of the UK economy;
- This is a 15.6% increase since 2008, compared to a 5.4% increase for the economy as a whole;
- The GVA of 9% between 2011 and 2012 was higher than for any other industry;
- In 2011 Creative Industries accounted for 8% of all export income;
- In 2012 UK artists created 5 of the top 10 bestselling albums on the planet; and
- The UK continues to excel at games design: the Edinburgh company Rockstar North's Grand Theft Auto 5 made \$1bn in its first 3 days of release.

In an editorial the *Guardian* comments "some will argue these successes are too commercial to reveal much of meaning about the health of the arts in Britain, but there is a false dichotomy between the public and commercial faces of culture. ACE estimates that for every pound the government invests in the arts, the UK economy grows £4, a statistic borne out by the recent history of British film, which was an endangered species before lottery funding arrived in the 1990s and is now in rude health. Rewards for public funding at the grassroots level are harder to quantify but equally tangible: Mr McQueen found his calling at Goldsmiths and has been supported by the publicly funded Tate galleries. Adele is a graduate of the state-backed Brit school of performing arts. Ms Dench and Mr Coogan have worked extensively for the BBC, while the games industry is supported by likes of the University of Abertay in Dundee."

Culture Secretary Maria Miller said "these incredible statistics are confirmation that the Creative Industries consistently punch well above their weight, outperforming all the other main industry sectors, and are a powerhouse within the UK economy." [Gov.uk](#), [Guardian](#), [NESTA](#)

Website launched to bring UK creative industries to the world

The Creative Industries Council have just launched www.thecreativeindustries.co.uk to showcase the breadth and strength of the UK sector, and its ability to work internationally. They argue that the UK will be a world leader in the sector by 2025. The British Council and ACE are collaborating on much of the content. [Creative Industries website](#), [Arts Council](#)

CBI and IPPR urge more government support for Creative Industries

Two recent reports have encouraged the government to invest more in the Creative Industries and take them seriously. The CBI have published their Creative Nation initiative. A spokesman said "The creative industries are all too often overlooked when discussing economic affairs. In reality they make a significant contribution to the UK's economy and it would be good to see the Government shining a bigger spotlight on this sector."

Meanwhile think tank IPPR's *Strategy for the Creative Industries* says that it makes no sense to exclude the sector from eleven areas especially earmarked for growth and support. The report will be published in full at the end of February with a speech by Maria Miller. [CBI](#) (full Creative Nation report), [Independent](#), [IPPR](#),

Most export bars fail...but you can keep the wallpaper and the stuffed moose

The *Guardian's* datablog tracks the £1.7bn of cultural heritage objects exported from the UK from April 2012 – April 2013. Including manuscripts to paintings, drawings, medals, prehistory and world antiquities, a large proportion were deemed to be of insufficient historical value to justify an export bar. We also learn that the UK exported no toys, stuffed animals, wallpaper or Scottish silver weapons. However, of the 19 most culturally important items, for which Ed Vaizey intervened with an export bar, only six of the cheapest were ultimately saved. Labour has recently called for a reform of the system. [Guardian](#) (data article), [Guardian](#) (data in detail), [Guardian](#) (lost Picasso and others)

Last portrait of Van Dyck, body of St Stephen and other export bar news

The National Portrait Gallery has raised £3.2m of the £12.5m needed to keep Van Dyck's self-portrait in the UK. The first deadline has been set for 14th February, but this may be extended by a further 5 months. Funds raised so far include £1m in public donations and £1m recent donation from the Monument Trust.

We reported last year that a large altarpiece *Devout Men Taking the Body of St Stephen* had been sold to the US. Now Ed Vaizey has applied an export bar to see if £1.7m can be raised to keep it in the UK.

