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NMDC news



'A Philosopher Giving that Lecture on an Orrery, in which a Lamp is put in the Place of the Sun' by Joseph Wright, 1766. c. Derby Museums Trust. The painting is currently on loan to the Science Museum for its exhibition 'The Art of Innovation' and is the starting point of a BBC Radio 4 series of the same name.

Museum bodies call for action on a 'quiet crisis' in funding and building maintenance

NMDC, the Museums Association and Art Fund have written a joint open letter to Government describing how infrastructure maintenance in museums has reached breaking point, following a decade of cuts. Published in *The Times*, it argues that delayed essential repairs risks disasters like those experienced at the National Museum of Brazil, Notre-Dame and Glasgow School of Art, but that there is also a 'quiet crisis' as digitisation projects stall from lack of funds and collections are placed at risk by dilapidated buildings. SMG Director Sir Ian Blatchford said that in regional museums alone, around £200m is needed for essential work, with a 'separate dialogue' needed about national museums. These problems are also making insurance for museum loans more difficult, because of the risks of bringing collections into buildings with poor air conditioning and other infrastructure risks. Examples can be found across the country – Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery has wiring which dates back to First World War and storage at Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery was flooded by sewage in the summer. Derby Museums Director Tony Butler told Radio 4 *"It's a knife edge. We've got stores where we're constantly moving around buckets to catch rainwater that's coming through the roof. I've got one museum store where the floor collapsed and it had museum objects that are balancing on broken floorboards...we're not saying that museums will shut tomorrow, but it does feel like at the moment we are literally papering over the cracks."* [NMDC](#) (open letter) [Times](#) (paywall after three articles), [BBC Radio 4](#) (begins at 21mins), [Museums Journal](#),

Members' news

Wallace Collection takes 'transformative' step to begin making loans for the first time

The Wallace Collection will begin making temporary loans for the first time in its 119 year history after its Trustees and Director Dr Xavier Bray obtained permission to lend from the Charity Commission and DCMS. Previously the terms of Lady Wallace's bequest had been interpreted to mean that lending was not an option, but now the collection is keen to pursue a change of direction. Dr Bray said that despite being in Central London, working for the Wallace had previously been a somewhat 'monastic' existence 'because people know that they will never get anything out of you'. He added *"for me it is a bit like the Hobbit and you see that dragon just sitting on the treasure, not letting anybody get close to it. This is a major new chapter for the Wallace, it's likely to be transformative in terms of how we work and how our curators and conservation staff think about the collection."* Chairman António Horta-Osório said that changing times mean that *"in order fully to engage with the international art community, we must be able to share expertise and resources with our colleagues in other great collections around the world"*. The Collection is now in talks with museums in London, Los Angeles and Vienna about possible loans. The museum also recently tripled space in the basement for temporary exhibitions, which are also likely to be enhanced by a lending two-way street. [The Art Newspaper](#), [The Guardian](#)

Manchester Museums to lead new sector support body on arts and ageing

The Baring Foundation is funding a new sector support body on arts and ageing and has awarded £250k to a consortium led by Manchester Museums to carry out the work. The Whitworth, Manchester Art Gallery and Greater Manchester Combined Authority are also involved in the group, which will aim to make the cultural sector more age friendly. The work will begin with an investigation in which older people will lead decisions and identify priorities. Director of Manchester Museum Esme Ward said *"it's time to build momentum and for imaginative, brave thinking and action if we are going to address ageism and realise the potential of a creative ageing society. I'd encourage those who share this ambition – arts organisations, cultural leaders, policy makers, academics, artists and investors – to step up and get involved."* [Baring Foundation](#), [Manchester Museums](#)

The Art of Innovation: landmark radio series begins alongside new Science Museum exhibition

The Science Museum has launched its new exhibition 'The Art of Innovation: from Enlightenment to Dark Matter' in tandem with a new major Radio 4 series. Both consider the intersection between scientific progress and social change, and explore these through the medium of artworks which show how artists have perceived changing times. The story begins in the late 18th century, with Joseph Wright's 'A Philosopher Giving that Lecture on an Orrery in which a Lamp is put in the Place of the Sun' – a star object loaned by Derby Museums Trust to the exhibition and discussed in the first episode of the series. Later episodes feature Gillray cartoons, mauve dye, 50s fabrics with patterns based on X-ray crystallography, hellish but awe-inspiring depictions of the Industrial Revolution and socially contested experiments with nitrous oxide. The series runs in 24 episodes throughout October. [Science Museum](#), [BBC Radio 4](#)

Also: The BBC has produced a two minute film showing how the Black Country Living Museum is used as a film location for Peaky Blinders, including its forge, backstreets and schoolroom. [BBC](#)

Cultural policy



Caricature of a chemical lecture by James Gillray, England, 1802 c. Science Museum Group

Creative Industries Federation announces merger with Creative England

The Creative Industries Federation and Creative England have announced that they plan to merge in Spring 2020, to make best use of a substantial overlap in aims and experience. The new organisation will be led by current Creative England CEO Caroline Norbury. In the meantime the two organisations will be seeking views from stakeholders and conducting a survey. Creative England has a history of 'uncovering, investing and growing creative businesses outside of London', which will complement CIF's work in building networks and acting as a mouthpiece for the sector. In a joint statement, the organisations said that together they will be "better placed to bring together SMEs, creators, freelancers and start-ups with big brands; represent and champion the interdependent commercial and subsidised elements of the creative industries; support creative businesses at grassroots level; and work with partners to secure the success of the creative economy in every region of the UK and across the devolved nations." [CIF/CE](#) (includes survey link), [Arts Professional](#)

Tom Watson speaks on Brexit, Labour cultural policy and the future of the Creative Industries

