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Ridley Scott: Building Cinematic Worlds Exhibition (Blade Runner). Monday 1 September – Sunday 5 October 2025, BFI Southbank.

Members' news

NG citizens invites the public to shape National Gallery's future

The National Gallery announced plans to put in place a Citizens Assembly - NG Citizens, which will be a five-year partnership with 50 participants selected by a civic lottery. The group will be drawn from 15,000 invitations that will be sent out across the UK, including individuals who have never engaged with the Gallery before. They will be invited to reflect on the Gallery's purpose, priorities and public value, drawing on evidence from a wide range of experts and perspectives. The new structure hopes to embed the public voice in the gallery's ongoing decision-making processes. Sir Gabriele Finaldi, Director of the National Gallery, said, "At the heart of the National Gallery is our stewardship of a collection that belongs to the UK public - our core aim is to bring people and paintings together. NG Citizens marks a bold new chapter in how we do that. By including the public in our decision-making, we hope to ensure the Gallery remains a truly national institution – inclusive, responsive and shaped by the people it exists for". The National Gallery follows in the footsteps of Birmingham Museums Citizens' Jury who began working with the public in 2024 to reshape the future of Birmingham's museums by directly involving local residents in the decision-making process. [National Gallery, Birmingham Museums](#) (includes report on Citizens' Jury), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), 'Citizens' Assemblies are no way to run the National Gallery' - [Standard](#)

Also: Citizens' juries can help museums fulfil people's needs, [Museums Association](#) (analysis, Jan 25)

Birmingham Museums Trust reopens Museum of the Jewellery Quarter

The Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, which has been closed since 2020 to undergo essential maintenance, has reopened with guided tours and a new self-guided gallery. The Story of the Jewellery Quarter, traces the 200-year history and development of the area and its traditional craft skills, it captures the vital role the jewellery industry has played in the region through a perfectly preserved workshop that offers a glimpse of working life in Birmingham's renowned Jewellery Quarter. Conservation to the site will continue with opening hours running from Thursday to Saturday. [Museum of the Jewellery Quarter](#), [BBC](#), [Secret Birmingham](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Royal Botanic Gardens' secures £5m donation

The Julia Rausing Trust have committed a £5m donation to the Palm House Renovation Project at the Royal Botanic Gardens' in Kew. It is the largest philanthropic gift to date for the project which in total will cost £60m. The funding will enable renovation of Kew's Waterlily House, including transformation of the heating system to achieve net-zero operation. The Royal Botanic Gardens have now secured almost one third of the total funding needed for the project. [RBG](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Norwich Castle reviews are in

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, part of Norfolk Museums Service, reopened on the 7 August 2025. You can listen to a tour with Tim Pestell, Curator of Archaeology at Norwich Castle and a review from historian Alice Loxton from 12 August on [BBC Front Row](#) (from 1:14mins) and watch a documentary on Channel 4 'The Castle: Rebuilding History'. Or catch up on the [BBC](#), [Telegraph](#), [BBC](#) (in pictures), [BBC](#) (Reopened castle getting about 1,500 visitors a day), [Smithsonian Magazine](#)

Members in the news

- The museum where history keeps repeating itself, Beamish, Living Museum of the North, 13 August 2025, [Apollo Magazine](#)
- Shropshire's RAF Museum recognised as top-rated attraction by Tripadvisor, 13 August 2025, [Shropshire Star](#)
- Ozzy Osbourne exhibition at Birmingham museum extended after public demand, 5 August 2025, [Independent](#)
- 'Haunted house' urgently needs extensive repairs, Preston Manor (Brighton & Hove Museums), 5 August 2025, [BBC](#)
- Natural History Museum's new gardens attract 5 million guests in first year, 31 July 2025, [Bloolooop](#)

Images this month

NMDC comprises of 48 members including the British Library, Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and the British Film Institute. This month we are sharing the Ridley Scott season at the BFI. The programme includes talks and screenings and a free exhibition that offers a rare look at film materials from Scott's archive. Ridley Scott: Building Cinematic Worlds - Exhibition runs from Monday 1 September to Sunday 5 October. [BFI](#) (Season), [BFI](#) (exhibition).

Government news

New Arts Minister appointed following Government reshuffle

Following the resignation of Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner on Friday 5th September, there have been various changes in a range of Government offices as a result of a reshuffle. David Lammy has been appointed the new Deputy Prime Minister, Yvette Cooper becomes Foreign Secretary and Shabana Mahmood the new Home Secretary, while Rachel Reeves remains as Chancellor.