Other objects with recent export bars include the Lusieri landscapes, a pair of bronze sculptures by Massimiliano Soldani-Benzi, and a painting by Poussin. [Guardian](#), [Gov.uk](#) (St Stephen), [Gov.uk](#) (Lusieri landscapes), [Gov.uk](#) (bronze sculptures), [Gov.uk](#) (Poussin painting)

Back to the drawing board for Southbank, as Mayor backs skateboarders

London Mayor Boris Johnson has backed the Southbank skateboarding community in its longstanding disagreement with the Southbank Centre over redevelopment plans. The Southbank Centre had offered an alternative space to the skateboarders, and insist that the redevelopment is only viable if the undercroft area is turned into shop units. A Southbank spokesperson said, "we look forward to hearing how he intends to fill the financial gap that now stands between us and our ability to provide free art and culture to millions of Londoners. In the meantime the Southbank Centre Board must consider the implications for the future of the project if he fails to do so." [Arts Professional](#)

World class heritage

Lake District nominated for World Heritage site status

Ed Vaizey has announced that the Lake District will go forward for the UK's World Heritage Site nomination for 2016. It joins two other sites, the Forth Bridge and Gorham's Cave Complex in Gibraltar which were nominated for 2014 and 2015 respectively, and are also still being considered. UNESCO and the International Council on Monuments and Sits will take a final decision on the Lake District in June 2017.

Meanwhile, Ian Stephens, Managing Director of Cumbria Tourism, has expressed concern that the area will lose its reputation as a tourist destination as a series of major festivals and arts organisations have closed recently due to lack of funds. Mr Stephens said, "where public funding is involved, we have a bit of a crisis in this county. We have got to do things differently and find new ways of funding these events."

There are currently 28 World Heritage sites in the UK including Stonehenge and the Tower of London. [Gov.uk](#), [Lake District National Park](#), [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only), [BBC](#), [Gov.uk](#) (Forth Bridge), [Gov.uk](#) (Lake District),

London leads as a 'World City' for culture

London Mayor Boris Johnson initiated the World Cities Culture Forum in 2012 and the Forum's research programme has produced a report looking at the cultural performance of the 21 world cities. In the most recent report London performs strongly:

- London has 173 museums and 857 art galleries – more than any other city in the report except for Los Angeles (museums) and Paris (galleries);
- London comes third on public library provision; and
- It has the highest number of World Heritage sites

London youth arts organisation A New Direction comments *“Our capital has a huge stock of cultural assets... However, its biggest challenge at present is to maintain its status as a leading player in global culture particularly in an increasingly tough economic environment where there are reductions in public subsidy for the art.”* [A New Direction](#), [London.gov.uk](#) (World Cities Report)

Dispatches from the Front

National Archives launch ‘Operation War Diary’

The National Archives has digitised thousands of First World War unit diaries as part of a wider programme to make millions of documents from the period available in 2014. They are also launching ‘Operation War Diary’ on a dedicated website where the public are invited to become ‘citizen historians’ and classify the documents.

William Spencer of The National Archives said, *“making the First World War unit diaries available online allows people across the world to discover the daily activities, stories and battles of each unit for themselves.”* [Operation War Diary](#), [National Archives](#)

War Graves work and building makeover for National Army Museum

Two dedicated staff at the National Army Museum (NAM) will be working with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Army to investigate First and Second World War soldiers who are not currently listed as casualties, but who are believed to have died as the result of conflict. NAM will act as adjudicator, researching the cases to corroborate whether they died as result of their service. The museum’s recommendations will then be sent to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The museum has also announced a £23.25m plan to redevelop the museum to make more space for its increasing number of visitors. It will discover whether its planning and HLF bids have been successful later in the year. [National Army Museum](#) (war deaths), [National Army Museum](#) (new development)

“We were crowdsourcing in 1918” – lessons from the Imperial War Museum

Julie Reynolds has written up her final detailed blog of the good ideas discussed at Open Culture 2013. It includes a discussion of the Imperial War Museums’ approach to telling the story of the FWW. IWM Director-General Diane Lees recalls how, when the museum first opened at the end of the war, millions responded to a request for letters and photographs relating to those who had fought. Now their great-grandchildren’s generation are working to give depth and organisation to these records: *“We were crowdsourcing in 1918 and we are now using digital technology to return to where we started.”* Staff are also being given digital skills at a computer club, so that people right across the museum are tweeting, blogging and Facebooking IWM’s stories. [Collections Link](#)

Keeping up to date with earth-shattering events: Natural History Museum’s volcano makeover

Writing for the Guardian, Alex Fairhead describes updating the Natural History Museum’s Volcanos and Earthquakes gallery after 17 years. He emphasises the importance of combining digital with objects in the gallery, so that recent earthquakes and new research can continually be added to keep the exhibition up to date. [Guardian](#)

Events

English Tourism Week

History and heritage organisations are invited to take part in English Tourism Week which takes place 29th March – 6th April. The dedicated website will be offering tools and information to those taking part. [English Tourism Week](#),

