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Triceratops: Eat, Roam, Repeat - the new free exhibition at Manchester Museum, from Saturday 25 October 2025 – Sunday 22 February 2026.

NMDC news

NMDC welcomes Curriculum Review and Government response

The final report of the Curriculum and Assessment Review and the Government's response to it were published on 5 November. NMDC made a submission to the public consultation in November 2024 and we are delighted to see that many of our key points and concerns have been addressed. NMDC Chair Laura Pye said:

"NMDC warmly welcomes the recommendations of the Curriculum and Assessment Review and the positive response from Government. It is extremely encouraging to see Government recognition that the arts strengthen our economy and society, and that they should be an entitlement for every pupil, not an optional extra.

We are delighted that Government is addressing the urgent need to restore the place of creative subjects in the school curriculum and to enable access to creative education, skills and careers for everyone regardless of background. The Review recommendations will help children thrive as well as developing the skills needed to support the UK's world-leading creative industries.

In particular we welcome the commitment to expanding access for all pupils to enriching experiences including arts and culture. Museums are a vital part of the UK's educational infrastructure, contributing to subjects right across the curriculum, and they add a dimension to understanding and learning which cannot be achieved by classroom teaching alone. Museums are also well-placed to support ambitions to better reflect the innate diversity of British history with the curriculum.

We look forward to continuing to work with DCMS and DfE on how museums can support and enrich the new curriculum as the recommendations of the Review are implemented."

See further details about the Review recommendations and the Government response in the Government news section below.

Development of online signposting resource for climate and environmental sustainability underway

NMDC and the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) have begun work on a new online resource to help museums and heritage organisations find practical environmental sustainability guidance tailored to their needs. Led by MeThree — the agency behind AIM's recent website overhaul — the project will curate and categorise existing high-quality resources, design clear user journeys, and develop engaging formats. With input from museum professionals and sector organisations, this project will also act as a pilot to inform plans for a larger standalone resource in due course.

Development of the resource responds to the recommendation from the Museum COP event in 2023 for NMDC to 'work with other sector bodies to develop signposting to existing resources for museums, including clear guidance on the most relevant resources for different types of organisations.' [MeThree](#), [NMDC \(Museum COP\)](#)

Have Your Say: 2025 Lending and Borrowing Survey

In 2021 NMDC and The Exhibitions Group (TEG) launched the [Principles and Guide to Lending and Borrowing](#), a shared commitment to making museum loans across the UK more open, practical, and accessible. Four years on, we want to know: how's it going?

This short survey - titled '**Lending and Borrowing Today: 2025 Review**' - is for anyone involved in lending or borrowing between UK collections. Your responses will help assess how widely the Principles have been adopted, where challenges remain, and how future guidance can better support the sector. It takes around 15 minutes to complete and the deadline has been extended to **5pm, Monday 17 November 2025**. Please answer based on your organisation's UK loans, and feel free to consult colleagues if needed. [TEG](#)

Members' news

Science Museum receives eight-figure international donation

The Serum Institute of India, led by CEO Adar Poonawalla, has made the largest international donation in the Science Museum's history. The gift will support the transformation of the 'Making the Modern World' gallery – which is set to re-open in 2028 as 'Ages of Invention: The Serum Institute Gallery'. Sir Ian Blatchford, Director and Chief Executive of the Science Museum Group, said: "Visitors will be able to journey through 250 years of innovation and explore the scientific ideas shaping our lives today." Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy said: "This is a wonderful demonstration of trust in the Science Museum, which is a powerful advocate for greater cultural and scientific ties between the UK and India. I look forward to seeing this investment support the transformation of this much-loved gallery space and educate and inspire visitors for generations to come." The Serum Institute of India is the world's largest vaccine manufacturer and part of the Cyrus Poonawalla Group. [Science Museum](#), [Museums Association](#)

National Museums Liverpool launches £1m Connector slavery research network

The Connector project has been funded by the Lloyd's Foundation and will facilitate collaboration between museums, heritage organisations, higher education institutions, creative practitioners, businesses and community groups worldwide. The project is scheduled to begin in autumn 2025 and will provide bursaries to establish an international network for researching transatlantic slavery history and legacies. NMDC Chair Laura Pye, Director of National Museums Liverpool, said: "As we continue to witness the ongoing legacies of transatlantic slavery, through challenges and tensions related to racism and discrimination, this project has the power to not only lay the foundation for both an innovative model for research, education and collaboration, but also respond to some of the most pressing and complex issues facing the world today." The Connector project will lay the foundation for further long-term plans to ensure transatlantic slavery research is inclusive, accessible and impactful for those who live with its legacies. [NML](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Royal Observatory awarded £9.7m by the National Lottery Heritage Fund