Shadow Culture Secretary Tom Watson has given a speech to the Creative Industries Federation about the risks to the sector from Brexit, especially with no deal, and issues beyond it, particularly the decline in cultural infrastructure. He said that having supported Brexit with a deal for two and a half years after the 2016 vote, he now supports a second referendum, in which he would campaign to Remain. He pointed to the economic, job creating benefits of culture, pointing to how Peaky Blinders increased tourism to the West Midlands, including Black Country Living Museum visits which are up by a third since 2014. He also said that culture gives communities the right to tell their own stories, but that this has been squeezed by Government cuts. *“Communities across the country have seen their theatres close, their museum opening hours curtailed, and the budgets for their local arts centres cut to the very bone. Music venues are being squeezed by developers on the one hand, and rising business rates on the other.”* With a General Election also likely in the near future, he also outlined some of the ideas that Labour is considering endorsing. These include:

- Piloting a tourism levy so communities have more of a say in cultural provision. This would give local authorities a new revenue stream for investing in tourist attractions including cultural venues.
- Labour has already committed to maintaining existing creative industries tax reliefs, but is exploring how they could be expanded – for example to literature and to new mediums such as podcasting.
- It is exploring the idea of Towns of Culture ([proposed last year](#) by Yvette Cooper MP).
- Watson also pointed to the commitment in Labour’s 2017 manifesto for a £1bn cultural capital fund and said that the party remains committed to ‘rebalance the cultural economy’.

Watson said that he is extending an ‘open invitation: if you have policies for the creative industries that you want us to consider for our manifesto, let us know’. [CIF](#), [The Art Newspaper](#)

Also: The West Midlands intends to grow its tourism industry by £1bn, or 9% over the next decade. The West Midlands Growth Company believes that 19,000 new jobs can be created using the springboard of major events including Coventry City of Culture and Birmingham hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2022. [ALVA](#)

Power and Privilege report: MA considers practical tools to transform museums

The MA has published a new report ‘Power and Privilege in the 21st century museum’ which explores the barriers to inclusion and offers practical tools to transform museums so that they reflect the breadth of society. It consists in part of short pieces written by people who took part in the ‘Transformers: Diversify’ programme of career training, suggesting tactics for creating change, from small nudges to organised programmes. These range from Joe Sullivan’s experience of building a co-developed programme with people from a local estate when he worked at the RAF museum to Dan Vo’s LGBTQ tours at the V&A. There is also an assessment of how far the sector has come. Sara Huws, Civic Engagement Officer at Cardiff University Libraries argues that despite at least a decade of ‘special projects’, the pace of real change in the sector has been ‘glacial’. She says *“let’s make space for established campaigners and activists, marginalised people, community organisers and grassroots organisations. Let’s make an invitation to use the wealth of our museums, to liberate it, to move unmediated through our spaces and collections, on their own terms.”* [Museums Journal](#) (article), [Museums Journal](#) (full report)

Olympia seeks museum partners as it gains approval for £1bn redevelopment

Hammersmith and Fulham Council has approved £1bn redevelopment plans for the London Olympia events centre, which will include a four screen cinema, a theatre, performing arts venue, co-working spaces, hotels and shops. The project will be completed in 2023, and is aimed to attract £9m in consumer spending and 10 million visitors to the borough. Developers are keen to speak to potential museum partners saying *“where the world is going we’re very much into experiences, and those experiences can exist in what is currently classed as museums and the visual arts.”* [Arts Professional](#)

Appointment and resignations

Stephen Deuchar will step down as Director of the Art Fund next March after a decade in post. He has recently joined the Board of the British Council and is planning new projects within and beyond the cultural sector. [Art Fund](#), Museums Journal, [Arts Industry](#)

Sir Peter Luff is stepping down early as Chair of the National Lottery Heritage Fund at the end of 2019 because of a medical condition. [NLHF](#)

Helen Whatley has become the third person to hold the post of Arts Minister this year, replacing Rebecca Pow who is moving to Defra. [Arts Professional](#)

Design Museum co-Directors Deyan Sudjic and Alice Black have announced that they will step down in January 2020, having worked together for 12 years. They will be replaced by Tim Marlow, currently Artistic Director at the RA. [The Art Newspaper](#), [Dezeen](#), [The Art Newspaper](#),

Surveys



A visitor looks at 'Supersonic', 1948-1952, c. Science Museum Group

Art Fund seeks experiences of using the Cultural Gifts Scheme to grow collections

Since 2017, The Art Fund has been working in partnership with DACS and Museums Sheffield to explore how the Cultural Gifts Scheme has been working for museums, donors and artists. This scheme allows donors to gift works to the nation in return for a modest tax benefit. Now The Art Fund is running a survey to discover how well it is working for museums as a means of growing collections. All replies will be anonymised and used to inform recommendations The Art Fund gives on the future of the scheme. The consultation runs to 14th October. [The Art Fund](#) (survey)

Also: The Scottish Government is consulting on whether and how to introduce a Transient Visitor Levy or tourist tax without creating an excessive administrative burden. The deadline for responses is 2nd December. [Scottish Government](#)

Museums, climate change and contributing to the Paris Agreement

Museums are recognised in the workplan that arose from the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate, but comparatively few realise this. Now the consultancy Curating Tomorrow has put together a survey to assess how far museums and galleries are working in line with the Agreement and could contribute to it, especially around education and public engagement. The survey consists of '40 short questions' and is aimed at museums of all sizes and museum networks. Only one response is needed per institution. [Curating Tomorrow](#) (survey), [Curating Tomorrow](#) (overview)

Also: Curating Tomorrow has also published a how-to guide to museums and sustainable development goals. [Curating Tomorrow](#)