Matters of Life and Death conference

The Matters of Life, Death and Medicine conference will be the culmination of a two year project about engaging the public with medical history and medicines. It includes case studies from various medical museums. It takes place on 14th March in Bristol, and tickets are free. [Eventbrite](#)

Open Culture 2014: 20% price reduction for small museums

The Collections Trust's conference Open Culture 2014 is now open for bookings. They are offering a further 20% reduction on the price of early bird tickets for smaller museums. [Collections Link](#)

Arts Award Discover and Explore adviser training

Arts Award's unique qualifications support young people to develop as artists and arts leaders, inspiring them to explore the worlds of art, culture and heritage. Open to anyone aged up to 25, Arts Award develops creativity, leadership and communication skills. Museums are perfect places to run Arts Award Discover and Explore, developed with primary age children in mind. To run Arts Award a member of the museum team with experience of working with children needs to attend adviser training which runs across the UK. Find out more about [Arts Award in museums](#) and [book training](#).

How to Engage with a service review

As local government resources are squeezed, many museums face a service review. This one day course for museum workers in Wales explores how to engage constructively with a review, and survive and thrive. Organisers have already led courses for The National Archives. It takes place on 25th February in Llandrindod Wells and is free, but booking is essential. [Eventbrite](#)

National Sporting Heritage Day announced

The first National Sporting Heritage Day will take place on 30th September. The event hopes to create an annual focus around sporting history, and sports clubs and communities are welcome to take part as well as museums. Those interested are invited to follow developments on the group's Facebook page. [Facebook](#),

Entrepreneurial museum series announced

Ironbridge Gorge has launched a series of events for museum professionals centred around the idea of the 'entrepreneurial museum'. The series begins on 27th February with an event about film friendly museums in Birmingham. [Museum Network Warwickshire](#)

Meeting: Future of the Museum Development Plan in London

ACE will continue its London Museums Development programme in 2015–18 and the application process for providers opens in April. The London Museums Group is inviting feedback on the London programme to date at an event at the Museum in Docklands on 13th February. [London Museums Group](#)

Philanthropy

New centre for philanthropy research opens

A new Centre for Sustainable Philanthropy is opening at Plymouth University. Its purpose is to discover what psychological factors encourage giving, so that it can be increased in a sustainable way. Director Adrian Sargent says that philanthropy is currently 'stuck' at 2% in the US and 1% in the UK.

Meanwhile among its predictions for 2014, the Collections Trust suggests that talk of increased philanthropy in 2014 is likely to remain just 'philanthrobabble' for the time being, as significant increases in giving are strongly correlated with tax breaks which are unlikely to materialise this year.

[Third Sector](#), [Collections Link](#)

Fragile start for National Funding Scheme

The National Funding Scheme, which uses the platform DONATE to encourage multiple small donations to arts organisations has had a modest first year, raising £14.5k plus gift aid, well short of the £6m originally envisaged at launch. 93% of donations so far have come from web apps rather than by text. The NFS scheme will now be rolled out nationally, with a further £200k required for its operating costs. [Arts Professional](#)

Speak plain English to encourage philanthropy says Arts Council Chair

In an interview with the *Telegraph*, mainly concerned with encouraging well heeled baby boomers to give to cultural causes, Sir Peter Bazalgette said that some artforms had gained the false image of being only for an elite because of the rarefied language used to describe them. He said:

“Some people say why is something like buying a lottery ticket going into the arts – aren’t they very upmarket, aren’t they very elitist. And I really strongly disagree with that... if you were with me watching the NO orchestra and schoolchildren of all sorts of backgrounds scream with mirth at sections of the Magic Flute you know it’s not like that...[but it gets that reputation] because of the way some critics write about it, and the way some curators write about it, in some sort of jargonised academic way as if they are part of a club that we can’t join.” [Telegraph](#)

Funding: offered

HLF launches new £10m anniversaries fund

The HLF has created a new £10m fund to be made available for anniversary-related events over the next five years. Sums from a few thousand pounds to over £2m are potentially available. The decision follows the success of events like the Olympics and Diamond Jubilee where a large central theme brought people together.