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has announced an award of £9.7 million to Royal Museums Greenwich towards a landmark capital project which will transform the Royal Observatory Greenwich, protecting the heritage, improving visitor experience and inspiring a new generation of scientists. Building on the foundations of 350 years of scientific scholarship and excellence at the Royal Observatory Greenwich, the 'First Light' £77m project will improve access to astronomy education and exploration through inspiring new galleries and displays, innovative architecture, sensitive conservation and improved access. Paddy Rodgers, Director of Royal Museums Greenwich said: "This will assure its continuance for years to come as a place of awe and wonder that continues to further the public understanding of Astronomy in line with its obligations at its foundation by the Royal Warrant in 1675." The first phase of the project starts in November, with work planned for completion by spring 2028. [RMG](#), [NLHF](#), [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#)

British Museum Pink Ball raises over £2.5m

The British Museum's inaugural Ball has raised more than £2.5 million, after welcoming nearly 900 guests, 70% of whom were new to the Museum. The Ball's proceeds will directly support the Museum's international partnerships, which include projects and collaborations with institutions from Ghana to Armenia and Iraq to India. These range from archaeological research at Girsu and Benin City, to pioneering curatorial collaborations with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) in Mumbai. The Museum's International Training Programme also continues to equip the next generation of curators to protect and share heritage worldwide. During the evening, the British Museum also announced a £10.3 million pledge from the Garfield Weston Foundation. This major contribution will enable the Museum to move forward with its Visitor Welcome Programme, which includes new Visitor Welcome Pavilions at both the North and South entrances, and will aim to reimagine the Museum's forecourt. [British Museum](#), [Guardian](#), [Art Newspaper \(£\)](#), [Museums Association](#)

Also: British Museum to save exquisite Henry VIII pendant for the nation, The Tudor Heart will also be on view in Room 2: Collecting the world until April 2026 and the public campaign is now live and open for donations: britishmuseum.org/tudor-heart-appeal. [British Museum](#), [Museums Association](#), [BBC](#)

Members in the news

- Hull museum reopening delayed for second time, 23 October 2025, [Arts Professional](#) (£)
- Art inspires football kit for Black History Month, Fitzwilliam Museum, 18 October 2025, [BBC](#)
- V&A's Gilbert Collection galleries to double in size for 2026 reopening, 6 October 2025, [M+H Advisor/ Art Newspaper](#) (£)
- Tate launches digital platform to deliver collection resources directly to classrooms, 6 October 2025, [M+H Advisor](#)
- 'Like time-travelling': readers tell of unexpected joys of V&A East Storehouse, 4 October 2025, [Guardian](#)
- ICON in conversation with Sara Wajid, Co-CEO of Birmingham Museums Trust, Issue 12, Autumn 2025, [Iconnect Magazine](#) (pdf, pg 20-23) (Membership needed for access)
- Museums, inequality and creative education in the age of AI, Tristram Hunt, 2025 Portal Trust Education Lecture, [Portal Trust](#)

Images this month

For November we are celebrating the opening of Manchester Museum's new free family friendly exhibition - **Triceratops: Eat, Roam, Repeat**. Through a series of vibrant displays and hands-on activities you can find out how a Triceratops lived, what it ate and how it survived battles with fearsome foes, including the terrifying T.Rex. The exhibition is on from 25 October 2025 to Sunday 22 February 2026. [Manchester Museum](#).

Government news

Curriculum and Assessment Review and Government response published

The final report and recommendations of the Curriculum and Assessment Review, commissioned in July 2024 from Professor Becky Francis CBE and a panel of experts, was published on 5 November. Recommendations for reform include refreshing programmes of study for each curriculum subject, raising standards in oracy, reading, writing, preparing young people for life and careers in a changing world, and delivering high standards for all.

The Government has also published its response to the Review, welcoming the recommendations and confirming how it intends to take forward the reforms with a plan to 'secure an excellent education for every child and young person, raising aspirations and building a world-leading curriculum, assessment and qualifications system for all', including confirmation that it will scrap the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).

The Government response makes numerous key points on the arts, including being clear that 'the arts are an entitlement within the national curriculum for every pupil, not an optional extra', and a commitment to revitalise arts education as part of the reformed national curriculum and through high-quality support for teachers of these subjects. It also commits to a new 'core enrichment offer' for every pupil, including access to arts and culture, as well as taking forward subject-specific recommendations from the Review including:

- Art and design: adding clarity to programmes of study on the knowledge and skills pupils should develop, supporting the teaching of a broader range of artists and media, and addressing concerns about the volume of work pupils need to produce for assessments.
- Music: reviewing the music curriculum and qualifications, including considering how to better support diverse genres and performance modes and continuing to invest in Music Hubs and their instrument and equipment stocks.
- Drama: creating a discrete sub-section for drama in the Key Stage 3 English programme of study and adding specificity on drama at Key Stages 1 and 2, and reviewing GCSE drama content and assessment methods.
- Dance: clarifying expectations for dance, supporting breadth within the PE curriculum, and improved progression to GCSE dance, which will also be reviewed.

Work is now underway to develop a new curriculum and assessment system, with plans for a first teaching of the new curriculum from September 2028 and new GCSE teaching from September 2029. Proposals will be consulted on from 2026.