Hosting and developing touring exhibitions

The Art Fund and Creative Scotland have opened two surveys on hosting and developing touring exhibitions. There is an organisation survey for museums, galleries and cultural organisations of all kinds, and a sector support survey for grant making bodies and those providing other services, whether or not they currently support touring exhibitions. The deadline for submissions is 31st October. [Organisation survey](#), [Sector survey](#)

Events

TEG's Sharing Collections Symposium

The Touring Exhibitions Group is hosting a symposium in partnership with NMDC and Art Fund looking back on what has been achieved in expanding support and funding for touring exhibitions over the past five years, and looking forward to the next moves. 'Sharing Collections Symposium: What's been achieved? What's next?' will feature projects including the hugely successful Dippy on Tour, Ceredigion Museum's 'Sheep' exhibition with loans from the Tate, and Green Howards Museum's 'Hostile Environment' exhibition which featured loans from Royal Armouries and National Museums Scotland. There will also be opportunities for networking, one to one surgeries and presentations on the principles of lending and borrowing. The event takes place on November 15th at the Natural History Museum. Tickets are £25 - £35. [TEG](#)

Bonnie Greer to give keynote at National Programmes Conference

Writer, broadcaster and former BM Trustee Bonnie Greer has been announced as the keynote speaker at the 2019 National Programmes Conference, which explores aspects of partnership work in the museum sector. The theme this year is issues of representation, authority and power with particular focus on disability, class, gender, race and sexuality. The event will include over 35 sessions with a full programme to be published a fortnight before the conference. Tickets are heavily subsidised and range from £8 - £15. The event takes place on 4th November at the British Museum. [British Museum](#)

How can museums support young people's employability?

Kids in Museums is holding a symposium exploring how museums are supporting young people to gain workplace skills – ranging from apprenticeships specific to museums and programmes that develop broader employability. Speakers include Liz Williams MBE, Social Mobility Commissioner for the UK and a keynote from a young person to be announced. There will also be case studies from National Museum Wales, Barbican, London Transport Museum and others, and a surgery to explore how attendees can expand their practice. The event takes place at London Transport Museum on 12th November. Ticket prices range from £11 for young freelancers to £54 for large organisations. [Kids in Museums](#)

Inclusivity and audiences day – smashing systems and building blocks

Inclusivity and Audiences day is an Arts Marketing Association event combining talks and workshops, offering tools to change how organisations work towards inclusivity. The event takes place at Birmingham Hippodrome on 7th November. Tickets range from £72 - £219 + VAT; there are also 13 bursaries covering up to 100% of ticket cost. [AMA](#)

Arts Fundraising training events - limited £10 tickets available

Arts Fundraising is offering 25 £10 tickets for its training events - interested people can apply competitively by filling out a survey to briefly explain why they would like the training. Topics range from being a trustee to asking people for money and digital tools for fundraising. [Arts Fundraising](#), (survey), [Arts Fundraising](#) (course list)

Oxford Cultural Leaders 2020

A new round of Oxford Cultural Leaders has been announced for 2020. The popular course is run by University of Oxford's Saïd Business School and its Gardens Libraries and Museums. It offers a week-long deep dive into leadership for heads of department, directors and senior managers. IWM Director Diane Lees says *"I firmly believe that the success of the sector is reliant on a new type of leader - one who embraces change; is entrepreneurial in outlook; who continually looks outwards to learn new things and yet is rooted in a strong sense of values, core purpose and public service"* and the course reflects this philosophy. Fees are dependent on institution size and begin at £2.8k. The course itself runs in Oxford from 22nd – 27th March 2020. [GLAM](#)

Digital History Seminars 2019 – 2020

The Institute of Historical Research is running a new series of monthly seminars until June 2020 focusing on historical research that has been made possible by electronic tools and resources. Topics include VR, the British Library's major Living with Machines project, the Great War as discussed on twitter and 19th century conceptions of nationalism. All are welcome to attend either in person or via the livestream. Free. [IHR](#)

Visible Mending: The Festival of Maintenance livestream – from archives to road repair

The second Festival of Maintenance took place in Liverpool in late September, but a complete livestream of the one-day conference is still available online. The wide-ranging programme includes a talk on 'keeping things dead' from The World Museum, to the British Library's Dr Mia Ridge discussing what digital ephemera we should keep and maintain, and what born-digital artefacts are not being collected by any institution. Within and beyond museums, the conference captures a change in social attitude, which values repair and making as a source of creativity and sustainability: speakers describe their specialisms in mending everything from clothes to pot holes. [Festival of Maintenance](#), [Youtube](#) (complete livestream)

- Has your institution preserved the livestream of a recent conference, or produced a podcast which relates to innovation, policy or networks in the museum sector? Let us know at news@nationalmuseums.org.uk, and we will briefly flag up recent resources.

M + H Awards 2020 now open for entries

The 17th M + H Awards opened for entries on 1st October. There are 13 categories with topics ranging from international projects, marketing and comms, temporary exhibitions, shops, innovation and restoration. Seven leaders of museum bodies including the RAF Museum's Maggie Appleton and LTM's Sam Mullins will be judging the entries. The deadline for entries is 31st January 2020. [M + H](#)

New international Climate Heritage Network launches in Edinburgh

The Climate Heritage Network is a new international group drawing together cultural, heritage, government and quasi-governmental groups which have made concrete pledges towards addressing climate change. It offers support to groups signing its MoU, and also aims to mobilise thousands of people from museum professionals to academics who have not yet been practically engaged on the issue. The Network is launching with a conference in Edinburgh on October 24th - 25th, and is also offering social media assets to organisations wishing to raise awareness of its work. [Climate Heritage Network](#),

Add your events and resources to VocalEyes listings for visually impaired people

VocalEyes is inviting museums and galleries offering events for visually impaired people to add them to its listings service. It is currently accepting events for the period December – February. The form can also be used to submit long-term resource listings, for instance if you have created a recorded audio-described guide for blind and partially sighted visitors. The deadline for this round is 14th October. [VocalEyes](#) (event form)