HLF says that in addition to First World War commemorations, potential dates on the horizon include: the centenary of Dylan Thomas’ birth; the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta; the 600th anniversary of Agincourt; the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo; the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death; the 700th anniversary of Bannockburn and the 150th anniversary of Beatrix Potter’s birth. Further advice on applying will be published very shortly. [HLF](#)

Creative Europe funds to support 250,000 artists

The European Union Creative Europe fund is now open with the first deadlines approaching in March. Creative Europe will provide funding for at least 250,000 artists and cultural professionals, 2000 cinemas, 800 films and 4500 book translations. The British Council’s interim Creative Europe desk is offering various seminars on how to apply to the fund – contact creative.europe@britishcouncil.org for more details.

There has recently been a reorganisation in the way that support for bids to Creative Europe is supported, with the British Council and BFI taking over the role from Visiting Arts, Antennae and Media Desk UK. [European Commission](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Funding: granted

Don’t Blink: transformation planned for cemeteries and their monuments

HLF has announced £26.5m in funding to repair cemeteries as well as parks across the UK. It includes a £3.7m award to Brompton Cemetery which is the final resting place of Emmeline Pankhurst and Fanny Brawne as well as 800 other notable graves. The cemetery also contains six listed buildings and over 35,000 monuments.

HLF Chief Executive Carole Souter said, *“eighteen years of Lottery investment in our public parks has transformed tired and in some cases under used green spaces into thriving community hubs. Our historic cemeteries, with their wealth of heritage, also offer huge untapped potential and we’re delighted now to include them specifically in this programme.”* [HLF](#)

Hyundai agrees to 11 year sponsorship of Tate

Car manufacturers Hyundai have agreed to support the commission and display of exhibitions in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall for the next 11 years. Sir Nicholas Serota said it was an 'unusually long commitment' and the sums involved are believed to be far above the £1.4m deal the Tate previously had with Unilever. Sir Nicholas added that business appetite for funding arts organisations may again be picking up: *"I think there is a slow turn taking place. There's more interest on the part of companies in talking about the future than was the case three or four years ago"*. [Financial Times](#), [Guardian](#), [Arts & Business](#)

Also: Arts & Business report on how some businesses are now funding cultural projects, not from their arts budgets but from their money for corporate responsibility which is set aside to help them to connect with communities. For example, Python Properties in Teeside has been working with young people in gallery spaces. [Arts & Business](#)

Cultural Destinations first round winners announced

Arts Council England and Visit England are collaborating on a three year Cultural Destinations programme to get tourist and cultural development work more closely in sync. Ten initial award recipients have been announced for the £3m scheme. They include Turner Contemporary, Sheffield Theatres Trust, The Brewery, Kendal, and Lincoln Business Improvement Group. All are working with a range of local partners. [Arts Council](#)

Museums and Galleries improvement fund: £4m in awards

The Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund which is supported by joint grants from DCMS and the Wolfson Fund have given £4.6m to 40 museums. Recipients include York Museums Trust who will be using £300k to create a 'secret' gallery at York Art Gallery, and Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service who will use £150k to develop the 'Voices from the Workhouse' exhibition. [Museums Journal](#)

Museums Galleries Scotland gives Capital Awards of £450k

15 museums have received capital funding from MGS in the new year, with grants totalling £450k. They include £40k for publically accessible storage for the pottery collection held by Renfrewshire Council, an energy efficiency project for Grampian Transport Museum, and high specification display cases at the Museum of Edinburgh. [Museums Galleries Scotland](#)

Awards and prizes

Museums at Night Artist winners announced

Culture24 has announced the results of its popular annual contest for museums to 'win' an artist to appear at their Museums at Night event. Champions of Georges House Gallery posed nude (with some carefully positioned placards) on Folkestone Beach, successfully bidding for an evening with Spencer Tunick, whose work features large crowds of naked people. Grayson Perry heads for the Yorkshire Museum for an evening of teddy bear making, and Amy Sharrocks will be at Swansea Museum for 'an evening of live art and falling down'. All the artists involved are listed here: [Culture24](#)

Museum of the Year 2014 open until Feb 10th for entries

The Art Fund has launched its Museum of the Year award for 2014, with a prize of £100k. Judges are looking for museums who best meet these criteria:

- Undertaken projects that will provide a lasting legacy or have a transformative effect on the museum.
- Demonstrated excellence, innovation and imagination.
- Brought its collections to life for audiences – engaging, inspiring and extending public understanding
- Delivered an original education and outreach programme.
- Clearly won the support and enthusiasm of its visitors and users.