The recommendations and Government response have been well-received across the arts and culture sector, with Arts Council England Chief Executive Darren Henley calling it "a great day for the next generation of creative talent in England". [Gov.uk – Curriculum and Assessment Review Final](#)

[Report](#), [Arts Professional](#), [NMDC response](#)

Catch up with Creative UK's panel at the Labour Conference

You can catch up with Creative UK's 'Creative Learners, Future Leaders: A Curriculum for Growth' panel at the Labour Conference via the Creative UK website. The panel included Keith Merrin, Deputy Chair of NMDC and Director of North East Museums, Jenny Waldman, Director of Art Fund, alongside Jonathan Davies MP and representatives from Kingston University, Music Mark and the National Theatre. You can watch highlights of three days of activity convened by Creative UK including the Creative Learners panel. Art Fund have also summarised the event and their call for creative learning and school visits to be embedded into the curriculum in a blog on their website.

[Creative UK](#) (highlights page), [Creative UK](#) (Creative Learners Panel - 60 mins), [Art Fund](#)

Green Party adopt a new Heritage and Tourism Policy

At their autumn conference in October the Green Party passed a heritage and tourism paper, which offered a framework for policy on museums. Writing on [LinkedIn](#), Philip Nelson, Development Lead, Heritage and Tourism, for the Green Party, called it 'a roadmap for how museums can lead a national transition towards a greener, fairer, and more inclusive future.' Key commitments include: recognising a wider definition for heritage which includes nature, living traditions, and community memory, proposing a new legal framework to enable claims for the restitution of cultural objects, a Green Heritage & Tourism Apprenticeship Programme and heritage-sensitive energy efficiency reforms, retrofit grants, and green certification schemes. The paper also explicitly recognises the well-being value of heritage and culture. [Green Party](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Guardian](#) (general piece on the conference), [New Statesman](#) (general piece on the conference)

Sector news and opportunities

Annual Museums Survey shows visits back to pre-pandemic levels

In 2025, 692 non-national museums within the Accreditation scheme contributed to the Annual Museums Survey. The survey provides insights into the sector's health as well as the challenges and opportunities it is facing, with data on workforce, finance, audiences, and insights. Key insights include:

- Overall on-site visits are on the rise, although some museums fair better than others with 29% seeing an increase in visitors and 24% seeing a significant decrease.
- Income is still higher overall than expenditure but museums highlight the challenge of fluctuating income/funding and rising costs.
- 67% feel the outcome for the coming year is positive.
- 40% of museums still use the social media platform 'X' down from 65% in the previous year. 1 in 10 are using Bluesky.
- 17% are using AI tools, which rises to 30% for the large/largest museums.
- Half of museums do not collect any equality and diversity information about their staff or regular volunteers.

[MDSW](#) (Annual Museums Survey), [M+H Advisor](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Paul Hamlyn Foundation closes to new applications

Instead of opening for new applications, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Arts Fund will give out the same amount of funding through renewing existing grants and reconsidering applications received over the past year. The Foundation explained that in the two rounds to date, they received 816 applications from arts organisations requesting a total of £166m. However the Arts Fund annual budget is £6.5m, meaning that, despite the quality of many applications, only 7% of organisations were successful, with the success rate more than halved over the past four years. Given the 'unprecedented demand' PHF are looking to maintain a healthy balance between renewing grants to organisations they already fund while also seeking opportunities to support new organisations whose work resonates with their mission. The fund will remain closed until at least April 2027. [PHF](#), [Museums Association](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Industrial action hits the sector

As industrial action continues at the National Coal Mining Museum in West Yorkshire, the British Library and Tate are also facing walk outs from staff over pay. Over 300 employees at the British Library who are members of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) voted to walk out from Monday 27 October until Sunday 9 November. PCS says the organisation has failed to offer an above-inflation pay award for a second consecutive year. PCS members at Tate's four gallery sites have also being balloted for strike action after the institution initially offered a 2% pay increase for 2025/26, according to PCS. This has now been increased to 3% but is still lower than the Civil Service Pay Remit and does not address the issues of low pay, says the union. The ballot at Tate closes on 11 November. [British Library](#), [PCS](#) (BL), [Independent](#) (BL), [Guardian](#) (BL), [PCS](#) (Tate), [Arts Professional](#) (£)(Tate), [Museums Association](#) (sector wide strikes), [BBC](#) (National Coal Mining Museum)

British Museum touring partnership opportunity

The British Museum has a new touring exhibition opportunity for 'Learning and Play in Ancient Egypt', starting Autumn 2027. The exhibition offers a glimpse into the life of children in ancient Egypt, with rarely displayed objects which illustrate a part of ancient life not often discussed in museum displays. It will be a truly family friendly experience including a number of hands-on interactive moments, offering programming for families and school groups. The British Museum is looking for three consecutive venues to host the Touring Exhibition for around 3 months each from Autumn 2027 to 2028. Please respond by 28 November. [British Museum](#), Contact John Stokes, Head of National Programmes jstokes@britishmuseum.org and Majeeda Goodall, Project Manager: National Programmes MGoodall@britishmuseum.org