Brexit preparedness: events, resources and commentary in brief

As uncertainty continues about when and how the UK will leave the European Union, there has been an uptick in resources offering guidance to the cultural sector. These include:

- The Creative Industries Federation has compiled a list of sector-specific resources and events to help organisations manage ongoing uncertainty, including the possibility of No Deal Brexit. [CIF](#)
- The Government is offering Brexit business readiness events to mid October in cities across the country. [Livegroup](#)
- A short Government announcement by Chancellor Sajid Javid confirms that it will guarantee 'certain EU programme funding' including Horizon 2020 worth £4.3bn in 2019 - 20. [uk](#)
- HMRC is offering a number of Brexit webinars, particularly aimed at those involved in import and export, which run on three more dates during October. [HMRC](#)
- The Office for Civil Society has also provided signposting, on topics including EU funding and Data protection. [DCMS](#)

There has also been some commentary from sector bodies:

- James Bird, Head of External Affairs at the Southbank Centre has blogged briefly for ACE, outlining the steps it has taken to prepare for Brexit. [ACE blog](#)
- Groups representing musicians have said that no deal Brexit will make touring 'unviable' for many smaller artists who often operate on tiny margins, with barriers including the cost of a carnet of visas, bureaucracy and the difficulties of carrying band equipment and merchandise across borders during a tour. [Guardian](#)

New No Deal Brexit guidance for DCMS sectors

In early October Government published a new series of guidance papers for the DCMS sector, covering actions to take in the event of No Deal Brexit. There are sector specific publications for those working in tourism, creative industries, the cultural sector and for those touring Europe or exporting objects of cultural interest. [Gov.uk](#) (full set of guidance papers), [M + H](#) (one page summary)

Employment



Coalbrookdale by Night, by Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, 1801 c. Science Museum Group

Partners announced for new round of Museum Futures scheme for non-graduates

Museum Futures is a programme giving a diverse group of people aged 18 – 24, who do not have a degree or prior museum experience, a chance to receive paid training for a year. As well as receiving on-the-job training in digital skills, they work towards a Level 3 diploma in Cultural Heritage. Nine museums have been announced as partners in the second 2020 round, these are: Birmingham Museums Trust, Bristol Culture/South West Museum Development, Derby Museums, Hastings Museum & Art Gallery, Horniman Museum, Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum, Tullie House, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums and the British Museum. The museums will be offering taster days in the autumn to local people who are interested in applying. Mitch Hudson, who is a 2019 trainee at Norfolk Museums Service said *“I feel that taking part in Museum Futures is a big achievement for me, as I previously was unsure of what direction to go in heritage, let alone having the confidence to work in it.”* There will be a final third round in 2021. [Museum Futures](#) (link to apply to attend taster days at participating museums), [British Museum](#) (overview to 2021) [Museum Futures](#)

MGS film tells the story of its Skills for Success programme

Museums Galleries Scotland has produced a short film on its Skills for Success programme, which offered places to 22 non-graduates to take up paid opportunities across Scotland and gain a qualification. Participant Ellen Pryde, an Engagement Trainee at the Scottish Crannog Centre has experienced everything from tour guiding to marketing and curating and says *“this has been a really good opportunity to find a career rather than just a job. Usually people who work in this sector have been to university, but bringing someone like me in is a fresh pair of eyes and a different perspective.”* [MGS](#) (short film), [MGS](#), [NLHF](#)

New guide for disabled people using DWP's Access to Work in the cultural sector

The Department for Work and Pensions' Access to Work scheme offers a range of support to help disabled people into employment including grants for travel, equipment and support workers. However, as artist Sue Austin and Disability Arts Online's CEO Trish Wheatley discovered when working together on an application, the reality of applying can be complex and daunting. Supported by ACE, Trish Wheatley has now produced a guide to applying specifically for those working in the cultural sector – including employers, employees and freelance workers. It is available in a variety of formats including BSL and audio. Disabled people remain among the most under-represented in the cultural sector, with only 4% working in MPMs in 2017 – 18, compared with 20% across all employers Disability Arts Online is offering organisations consultation on accessible recruitment as well as free one-to-one support to disabled artists and cultural workers. [ACE](#)

Black Country Living Museum seeks 18 - 25 year olds to join Board

Black Country Living Museum is seeking new trustees and is keen to appoint a younger generation aged 18 – 25 for the first time. Tate and Kids in Museums have also appointed younger trustees in recent years to offer better, more diverse representation. [BCLM](#)

Funding

NLHF encourages heritage bodies and museums to seek funding for international working

NLHF is encouraging more heritage bodies to consider international working as a route to generating more visitors at home and abroad. It gives the example of Historic Dockyard, Chatham which worked with Rijksmuseum in the Netherlands on loans and shared working to commemorate 350 years since the Medway Raid by the Dutch navy in 1667. The Dockyard received 15% more visits from the Netherlands during the commemoration events and 10% more UK tourists. It is now exploring options to work with several other European countries, the US and China. Recent research by BOP consulting suggests international work is a good route to growing audiences, and NLHF is encouraging such partnerships in its Strategic Framework to 2024. [NLHF](#) (Chatham Dockyard/Rijksmuseum), [NLHF](#) (research)

Heritage Alliance publishes new funding directory for international work

The Heritage Alliance has published a new directory listing 117 funding bodies which will support international partnership work – ranging from large players such as ACE and Art Fund to less well known trusts, foundations and travel fellowships. Many of the funders listed are also open to applications from across the cultural sector, including museums and galleries. Heritage Alliance has also published a brochure giving short case studies of UK heritage organisations working on international projects, from cultural exchange with China to the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust. [Heritage Alliance](#) (directory), [Heritage Alliance](#) (examples of international projects)