For the first time the prize has an international judge, Wim Pijbes, Director of the newly reopened and hugely successful Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Applications close on 10th February. [Art Fund](#)

Scholarships and living expenses for MAs in Museum Studies

For a second year the University of East Anglia is offering scholarships for students wishing to study for an MA in Museum Studies at their School of Art History and World Art Studies. Four students will receive fees and a tax free maintenance grant of £9.5k. [University of East Anglia](#)

Observer seeks cultural entrants for ethical awards

The *Observer's* Ethical Awards this year include a section for ethical culture. They invite people to nominate any artform or cultural happening that contains a strong call to ethical action. The closing date is 21st March. [Observer](#)

Education

Give younger teenagers a taste of careers in heritage

Creative and Cultural Skills are seeking cultural organisations to work with them to give 13 – 16 year olds an idea of what it is like to work in the heritage and history sectors. Their aim is to excite young people about careers in the sector, and they offer to “provide extra resources, online tools, collateral and, if required, expert speakers from the sector.” Its Creative Choices scheme will have reached 40,000 young people by April, and includes everything from performing arts and jewellery making to museum work.

Meanwhile a slightly older student from the Langley Academy [has blogged](#) on their museum work experience – and what it is like having museum learning integrated right across the school curriculum. [Creative & Cultural Skills](#), [London Museum's Group](#)

Strategy

The Future of Our Past

Welsh Minister for Culture and Sport, John Griffiths has announced Wales' new heritage measures following the consultation *The Future of Our Past*. Plans include:

- Regular strategic plans for the Welsh cultural environment;
- The creation of a new independent advisory panel; and
- The decision that Cadw and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments will remain separate for the time being.

[Welsh Government](#), [Welsh Government](#) (consultation responses)

Minding the Gap: heritage science research and curation

A collective of museums, archives and universities have just published *Mind the Gap: Rigour and Relevance in Heritage Science Research*. The report explores whether there is a communications gap between university research and practical heritage applications of heritage science. The year long work looked at 216 different projects. They found that:

- The perceived 'gap' between researchers and users of science heritage data is inaccurate – there are an increasing number of people whose jobs span both roles; and
- It argues that funding should extend over longer periods so that collaborations can develop properly.

National Archives, AHRC, the Tate, UCL and the University of Exeter were among those who contributed to the report. [National Archives](#)

Digital developments

Collections Trust consults on Spectrum Data Standard

The Collections Trust has laid out the thinking behind the proposal for a new standard to help museums worldwide capture, manage and share rich information about their collections. This thinking is based on the principle of COPE – Create Once, Publish Everywhere – a paradigm where core data is organised to keep up with the proliferating number of digital mediums. The proposed standard will build on the success of SPECTRUM, a globally used collections management standard. The Collections Trust has now opened a consultation until the end of February to gather sector view. [Collections Link](#)

Also: Collection Trust have just published some resources for making a Digital Assets Management plan here. [Collections Link](#)

Live Broadcasting the Arts: flourishing, profitable models

Nesta has blogged an update on work to support the live broadcasting of the arts, supported by major performance spaces and the Arts Council England. They report that the Royal Opera House have live broadcast *Giselle*, for the first time including an accompanying digital guide for mobile devices. Meanwhile the National Theatre is now regularly live broadcasting to 600 venues in 25 countries, has reached an audience of 1.5 million people with the majority of productions making a profit.

It's not just huge organisations who are benefiting from the technology: Streetwise Opera and Cornwall's Miracle Theatre are also being supported by the Arts Council/Nesta Digital R&D fund.

ACE have also called on the BBC to forge more collaborations with arts groups and show a much greater proportion of the country's live output. They say it will be a "net gain for the cultural power of the UK" and have "beneficial effects for the wider economy". [Nesta](#), [Royal Opera House](#) (*Giselle* preview), [The Stage](#)

NESTA predicts... 'extreme volunteering' at the Horniman and elsewhere

Nesta has published its wide ranging predictions for 2014, many of which touch on digital social trends which increasingly affects museums. They argue that in the light of Edward Snowden's revelations, people will begin to 'take back' personal data about themselves and withdraw from US platforms. 2014 will also be the year that 'robots walk among us' as the technology becomes mainstream. They also say that "every city will have a social innovation strategy by the end of the year".