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Cultural funding pressures

Ironbridge Museums to be taken over by the National Trust

It was announced on 16 October that the Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust, which has been operating locations in Shropshire since 1967, will be taken over by the National Trust with the help of a £9m government grant. The trust currently runs 10 museums, with 35 listed buildings and scheduled monuments, including Blists Hill Victorian Town, the Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, and the Old Furnace. It does not include the world's first large iron bridge, a Grade I listed structure spanning the River Severn and giving the area its name, which is owned by Telford and Wrekin Council and cared for by English Heritage. The transfer, aimed to secure the long-term future and prosperity of the Trust's properties will take place on 2 March 2026. The Museums Association writing on 21 October reported on Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy's comments that the transfer was 'urgent' and 'difficult decisions' could affect Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust staff and volunteers going forward. [Gov.uk](#), [Ironbridge Trust](#), [NT](#), [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#), [BBC](#) (locals react), [AIM](#) (statement)

500 jobs to go at the National Trust

Alongside taking on Ironbridge Museums Trust the National Trust have confirmed that 500 jobs are to go in an effort to achieve £26m in savings, which equates to making 6% of their full-time staff redundant. The Museums Association reported that a third of the job losses would come from compulsory redundancy. The BBC reported that the cuts were due in part to 'an inflated pay bill and tax rises'. [BBC](#) (tax rises), [Guardian](#), [Museums Association](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Future of Walsall Leather Museum causing concern

Local campaigners have reacted angrily to the relocation of Walsall Leather Museum which they believe Walsall Council is pushing through without proper consultation. The council now plan to lease the site, originally an 1888 leather factory which houses the museum, to Walsall College. Campaigners say the building should itself be considered a key exhibit of the town's leatherworking heritage. The Conservative-led council approved the project which will save £190,000 in costs. It is proposed that the museum will be moved to a 'central location'. [BBC](#), [Guardian](#), [Museums Association](#)

Museum Mapping Closure report

The Museum Mapping Lab will be launching new research which has been looking at Museum Closure in the UK 2000-2025. Run by academics at Birkbeck University the report will be launched at the University on the evening of 1 December from 6pm with a response from Lord Neil Mendoza and discussion. Also present will be Professor Fiona Candlin, Director of the Mapping Museums Lab and Isabel Wilson, Interim Director for Museums, Arts Council England. [Museum Mapping](#) (event details),

AIM update their Economic Impact Toolkit

AIM's Economic Impact Toolkit helps museums estimate their economic contribution and impact (their overall, or gross, economic impact) for the purposes of advocacy. It supports museums to make a case to economic and tourism stakeholders – such as local councillors, MPs, and funding bodies – by helping them calculate their net additional economic impact. The September 2025 update to the Toolkit includes the latest tourism metrics at national and locality levels, sourced from Visit Britain, Visit Scotland, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. The update also includes volunteer impact metrics to consider the scale and value of volunteering. Volunteering is not typically found in traditional economic impact assessments, however, it may provide a useful advocacy message for those museums for whom volunteering is an important consideration. [AIM](#)

Also: Museum of Oxford introduces £4 entrance fee, [BBC](#)

Also: NPO owing over £1.6m enters temporary administration to safeguard creditors' interests, [Arts Professional](#) (£)

Louvre theft highlights increase in museum crime

The Louvre museum was the subject of a much-covered break in and theft of jewellery from its collections on the 19 October. Jewels worth €88m (£76m; \$102m) were taken and four people have been arrested and charged, whilst reports say the Louvre has transferred some of its most precious jewels to the Bank of France following the heist. 57 Museum directors including some NMDC members have voiced their support for underfire Louvre director, Laurence de Cars, who became director in 2021, highlighting that 'Museums are not strongholds nor vaults'. [BBC](#), [Le Monde](#) (arrests), [Le Monde](#) (support)

A number of French museums have faced thefts in recent months including the Adrien-Dubouché National Museum in Limoges, with thieves taking three objects worth a total of more than €6.5m, and the National Museum of Natural History which reported that gold samples worth €600,000 (gold value) were taken in September. [Guardian](#), Are French Museums Becoming Hotbeds for Theft?, [ArtNet](#)

In the UK arrests have also been made after the theft of Bronze Age jewellery from St Fagans National Museum in Cardiff. Police are continuing to look for the stolen items after the arrests following the burglary which happened on 6 October. An Amgueddfa Cymru–Museum Wales spokesperson said: "We are pleased to hear this significant development in the investigation. We are hugely grateful to South Wales Police for the speed in which they have responded to this incident and will continue to work with them on their ongoing enquiries". [BBC](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Also: Thieves steal more than 1,000 items from Oakland museum in 'brazen' heist, California, [Guardian](#)

Also: Museums advised to take 6 steps to prevent 'smash and grab' crime, [M+H Advisor](#)