Also: The Heritage Alliance has also produced a brochure of case studies giving examples of the heritage sector working with creative industries, with some examples from the museum sector. Pairings include museums and dance and heritage sites finding spaces for small conservation businesses. [Heritage Alliance](#)

Awards



A visitor admires Paradigm (Structural), 2015, by Conrad Shawcross courtesy of the artist and Victoria Miro, London-Venice c. Science Museum Group

European Museum Academy, Children in Museums Award

The European Museum Academy has opened its call for entries for the 2020 Children in Museums Award, with a deadline of 15th February 2020. The prize is for innovation in any exhibition or programming for under 14s. [EMA](#)

Jewish Museum announced as winner of the Museums Change Lives Awards

The Jewish Museum in London has been announced as winner of the MA's 2019 Museums Change Lives Award for its exhibition 'Jews, Money, Myth' which explores the complicated history of Jewish people and money over two millennia and how stereotypes have persisted. The exhibition is in partnership with Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism at Birkbeck University and based on groundbreaking new research. Other winners included:

- Kirkleatham Museum in Redcar, which won the Best Small Museum Award for its co-curated project 'Steel Stories' about local industry.
- Victoria Rogers, manager of Museum of Cardiff won the Radical Changemaker Award for work including a dementia-friendly service and diversifying audiences.

- Leeds Museums and Galleries won the Judges' Award for Environmental Sustainability for 'Beavers to Weavers' which explores how animals take only what they need from their environment. The exhibition itself used sustainable and environmental materials.

Judge Moira Sinclair, who is Chief Executive of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation said *"we are all too aware of the divisions that our society is facing – the ability to see and accommodate difference, to empathise and to find commonality is a real issue, it was so heartening to hear, through the judging process, how museums across the country are responding."* [Museums Journal](#) (winners), [Museums Journal](#) (shortlist), [Jewish Museum](#), [Kirkleatham Museum](#), [Secret Life of Objects Blog](#) (Leeds Museums)

Multaka project wins Collections Trust Award for two Oxford museums

The Multaka project, which trained refugees to become tour guides and co-curators at two Oxford museums has won the Collections Trust Award 2019, themed this year around 'use led' collections. The project allowed recent forced migrants from Africa and the Middle East to bring their own perspectives to the understanding of collections while also improving their English. The Pitt Rivers Museum and History of Science Museum share the £1k award. [Museums Journal](#), [Collections Trust](#)

Saving, lending and repatriation of collections

Record year for objects acquired through the AiL and Cultural Gifts schemes

The annual report of the Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts tax relief schemes for 2018 – 19 shows record results, with 46 objects or collections worth £58.6m being acquired for the nation. This is double the value of collections acquired in the previous year. The works included two major political archives created by Clement Atlee and Tony Benn, a collection of African textiles, Islamic ceramics, works by Damien Hirst and paintings including Sir Peter Paul Rubens' 'Portrait of Emperor Charles V'. Institutions receiving works through the schemes for the first time include The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Museum of East Anglian Life, Towner Art Gallery, and Norfolk Record Office. Edward Harley, Chair of the AiL panel said *"it is heartening to see that the list of first time allocatees continues to grow and that it has been a bumper year for high value items going outside the capital."* [Arts Industry](#), [ACE](#) (whole report)

Also: See under the Surveys section of this newsletter, to give feedback to the Art Fund on experiences of the Cultural Gifts Scheme.

Business historians seek to save Thomas Cook archives

As well as leaving thousands of travellers stranded abroad, the collapse of travel company Thomas Cook after 178 years has left the fate of its business archives in doubt. Its earlier materials tell the story of how Cook's vision made travel far more widely available, and not just the preserve of aristocrats. Initially vilified as a 'modern Attila' leading 'barbarian hordes' into Italy, he had transformed the travel scene by 1877. Now the Business Archives Council and individual historians are hoping to preserve the materials. Stephanie Decker, Professor in Organisation Studies and History at Aston University says that preserving business archives in these circumstances can be difficult as administrators may take little interest in collections that do not include art, and it is costly to take on large bodies of material that will need extensive care. [The Conversation](#)

Trial copy of Lady Chatterley's Lover to remain in the UK

Earlier this year DCMS placed an export bar on an annotated copy of Lady Chatterley's Lover used by the judge in the landmark 1960 obscenity trial. Following a crowdfunding campaign begun by English PEN and the estate of TS Eliot, the book has been acquired by the University of Bristol. [Guardian](#)

UK will be largest lender to significant Louvre exhibition

The Louvre's significant Leonardo exhibition has been planned to 'gather the greatest number of works' by the artist to mark his 500th anniversary. Opening on 24th October, it will include more loans from the UK than any other country. The 40 works, or a quarter of the total, include 23 from the Royal Collection and five from the British Museum as well as loans from the Fitzwilliam, Ashmolean, National Galleries Scotland, National Gallery and the Codex Arundel from the British Library. Louvre curator Vincent Delieuvin told *The Art Newspaper* 'Britain, ironically in this moment of Brexit, is the most important lender.' [The Art Newspaper](#), [The Art Newspaper](#)

Art Detective project discovers Van Dyck painting at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

Art UK's Art Detective project has had a major success as it was confirmed that a painting in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool is by Van Dyck himself and not simply from his studio. Art Detective is an online forum connecting the public and art specialists to try to discover more about art in public collections. In September 2018, art dealer Fergus Hall wrote to project expressing suspicions that 'The Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia 1566 - 1633' was painted by the Flemish master and subsequent investigation by the group confirmed it. The painting shows an older woman dressed the monastic costume of the Poor Clares: she was joint ruler of the Spanish Netherlands from 1598, and later Governor after the death of her husband. Art Detective Group Leader Bendor Grosvenor said "*this is a great example of how Art Detective can bring museums, experts and the public together to advance art history.*" [Art UK](#) (painting)