Finally "extreme volunteering" will become more common - not 'extreme' in the sense of the Horniman's 'extreme curator', Paolo Viscardi, currently being exposed to exceptional heat and cold in the service of history - but merely 'extreme' in the amount of time and commitment volunteers may offer. [Nesta](#), [Horniman Museum](#)

Science Museum produces 'super app'

The Science Museum has released a 'super app' for ipads, *Journeys of Invention*, which allows users to experience 90 of the museum's most iconic objects, sometimes in greater detail than is possible when visiting the museum. Users can walk in 'virtual reality' inside the Apollo 10 command module, send messages on Twitter from a Second World War Enigma machine and do experiments with microwaves. 200,000 people have already downloaded it. [Evening Standard](#), [Science Museum](#) (taster film)

Wellcome Library offers free access to huge historical archive

The Wellcome Library has become the latest to offer a huge archive of high resolution images for personal or commercial use. The 100,000 images from the history of medicine range from an Egyptian prescription on papyrus to a 15th century Persian horoscope and Enlightenment medical drawings of anatomy. [Wellcome Library](#)

Appointments

The Prime Minister has appointed six new trustees to the board of the Heritage Lottery Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund. They are: Sir Roger De Haan, philanthropist and former Chairman and CEO of Saga, David Heathcoat-Amory, Chairman of London and Devonshire Trust, and Dr Tom Tew, CEO of the Environment Bank, who will join immediately; Sandie Dawe, CEO of VisitBritain, and Steve Miller, Head of Norfolk Museums Service, who will join in February; and Perdita Hunt, Director of the Watts Gallery Trust, who will join in July. There are 15 trustees in total on the joint board. [HLF](#)

Arts Council Ireland has just appointed Sheila Pratschke as its new Chair. She was previously a director of the Irish Film Institute. [Irish Times](#)

Alexander Sturgis will become the new Director of the Ashmolean Museum in September. He is currently Director of the Holburne Museum in Bath. [Museums Journal](#)

Jean Franczyk will become Deputy Director of the Science Museum Group. She is currently Director of the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. [Museums Journal](#)

New spaces and new places: Collections earning their keep

Cutty Sark moonlights as comedy venue

Reopened in 2012 after a serious fire, the Cutty Sark is now offering an evening comedy club in a studio theatre on its lower decks, which launched in late January. Opening performances by Alan Davies, Richard Herring and Ross Noble have already sold out, but you can still book for Macbeth in 20 minutes on February 9th.

The Cutty Sark's Director Richard Doughty said, "our aspiration is that the development of Cutty Sark as a flexible theatre space will enable us to reach out to new audiences who can discover the ship in a whole new way." [RMG](#), [BBC](#), [The Stage](#)

Coronation Street becomes a tourist attraction

After 53 years at the apex of soap, the set of Coronation Street in Manchester is empty as Granada Studios move to a new set at Salford Quays. The old set has now received planning permission to be turned into a tourist attraction, hoping to bring in 1,000 visitors a day when it opens in April.

[ALVA](#)

Burrell Collection to tour

After an extended debate and a change of law by the Scottish Parliament, the Glasgow-based Burrell Collection has finally been cleared to tour. The Council is hoping that world tour will raise £15m towards the £45m repairs to the collection's home museum building. Officials are already in conversation with major institutions in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. [Scotsman](#)

Piecing together a global history: the Scottish diaspora tapestry takes shape

Volunteers across the world are creating squares for a giant 'Scottish diaspora tapestry' ahead of Homecoming 2014 exhibitions. Embroiderers are creating 150 squares which are being sewn together in East Lothian. [Scottish government](#)

Most V&A Chinese paintings 'are fake'

The V&A have acknowledged that the majority of their Chinese paintings are fake. Most were acquired in the 19th century and the period before the Second World War when there was not widespread expertise: the V&A's first Chinese-reading curator was appointed in the 1970s. The problem is widespread in museum collections, with the British Museum and institutions across the world having pictures with 'optimistic attributions'. [Art Newspaper](#) (subscription only)

Future of Blythe House considered

The DCMS is reconsidering the future of Blythe House, the West London former HQ of the Post Office Savings Bank now used for storing collections from the British Museum, Science Museum and V&A (which opened the Clothworkers' Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion there in late 2012). The British Museum, which holds 2 million objects there, is hoping to move some back to its Bloomsbury site when its World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre opens later in the year. [Museums Journal](#)

Will the Scots sack the British Museum?