Creative careers and young people

November is Discover! Creative Careers Month

Discover! Creative Careers programme aims to introduce young people from some of the UK's least advantaged communities to the possibilities of a creative career. To support this year's event, Creative UK are sharing the new DCMS-led Discover! A Career in the Creative Industries Campaign that launched on 31st October to accompany this year's extended programme of activities. The campaign will run until the 30 November with a specific focus on 13-17-year-olds and their parents from lower-socio-economic backgrounds across six priority regions (Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, North East of England, West Midlands, West Yorkshire, West of England) who have been identified as facing higher access barriers into the sector. [Industry Toolkit](#) (pdf, 17 pgs), [Discover Creative Careers Month](#)

Report on Effects of Arts/Culture Programmes on Youth Crime

At the end of August the Department for Culture, Media and Sport release a Rapid Review report which details the current landscape of arts and culture-based programmes that aim to address serious youth crime. The report comments on the diversity of these programmes and the challenges this can present, in particular in regards to delivery and equality of access. The report also provides an assessment on the effectiveness of these programmes in reducing rates of violent crime among young people. Whilst the evidence on the effectiveness of arts and culture programmes is limited and inconclusive this could be because there is a lack sufficient evidence to confirm their impact. It is a useful wide-ranging report that lists organisations involved in this kind of work and proves a good starting place to working with young people. [Gov.uk](#) (press release), [Gov.uk](#) (report, pdf, 96pgs)

Also: Government axes teacher training bursaries for arts subjects, [Arts Professional](#) (£) / [Schools Week](#)

Health and wellbeing

Art Fund research shows the benefits of looking at art

The Physiological Impact of Viewing Original Artworks vs. Reprints: A Comparative Study (2025) was undertaken by King's College London and co-funded by Art Fund, the UK's national charity for museums and galleries, and the Psychiatry Research Trust. The study measured the physiological responses of participants while viewing masterpieces by world-renowned artists including Manet, Van Gogh and Gauguin in a gallery. The research found that art activates the immune, endocrine (hormone), and autonomic nervous systems all at once – something never previously recorded. The report highlights the most compelling scientific evidence to date that viewing art has immediate, measurable benefits for our health and wellbeing. [Art Fund](#), [Guardian](#), [Sky News](#), [Museums Association](#)

First round of grants announced for the Health and Wellbeing Fund

The Museums Association has announced the first recipients of their Health and Wellbeing Fund which is a programme of grant-making, networking and learning dissemination for health and wellbeing programmes in museums, funded by the Julia Rausing Trust. 9 organisations have benefited from funding including NMDC member the Horniman Museum and Gardens, which will use an award of £73,080 to build on a piloted object-based art psychotherapy with social prescribing link workers, recovery colleges and mental health inpatient wards. Applications will open early in 2026 for another round of grants from the Health and Wellbeing in Museums Fund. In particular the MA want to support applications from museums in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, recognising that although applications from all four UK nations were shortlisted in 2025, the final list of nine awards are all in England. [Museums Association](#)

Climate emergency

Two guides on communicating climate concerns and action

The Britain Talks Climate & Nature report and toolkit from **Climate Outreach and More in Common** provide the most up-to-date and in-depth analysis of what 7,000+ people across Britain think and feel about climate and nature. Key recommendations for climate communicators include:

- Translate and explain, don't assume or assert
- Inspire a better future: show why tackling climate change leads to good things for us all
- Don't take support for granted but don't misinterpret or overestimate opposition

There are also sections in the report on trust and leadership, and consultation and engagement. The communications toolkit is a quick-start guide with tips on how to talk about different issues, including net zero and climate adaptation. [Climate Outreach](#) (report), [Climate Outreach](#) (Communications Toolkit)

Julie's Bicycle had also produced a guide on Communicating Your Climate Action, which offers practical tips and inspiration for cultural organisations and creatives to share their climate stories with confidence. The guide provides tips on how and where to talk about your climate work and advice on tone, storytelling, and avoiding greenwashing and real-life examples from arts organisations across the UK. [Julie's Bicycle](#) (press release), [Julie's Bicycle](#) (guide - 7pgs)



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Digital

AI and Culture report from UNESCO

This report was prepared by an Independent Expert Group convened by UNESCO to gather views and ideas on culture and artificial intelligence. The Group's analysis highlights an urgent reality: artificial intelligence is advancing faster than cultural governance, widening divides and raising new risks, while also offering powerful opportunities to reinforce cultural innovation and resilience. The report identifies the core challenges, including how AI is outpacing governance, reinforcing bias and homogenisation, undermining cultural rights and eroding creativity and skills. The challenges are also balanced by the opportunities such as the expansion of creativity and access, protection of cultural heritage and learning opportunities. For those who want to take a 'deep-dive' into AI and its impact on culture each section has a list of references for further reading. [UNESCO](#) (website), [UNESCO](#) (report, pdf, 80pgs)

Also: Call to widen global access to public domain heritage, [Museums Journal](#)

Also: British Library guide on digitisation of documentary heritage in challenging locations now available in Ukrainian, [British Library](#)