Mapping Digitised Collections in England

The Collections Trust has produced a report 'Mapping Digitised Collections in England' at the request of DCMS. It was written in response to the Culture White Paper ambition to offer routes to digitally access collections in depth, and successfully search across collections. The project developed a prototype, using AI and various plugins, to explore how that might work. Findings include:

- It should be possible to offer users a single interface that allows users to access data from a wide range of institutions.
- It is possible to build something sufficiently flexible to work around different cataloguing standards between and even within institutions.
- However, when various AI systems were used to process the data, results were mixed – AI would need to be trained specifically on cultural data.
- Success would also be dependent on all institutions maintaining their data, to prevent broken links across a system.
- There would however be significant benefits to the sector, including close working with higher education, becoming a 'pipeline' for international collaboration and aiding the work of those searching across data currently siloed in many museums.

[Gov.uk](#)

Decolonising collections

Rethinking relationships and building trust around African collections

A panel at the MA's recent conference discussed the current state of progress in re-evaluating how UK museums make available and display their African collections acquired during colonialism. The recent report by Sarr and Savoy on African collections in French museums, which included recommending repatriation, has caused reaction across the world. Several UK museums including the Horniman, Pitt Rivers, Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and National Museums Liverpool are also about to embark on a project about their African collections and these issues. The panel was chaired by Horniman Director Nick Merriman and included an international speakers Shadreck Chirikure, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Cape Town and Juma Ondeng of the National Museums of Kenya.

The panel agreed that the French report has been significant in moving the goalposts of discussion, but also argued that it was 'forty years too late' and still approached from a top-down perspective, rather than with significant input from origin communities. Discontinuity was a major theme - a society which has lost significant objects does not stand still - attitudes to ceremonial objects and practices may have changed in the intervening time and people will have created new stories. Horniman Museum's JC Niala commented 'the life history of these objects cannot be chopped off in one century and restarted in another'. Instead, any form of reintegration also has to acknowledge what has happened to the objects and people in the intervening time.

The panel discussed how to create work with communities that is generally effective: JC Niala says that museums should not open collections with no guide or context, but instead must make it genuinely easy to find and interpret material. Tshepo Skwambane, was involved in Brighton Museum's 'Fashion Cities Africa' alongside fellow panel member Helen Mears who is Keeper of World Art. He said that 'working in museums is a luxury', not necessarily available to those with rent

and bills to pay unless projects are properly resourced. He praised the approach of the Brighton project in bringing academics and community members together on an equal footing. Diaspora communities can often act as a 'bridge' in the current cultural context, and involving artists allows for interpretations in the light of history and contemporary society. Colonialist cataloguing terms of the past - which often say little about the maker or provenance of an object can also act as roadblocks to better understanding and reinterpretation.

All livestreamed films from the MA conference will be edited this week and placed on the MA website in its 2019 Brighton archive. [Museums Association](#), (African collections panel film), [Museums Association](#) (archive of Brighton 2019), [MA conference app](#) (full panel details)

Manchester Museum returns sacred and ceremonial objects to Australia

Manchester Museum has repatriated 43 secret sacred and ceremonial objects to four groups across Australia: Aranda people of Central Australia, Gangalidda Garawa peoples' of northwest Queensland, Nyamal people of the Pilbara and Yawuru people of Broome. The museum has held the material since the 1920s and has been involved in some repatriations to other countries of origin since 2003. This work was in partnership with Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) – Manchester Museum Director Esme Ward says she hopes the collaboration will help as they seek to “*promote understanding between cultures, learn together and build new relationships for the future*”. [Manchester Museum](#), [AIATSIS](#)

Visitor statistics



A visitor admires Paradigm (Structural), 2015, by Conrad Shawcross courtesy of the artist and Victoria Miro, London-Venice c. Science Museum Group

Taking Part statistics

DCMS has published Taking Part statistics for cultural and sport engagement for adults and children for the year 2018 – 19. Figures show:

- 62% of children aged 5 – 15 visited museums in the past year, up from 58.8% in 2017 – 18, but similar to previous years.
- 2% of adults visited a museum, again a similar figure to the previous year, but significantly up from 42.3% when figures were first collected in 2005 – 6.

- The frequency of adult visits was also similar to the previous year: 0.5% of adults visited a museum or gallery at least once a week, 4.1% at least once a month, 16.6% three to four times a year and 28.9% once or twice a year.
- The most popular reasons for visiting are interest in the subject (48.3%) followed by spending time with friends and family (36.9%). Non-visitors cited lack of time (39.3%), lack of interest (36.3%), health or disability (12.4%) or difficulty getting there (7.9%).
- Just over a quarter of adults used a museum website or app, most frequently to find out basic information including programme, opening times or to order tickets. A significant minority of around 15% come to websites to look at collection items.
- The socio-economic gap between museum visitors has remained consistent since Taking Part began in 2005 – 6. In 2018 – 19, 36.1% of visitors were from the lower socio-economic group and 60.1% from the upper socio-economic group. Ethnicity also remains a factor, with people from the 'Mixed' group most likely to visit at 60%, White 51.1%, Black 33.5% and Asian 43.7%.
- Figures for arts, heritage and library use were all stable over the last year, although library usage is considerably down since 2005 – 6, arts have remained the same, and heritage is up by 3%. For the first time, Taking Part statistics are also tracking general use of digital (not just within the cultural sector).