With more than a touch of levity and schadenfreude, the *Art Newspaper* asks whether the Scottish Government will seek a share of the treasures of the British Museum if Scotland votes for independence later in the year. It focuses particularly on already contested objects like the Isle of Lewis chess set, which it argues Scotland might have a claim on as the British Museum was founded as an institution for the whole of the UK. However, the newspaper admits that the scenario is unlikely, even if the polls are wrong and independence takes place: the SNP have so far showed no interest in staking a claim. [Art Newspaper](#) (subscription only).

Exhibition Highlights 2014: Part II

You can see an extended list of the pick of NMDC members' 2014 exhibitions on our website [here](#), with a summary of major exhibitions at each venue. Here is a flavour of what the longer list contains:

Some international touring exhibitions

Jeremy Deller's *English Magic* was commissioned by the British Council for the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2013. It reflects Deller's interest in the diverse nature of British society and its broad cultural, socio-political and economic history. Deller weaves a narrative thread through the exhibition, which draws in references such as politics, tax evasion, the Iraq war and Ziggy Stardust. For the first time the Venice Biennale exhibition will be shown at venues across the UK, including **Bristol Museum and Art Gallery**.

American Impressionism at the **Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art** will be one of the main highlights of the summer exhibition programme and, will bring together some 80 paintings by major international artists on its only UK appearance on an international tour.

The Artes Mundi 6 Exhibition at **National Museum Cardiff, Chapter, and other Cardiff locations** will show entrants to the Artes Mundi 6 Prize which will be awarded in early 2015. Ten artists from eight countries have been shortlisted coming from the UK, USA, Portugal, Israel, Croatia, Iceland, Brazil and the Netherlands.

Beautiful Science

The **British Library's** *Beautiful Science* explores how our understanding of ourselves and our planet has evolved alongside our ability to represent, graph, and map the mass data of the time. From John Snow's plotting of the 1854 London cholera infections on a map, to colourful depictions of the tree of life, discover how picturing scientific data provides new insight into our lives.

Meanwhile notable scientific objects from across the vast collections connected with **University of Cambridge Museums** will be on display at Two Temple Place, London. *Discoveries, Art, Science and Exploration* will be the first time Cambridge's unique, world-class collections have been drawn together under one roof. The exhibition features, among many other objects: ancient fossils, contemporary art, modern Inuit sculpture, Darwin's only surviving egg from the Beagle voyage, a rare dodo skeleton and a state-of-the-art digital instrument that searches for sub-atomic particles in the frozen depths of Antarctica.

Information Age at the **Science Museum** is a new £15.6m permanent gallery that will use interactive displays to reveal personal stories about how our lives have been transformed by communication innovations over the last 200 years.

How Scotland flourished

GENERATION is a landmark project celebrating some of the very best art to have emerged from Scotland in the last 25 years. It will bring an a programme of works by over 100 artists to over 60 galleries, exhibition spaces and venues, with the majority of the exhibitions taking place over the summer of 2014, as part of the Glasgow 2014 Cultural Programme.

Meanwhile **Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum** are showing *How Glasgow Flourished, 1714 - 1837*. It describes how Glasgow grew into a city of global importance through a few fabulously wealthy businessmen, the city's workers and industries. It explores how to make millions, see what life was like for slaves and workers and find out what still remains from that period in Glasgow today.

The **Scottish National Portrait Gallery's** *John Byrne* exhibition shows portraiture from across career of one of Scotland's most celebrated artists. It will be the first major show at the Portrait Gallery to honour the Scottish painter's work and celebrate his contribution to Scottish art.

Jobs

Current vacancies on the NMDC jobs website include:

- [Web Project Manager - Royal Museums Greenwich](#)
- [Head of Visitor Commerce - Natural History Museum](#)
- [New Media Engineer - Information Age - Science Museum](#)
- [Head Curator - National Railway Museum](#)
- [Conservation Student work placements - V&A](#)
- [Events Officer - Maternity cover - Wallace Collection](#)

See the full selection of current jobs at NMDC members' organisations [here](#).

This newsletter can also be read online at <http://nmdcgit.nmdc.webfactional.com/news/newsletters/>