Awards

Kids in Museums Family Friendly Museum Awards announced

Congratulations to Experience Barnsley Museum and Discovery Centre which has been named as the winner of the Kids in Museums Family Friendly Museum Award. Overall winner and winner of the Best Small Museum category, the museum explores Barnsley's past and present through a varied programme of activities and events, all delivered by a group of passionate staff and volunteers. The curatorial team works with regular groups including Action for Autism Barnsley, Age UK and Feels Like Home, an organisation supporting refugees and asylum seekers. The win follows a record-breaking milestone for visitor figures at Barnsley Museums, with two million people welcomed through the doors in 2024-25. Other museums recognised in the awards for their efforts to welcome families and young people include:

- Best Medium Museum: V&A Dundee
- Best Large Museum: The Burrell Collection, Glasgow
- Best Accessible Museum: Eureka! The National Children's Museum
- Best Museum Youth Project: Social Justice - Black Cultural Archives. [Kids in Museums](#), [BBC](#), [Experience Barnsley](#)

Also: The Museum and Heritage Awards are now open - applications before 30 November save £40 with all entries due by 31 January. [M+H Advisor](#)

Funding news and opportunities

Scottish museums funded for resilience and accessibility work

17 museums across Scotland have been supported with £862k through the Museums Galleries Scotland Repair and Adaption Fund. The fund was introduced earlier this year to address the urgent need for capital funding in the sector and was made possible by a significant increase in capital investment from the Scottish Government. The awards will support capital costs that directly increase the resilience and accessibility of museums by upgrading facilities and making essential repairs. Many of the awarded projects focus on environmental sustainability, with museums seeking to reduce their climate impact and improve operational efficiency. See MGS for full details of award amounts which include £89,000 for Glasgow Life. [MGS](#)

Weston Loan Programme opens for applications

Administered through Art Fund, the Weston Loan Programme enables short-term loans of important works of art and artefacts to museums and galleries across the UK. Grants range from £5,000 to £35,000, covering all costs associated with securing, displaying and promoting loans. The programme is supported by the Garfield Weston Foundation and can support 100% of the costs associated with securing a loan, displaying a loan and maximising the impact of the loan. Applications from UK public museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives will be considered. Applications from small and contemporary arts spaces and other non-collecting institutions will also be welcomed, provided they meet the aims of the programme. Applications opened on 13 October and close on Friday 12 December. [Art Fund](#)

ACE Unlocking Collections Grants

Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grants are a time-limited priority within its open-access funding programme. Unlocking Collections Grants are aimed at enabling museums to develop their collections-based work and increase public engagement with, and use of, their collections. ACE are interested in applications that re-interpret collections, use digital tools and mechanisms in museums to promote content across the sector, and also collections reviews. A good recent example of an Unlocking Collections Grant is the Freud Museum in London which has just opened a new exhibition called 'Housekeeper' (29 Oct - 1 Mar 2026) which looks at the little known story of Sigmund Freud's housekeeper Paula Fichtl. [Freud Museum](#), [ACE](#) (Project Grants), [ACE](#) (Unlocking Collections (guidance, pdf))

Maritime Heritage funding available from Lloyd's

Lloyd's Register Foundation is offering a £2.5m funding programme that will support initiatives that strengthen maritime heritage research, equity, safety, and public access. The Foundation welcomes applications from academic and research institutions including museums, archives and heritage charities, as well as community and cultural organisations, non-profits and consortia. Collaborative, cross-sector and inter-disciplinary proposals are strongly encouraged. Funding is invited on key themes which include: Safety (shipwreck, maritime disasters, learning from mistakes), Equity & Transparency (forgotten voices, hidden figures and contested history) and Transitions (ships, ports, technical transitions (e.g. decarbonisation)). Grant size is between £200k and £500k per project with flexibility on project duration. Applications are open until 24 November. [Lloyd's](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Airbnb Best of British Fund

Airbnb has launched a £1 million Best of British fund, to help support the stays, experiences and attractions that make Britain great. Grants of up to £100,000 are available to support unique and distinctive stays, experiences and attractions that make British holidays memorable and help communities thrive. One of the categories is Culture & Heritage which looks for submissions which protect, restore or celebrate UK's rich history and traditions. Applications are welcome from a broad range of recognised groups or organisations, including small businesses, social enterprises, community groups and cultural and heritage groups. The deadline for applications is 23:59 on 23 November 2025. [Airbnb](#)



Triceratops: Eat, Roam, Repeat - Manchester Museum, from Saturday 25 October 2025 – Sunday 22 February 2026.