[Gov.uk](#) (overview), [Gov.uk](#) (detail), [Gov.uk](#) (child statistics)

Figures published for arts, culture and museum visits in Northern Ireland

Figures have also been published for cultural visits in Northern Ireland for the period 2018 – 19. The figures show:

- 49% of adults have visited a museum or science centre in the last year, a figure very similar to England (50.2%).
- 30% visited a local museum in the last year, and 35% visited one of the three national museums, very similar figures to 2017 – 18, although national museum visits are still down from a peak of 38% in 2012 – 13.

[Department for Communities](#)

In brief: growing visitor numbers from Dundee to Plymouth

A number of museums have announced landmark visitor statistics this month:

- V&A Dundee has achieved 830,000 visitors as it turns one. [V&A Dundee](#)
- The effect of Dippy on Tour on visitor figures continues, with Great North Museum Hancock reporting a spike to 107,944 visitors over six weeks, which is 51% above its average footfall, plus 'a big uplift in shop sales and donation'. The benefit to the local economy has also been calculated at over £1m. [M + H](#)
- 275,000 people have visited Bolton Museum since its significant £3.8m refurbishment a year ago, which has particularly showcased the museum's Egyptian collection. [M + H](#)
- The Mary Rose Museum in Plymouth has welcomed its two millionth visitor after opening in 2013. [M + H](#)

British Museum revises visitor figures upwards to become most popular UK attraction

The British Museum has revised its visitor numbers upwards for 2018 – 19 after citing a fault in its visitor counting system. The Government has accepted these figures, now up from 5,709,000 to 6,025,000. This makes the BM the most popular attraction in the UK, slightly ahead of Tate Modern's 5,799,000. [The Art Newspaper](#)

AIM warns about fake calls to museums relating to energy and utilities

AIM's Energy Action Group warns that museums are receiving a growing number of fake calls from fraudsters pretending to be from an institution's own energy company. These can be aggressive, with callers claiming that energy contracts have either expired or need to be instantly renewed. AIM has published guidance for dealing with these calls, and offers support from its Energy Action Group to AIM members. [AIM](#)

Education

Arts for Every Child briefing paper: why arts education is a social justice issue

The Cultural Learning Alliance has partnered with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for the fifth in its series of short briefing papers, which mix quotations from thought leaders with a guide to the current evidence and issues. Over four pages 'The Arts for Every Child - why arts education is a social justice issue' describes how an art-deficient education also comes with learning and economic disadvantages. It describes how the arts are a route to building a society with a culture of 'citizenship, tolerance and empathy', whereas those without 'creative or technical outlets' were found to suffer from low self-esteem and unhappiness. Sir Peter Lampl comments: *"young people from less well-off backgrounds in particular don't have access to the benefits that enrichment activities outside the classroom can bring, such as debating, volunteering and the performing arts. We need to ensure we close these gaps in access, so life skills can be harnessed as a driver of social mobility."* [Cultural Learning Alliance](#).

Reinventing Government policy from 1944: Saturday art clubs for every 13 – 16 year old

Meanwhile *The Art Newspaper* podcast takes a look into the deep past of cultural policy as designers and philanthropists Sir John and Frances Sorrell describe how Government in 1944 began to look at plans for the post-war world. It felt concern about international trade and the state of design of British goods; one result was the creation of The Design Council, another was Saturday art classes aimed at 14 year olds. These eventually became the route into the cultural world for both Frances and John. Recently, the Sorrell Foundation has worked towards rekindling the Saturday clubs, with programming aimed at 13 - 16 year olds, including design sessions and gallery visits. The couple are now harnessing the existing infrastructure of school and university buildings and are aiming for a paradigm where everyone in that age bracket can go to a Saturday club in the subject of their choice, throughout the whole year. Sir John says the three crucial underpinnings are that *"it's free...you don't have to go...there are no tests or exams - these young people are very, very tested and this is one respite from it on a Saturday"*. [Sorrell Foundation](#), [The Art Newspaper](#)

Where's Wally? Project aims to grow family visits to 50 museums this autumn

Kids in Museums has partnered with Walker Books, which has just published 'Double Trouble at the Museum' in its Where's Wally series. 50 museums across the UK will host hunts for Wally, tied in with the book, over the autumn. The aim is to attract more family visits during that period. Participating museums range from the V&A to Time & Tide in Great Yarmouth and the Riverside Museum, Glasgow. [M + H](#), [Kids in Museums](#)

International



Cystoseira granulata from Photographs of British Algae Cyanotype Impressions, by Anna Atkins, 1843 c. Science Museum Group

Notre Dame update: €300m raised and conservation underway

Two billionaires have signed agreements to make payments totalling €300m over several years towards the restoration of Notre Dame. Bernard Arnault, France's wealthiest man, contributes €200m and luxury good businessman François Pinault will give €100m. Meanwhile, restoration work to date includes rubble removal by robots, because the risk to human workers from collapsing vaults is too great. Windows have been temporarily removed, the roof has been covered and support has been added to the flying buttresses. Paris is also dealing with the implications of widespread lead pollution, after 430 ton of lead tiling were destroyed in the fire. [The Art Newspaper](#) (funding), [The Art Newspaper](#) (conservation)

Dutch exhibition on Nazi design bans photography amidst fears of glorification

The Design Museum Den Bosch in the Netherlands is hosting an exhibition about the development of Nazi design – including the swastika, Volkswagen Beetle and 1936 Olympic Games – but has banned photography amidst fears that it will be used to glorify the far right on social media. The exhibition has attracted some protest, but the Design Museum argues that exhibitions cannot only concentrate on the 'good side of culture'. It said in a statement "*The Nazis were masters in using design to achieve their goal, to both convince and destroy huge numbers of people. If you wholeheartedly want to be able to say ... '[n]ever again,' you must take time to analyse how the influencing processes worked at the time.*" The exhibition marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Den Bosch from Nazi occupation. [Guardian](#), [Times of Israel](#), [Smithsonian Magazine](#), [Design Museum Den Bosch](#)