Openings and development news

Poole Museum sets reopening date

Following a seven year £10m regeneration project, Poole Museum will reopen on 5 November. The opening marks the culmination of a major heritage-led regeneration project that began in 2018 and has been funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, BCP Council, Arts Council England, Historic England, and other charitable foundations and grant providers. The redevelopment includes six new galleries and open display of Poole Iron Age Logboat. The free-to-enter museum is launching with a temporary exhibitions programme including the Sound of the Sea, an immersive digital exhibition that responds to people's presence, and Un/Common People, which celebrates the history and mythology of folk culture. [Poole Museum](#), [Museums Association](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Ibraaz opens as a Global Majority cultural space in London

Open from Wednesday to Sunday in a former gentlemen-only arts club, Ibraaz will be free to visit and will feature exhibitions, talks, screenings, music and artist residencies. Developed by the Kamel Lazaar Foundation, a Geneva-based non-profit with links to the Middle East and North Africa, Ibraaz was founded by Lina Lazaar, who is the vice president of the foundation, and includes exhibition spaces, library, cafe and bookshop. Ibraaz opens with Parliament of Ghosts (15 October–15 February 2026) a site specific work by Ghanaian artist Ibrahim Mahama. The work repurposes colonial-era furniture and jute sacks alongside newly crafted elements and is designed to reflect on memory, restitution, and the poetics of reuse. [Ibraaz](#), [Museums Association](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Garden Museum to restore historic artist's house

The Garden Museum has been awarded a £294,221 development grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to begin the 'Benton End Revived' project. Benton End House and gardens in Suffolk is the former home of artist and gardener Sir Cedric Morris and partner Arthur Lett-Haines. Sir Morris and Lett-Haines established the art school East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing at Benton End and one of the first pupils was the 17-year old Lucian Freud; one of the last, Maggi Hambling. [Garden Museum, M+H Advisor](#)

Conferences and events

ICOM UK Conference 2026 Call for Papers

The 2026 ICOM UK conference "Museum Diplomacy in Action" will take place on 16 and 17 April in Oxford, UK. This conference will explore the unique position of museums as powerful cultural diplomats in an uncertain world. Showcasing globally-engaged practice from around the world, the conference will share practical examples of how museums can engage in cultural diplomacy to bridge cultural divides, engage with global challenges, stimulate collaboration, strengthen and heal international relationships, leaving delegates inspired and empowered to think and act globally.

ICOM UK is looking for speakers to suggest ideas for a presentation, a workshop or panel discussion – specifically with practical experience of museum cultural diplomacy in their own institutions – working internationally, locally or with diaspora communities. The Deadline for proposal submissions is Friday, 21 November 2025. [ICOM UK](#)

Call for speakers for the M+H Show

The 2026 M+H Show will be held on 13-14 May. They are inviting passionate professionals and creative thinkers to help craft a programme that tackles real challenges, shares practical solutions, and celebrates the incredible work happening across the sector. Whether you've led an innovative project, developed new ways to engage communities, or learned valuable lessons worth sharing, your insights can make a real difference. Sessions are programmed for a maximum of 40 minutes, including time for Q&A. Submit your session proposal by 30 November. [M+H Show](#)

Rural Museums Network Online Seminars

The Rural Museums Network has two online seminars in November and December. On 6 November the session will focus on Collecting and Studying Rural Protest and on 4 December the topic is Rethinking the Rural Life Museum: "Irons, Pots and Griddles oh my!". Both sessions are free for members of the Rural Museums Network, AIMA and BAHS. £5.00 non-members. They take place from 3-4.15pm on Zoom. [Rural Museums Network](#)

TEG sessions on community engagement and sustainable exhibitions

The Exhibitions Group are running two training sessions this autumn. On the Wednesday 21 and 28 November there will be training on Community Engagement for Exhibition Making which will help participants develop confidence and skills in leading and supporting community engagement in museums. The sessions runs from 10-12 noon on each day. TEG have also opened booking for their January training sessions on Reducing the Environmental Impact of Temporary & Touring Exhibitions which will run on Wednesday 14 and 22. You'll discover practical strategies, explore a real-life case study, and gain confidence in making environmentally informed decisions. The training covers all key areas of the 'Rethinking Touring Exhibitions Toolkit', from partnerships and procurement to transport, design and advocacy, to show what's within your sphere of influence and how to take action. The sessions run from 10-12.30pm and tickets costs £69 for TEG members and £99 for non-members. [TEG](#)

CoMuseum International Conference - Museums and Hope

This year, the CoMuseum Conference marks its 15th anniversary and will be held from 3-5 December in Athens and Thessaloniki. The 2025 theme, 'Museums and Hope', positions museums as places of human connection, imagination, healing and resilience. As global societies face increasing polarization, technological acceleration, and cultural fragmentation, the conference asks: What does it mean to be human – and hopeful – today? And if museums are both stewards of the past and curators of our shared future, how can they foster a more compassionate and expansive understanding of what it means to be human? The Conference is organized by the Benaki Museum and the British Council. The line-up of speakers includes Sharon Ament, Director of the new London Museum due to open in 2026. Registration opens on 12 November with more details coming soon. [CoMuseum](#)

Copyright and AI from the Museums Association

On 10 December the Museums Association will be running an online training day looking at recent legal cases and the rapid development of technology such as AI and its ramifications for copyright and licensing in museums. Through a mix of panel discussion, case studies and audience participation, the event will explore topics including the latest approaches to trends in collections copyright and income streams related to copyright. The day will run on Zoom from 11-4pm. Tickets cost £67 for non-members and £46 for members with a concessionary members rate of £36.

[Museums Association](#)

Family Arts Conference 2026

The family arts and culture conference returns on Thursday 12th February 2026 at Northern Stage, Newcastle, with Early Bird tickets available until 19 November. This year the focus is on the power of turning stories into action, passion into progress, and art into impact. With a theme of Changemakers & Storytellers who are weaving bold new narratives through creativity and connection. Topics include Storytelling for Change, Partnerships with Purpose, Place and Community and Intergenerational Imagination. The Early Bird rate is £185 and for small organisations (10 or fewer employees) £135 with a £3 booking fee. Standard tickets cost £225 and £155 respectively. [Family Arts Campaign](#)



Triceratops: Eat, Roam, Repeat - Manchester Museum, from Saturday 25 October 2025 – Sunday 22 February 2026.

Appointments

On 4th November the British Library Board announced that Chief Executive **Rebecca Lawrence** had stepped down after taking on the role in January 2025. The Board thanked her for her contributions to the Library. **Dr Jeremy Silver** will be the interim Chief Executive – a British Library Board member since 2019, re-appointed in 2023, Dr Jeremy Silver is a non-executive director, investor and author, with extensive global experience in digital media, immersive technologies, music and AI/machine learning.

The Cartoon Museum in London has appointed **Beth Bryan** as their new director following the departure of **Joe Sullivan** who has left to join Royal Gunpowder Mills as Chief Executive Officer. Bryan previously served senior roles within the Barbican Centre, Hogarth's House and The National Lottery Heritage Fund. [M+H Advisor](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

The Heritage Railway Association has announced that **Lord Parkinson** of Whitley Bay is to become its new Chair. Lord Parkinson, who served as Minister for Arts, Heritage and Libraries in the UK Government from 2021 to 2024, took up his new role with the UK-wide trade body for the heritage rail sector on 1 October. [HRA](#)

Obituary

Dr Elspeth King

Former museum director and social historian Dr Elspeth King worked for 16 years at the People's Palace and headed up the Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum, where she championed Scottish history, art and heritage. One of her first curatorial decisions sparked controversy when she put Billy Connolly's iconic banana boots – designed by Glasgow pop artist Edmund Smith in 1975 – on display. The BBC recalled 'Some visitors complained that the comedian's profanity-laced routines were too crude to be celebrated in a public museum'. Under her curatorship, the People's Palace won European Museum of the Year in 1981 and British Museum of the Year in 1983. [BBC](#), [The National](#). You can also listen to an interview with Elspeth from 2018 on BBC Sounds where she talks about her career. [BBC Sounds](#)

Catch up

World's first museum of youth culture set to open in London, 3 November 2025, [Independent](#)

Sting back to support venues that fuelled dreams, 31 October 2025, [BBC](#)

Witch trials explored in US and UK museums link, 27 October 2025, [BBC](#)

Courtauld receives £30m gift, largest gift in its history, 14 October 2025, [M+H Advisor](#)

Royal Academy has announced plans to expand its free collection gallery, 3 October 2025, [FAD Magazine](#)

International news

Restitution row: how Nigeria's new home for the Benin bronzes ended up with clay replicas, [Guardian](#)

Egypt's vast \$1bn museum to open in Cairo after two-decade build, 31 October 2025, [Guardian](#)

Japan's Okada Museum forced to sell works to settle founder's \$50 M. legal bill, 24 October 2025, [ARTnews](#)

Zayed National Museum in Abu Dhabi sets opening date, 16 October 2025, [Bloolooop](#)

Get Cartier! How Jean Nouvel turned an old Paris department store into a museum to rival the Louvre, 10 October 2025, [Guardian](#)

French museums are worried Trump will end a major tax deduction for American patrons key to their funding, 7 October 2025, [ARTnews](#)

Jobs

Join **Julie's Bicycle's** Board of Trustees - Julie's Bicycle is seeking a Chair, Treasurer, and new Trustees to help lead the not-for-profit organisation mobilising the arts and culture to take action on the climate, nature, and justice crisis. Deadline for applications: 23 November 2025. [JB](#)

Collections Trust are also looking for a Chair for their Independent Audit Committee. The deadline has been extended into November. [Collections Trust](#)

Queer Heritage South is looking for an Associate Exhibition Curator to help curate an exciting new exhibition at Brighton Museum & Art Gallery. [QHS](#)

Posts being advertised on the [NMDC jobs board](#) this month include:

- [Associate Curator of Paintings 1600-1800 - National Gallery](#)
- [Senior Interpretation Manager - British Library](#)
- [Editorial Assistant, Tate Etc and Guide - Tate](#)
- [Curator, Digital Futures 2 - Imperial War Museums](#)
- [Keeper of Africa Oceania and the Americas - British Museum](#)

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