Digital

Green Screen Greeks: Samsung Centre reopens after refit – and reaches new virtual audience

The British Museum has reopened its technology hub for young people, the Samsung Digital Discovery Centre after a major upgrade. It has also announced that its partnership with Samsung has been renewed for another five years to 2024. Sessions on offer include 'Build Roman Britain in Minecraft' and 'Green Screen Greeks' where visitors become an ancient Greek athlete and compete against their family. There will also be 35,000 places for children to take part in Virtual Visits over the next five years, where sessions from the Samsung Centre are beamed directly into school classrooms, with activities designed around the realities of classroom technology. BM Director Hartwig Fischer said "*the advances in digital technology have enhanced the learning opportunities within – and now outside – the Museum, and the SDDC has been at the very forefront of our efforts to share the collection more widely.*" [ALVA](#), [Samsung](#)

National Gallery X opens to experiment with the future of 'robotics and AI' in cultural settings

The National Gallery and King's College London have collaborated to open a studio 'National Gallery X' where artists in residence and creatives can explore new technologies in a gallery setting. The space will use cutting edge AI, Robots and 5G connectivity and look at how these will become part of the cultural scene over the next decade. The opening event features composer Peter Weigold's new piece 'Rain, Steam and Speed', which uses sound design and spatial audio technologies developed at King's to respond to Turner's masterpiece. There will be an open call for artists later in the year, and developments will be announced on twitter under the hashtag #ngx. [National Gallery](#), [Twitter](#)

Art apps and 'screen suck' – reviewing digital ways to discover additional data about artworks

The New York Times has road tested various apps, from Shazam to Smartify, which aim to give users information when pointed at artworks. It found the results 'addictive' but variable, with some working well only in partner venues. It also describes how some institutions are moving away from the approach, including The Met, which closed its art app last year in favour of a website and The Jewish Museum in New York, which has developed web-based audio tours instead of visuals, to counteract what it describes as 'screen suck'. [The New York Times](#), [The Jewish Museum](#), [The Jewish Museum](#) (audio tours)

DCMS committee reports on 'Immersive and addictive technologies'

The DCMS committee has published a report assessing the extent to which digital offerings including games, VR and social media might have an addictive quality. It found that there is little hard evidence and that "*the concept of technological 'addictions' is highly contested, and there is a notable difference between clinical and colloquial uses of the term*". However, in discussing the use with a wide variety of respondents including museums, academics and industry, it found some problems and heard views about how to address them. Findings include:

- Some people struggle not to overuse games, apps and social media, leading to 'gaming disorder' and the risk of excessive gambling as well as social anxiety. Games which can enhance some people's lives can damage others.

- Some representatives of digital industries 'lacked honesty and transparency' about what data is collected and the 'psychological underpinning' of how products are designed. There is some good practice – the company Jagex includes in-game characters from mental health charities, but responsible practice varies across the industry.
- Some very young people have social media profiles including 20% of 8 – 11 year olds, as well as 70% of 12 – 15 year olds and 80% of all adults.
- One respondent said that social media influencers with large followings on platforms such as Instagram 'whose posts influence others' behaviours or purchasing habits' have a responsibility to present life as it is, not only an image of perfection.
- Sarah Jones of Birmingham City University said that in her experience VR represents a step change compared with reading a book or watching a film – *"you are talking about jumping into that frame, you are actually part of the environment... That means that the whole experience is intensified massively."*

As part of the Inquiry, committee members visited V&A's exhibition 'Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt' which told the story of their development from the turn of the century to the present. It captures how industry tropes around sex, violence, gender roles and different cultures have been challenged, creating a train of thought which the committee 'factored into discussions during the inquiry'. Parliament.uk

Rethinking galleries

In brief

- A £6m contemporary art gallery is being built at Sherborne in Dorset after the local Cannon Foundation donated the funds. Director Emma Morris, formerly of the Towner Gallery in Eastbourne said *"The Paddock Project is a once in a lifetime opportunity for Sherborne, made possible through a visionary philanthropic act. Since moving to Dorset a year ago I have been struck by the hunger for this project to succeed, from artists, businesses, schools and the wider community."* The gallery, which will open in 2022 will also be a social meeting space and will offer opportunities for creativity. [Arts Industry](#),
- The Arnolfini Gallery in Bristol, which wound down its activities in 2017 after losing ACE funding has reopened under a new model in which it is working closely with the local University of the West of England (UWE). Described as a 'perfect symbiosis' the new arrangement includes an UWE art department on the premises in offices previously let out to business. ACE has also committed to the new plans, contributing £1.8m over the next three years. [Arts Industry](#), [UWE Bristol](#) (City Campus at Arnolfini)

Turner Contemporary: assessing the depth of regeneration through culture

Turner Contemporary, which opened in Margate in 2011 is often heralded as an example of how culture can transform the prospects of 'forgotten' towns as well as being criticised as offering only surface gentrification. A new assessment shows a mixed picture: overall Margate has moved from the 0.3% percentile of most deprived areas to the 1% most deprived: a modest improvement. However, over half of all tourist visits to the town are because of the gallery, new businesses have opened and many find their profits rise in line with the opening of new exhibitions. Artist Tracy Emin also points to the link between the gallery and local young people taking art at GCSE and Margate Art School is launching a master's degree in fine art. Local artist Dan Thompson says that he welcomes the opening of 'fancy galleries' but adds 'we've still got to make that real, deep lasting change.' [BBC](#)

Jobs

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

- [Collections Technician - National Museums Scotland](#)
- [Research Development Manager - British Library](#)
- [Preventive Conservation Engineer - National Gallery](#)
- [Chair of the Board of Trustees - Royal Pavilion and Museum Trust](#)
- [Conservator - Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery](#)

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

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