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Lisa Nandy remains in post, though Minister of State Chris Bryant who held a joint role in DCMS and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology is now Minister of State at the Department for Business and Trade. Ian Murray who was previously Secretary of State for Scotland will now take on the role of Minister of State. [Gov.uk](#)

Conference season returns for UK political parties

From 28 – 30 September, the Cultural and Creative Industries Pavilion will return to the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool, as dozens of organisations and individuals team up to showcase the transformative impact of creativity. The programme includes a session on Tuesday 30 September which features speakers from NMDC and Art Fund on the topic of 'Creative Learners, Future Leaders: A Curriculum for Growth'. [Labour Conference](#), [CreativeUK](#) (Pavilion programme)

Consumer Rights Act and Online Safety Act causing concerns for the sector

The Times newspaper reported warnings from the National Trust, Tate and the V&A that a new part of the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act (DMCCA) 2024, which is designed to give consumers enhanced cancellation rights for subscription contracts, would allow visitors to purchase a membership and use immediate benefits such as free access to paid exhibitions, before filing for a full refund within 14 days. Under the provisions of the Act, which is set to come into force next year, charity membership schemes will be subject to a "two-week cooling off period", allowing people to cancel them and get a refund, as well as additional requirements that could result in huge additional administration costs for charities. NMDC and its members continue to liaise with wider charity sector bodies to make the case for changes to proposals to ensure charitable membership schemes are not negatively impacted. [Times](#) (£), [M+H Advisor](#)

Arts Professional reported on concerns from the Vagina Museum that online educational content is being filtered and hidden by social media platforms following the introduction of the Online Safety Act which legally requires social media and other internet platforms to block children's access to harmful content in the UK or face large fines. The Museum's Director Zoe Williams cited Bluesky flagging a cartoon image of a vulva as "sexually explicit" and Instagram deeming a photo of a preserved female reproductive system as "sexually suggestive", highlighting that AI image filtering has exacerbated this problem. Director of the Museums Association Sharon Heal was quoted as saying the Vagina Museum has "a clear educational role" and it should "not be being blocked or flagged on social platforms by the new measures in the Online Safety Act". [Arts Professional](#) (Online Safety Act), [M+H Advisor](#).

Data on MGETR claims published

HM Revenues and Customs (HMRC) has published official statistics on the number and value of claims for creative industries tax reliefs and expenditure credits, revealing a £2.4bn payout. The official statistics cover wider claims for Film, High-End Television, Animation, Children's Television, Video Games, Theatre, Orchestra as well as Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Reliefs (MGETR), for the financial year up to March 2024. For the period 2023-24 there were 270 claims for 2,155 projects amounting to £28 million in tax relief. Since MGETR was introduced, companies have made claims for 11,145 exhibitions and £115 million has been paid out. [Gov.uk](#)

New round of DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund

A new round of funding is open to bids from accredited museums, museum services and galleries in England which either have Designated collections or are current Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations. The new £4m round is for 2025-27 and funds need to be spent by March 2027. Grants are available up to £400,000 towards eligible capital projects. Bids submitted for consideration must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- material improvements to the display and interpretation of collections, in permanent galleries, exhibition spaces and public spaces, to enhance visitor experience
- improvements to access and/or interpretation for visitors with disabilities, children and young people, and/or underrepresented audiences
- improvements to environmental controls, collections storage and conservation facilities to enhance the care of collections.

Further details, including criteria, eligibility and a list of eligible organisations, are available on [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

Museums benefit from Heritage At Risk Funding

37 local heritage sites will receive grants to help with repairs, as part of the Government's Heritage At Risk funding. Tullie in Carlisle and the National Waterways Museum in Ellesmere Port will benefit from a share of more than £15m. The Grade II-listed National Waterways Museum, will receive £252,282 to deal with the wet and dry rot in its roof, as well as fixing structural timbers to prevent collapse. Woodhorn Colliery in Northumberland, part of North East Museums, will also receive nearly £1m to repair historic mineshaft structures. Keith Merrin, Director of North East Museums said: "The structures are such an iconic part of Northumberland's landscape and identity and they stand as powerful symbols of the region's proud mining legacy. Their restoration will not only prevent the loss of a vital piece of our heritage, but will completely reawaken the visitor experience around the colliery buildings at Woodhorn Museum and the stories that they tell - reconnecting the community with its past." The Heritage at Risk Fund is part of the £270 million Arts Everywhere Fund. [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), [BBC](https://www.bbc.com), [Museums Association](https://www.museumsassociation.org)

Making a case for funding Scottish Culture

Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) has called on politicians to commit to multi-year funding and increased capital investment for museums in Scotland in response to the Scottish Parliament's Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee's pre-budget scrutiny for 2026-7. The call for a commitment on funding would be to "enable strategic planning, innovation and staff retention". They also called for sustained and expanded funding for the Museum Futures programme, to support collaboration, innovation, and organisational sustainability. [MGS](https://www.mgs.org.uk) The Museums Association also submitted evidence again highlighting the need for core and multi-year funding alongside making a case for more capital funding for museums including an equivalent to the Museum Estates and Development Fund that exists in England. [Parliament.scot](https://www.parliament.scot), [Museums Association](https://www.museumsassociation.org)

Also: John Swinney, First Minister, "Culture investment is the smart thing to do", [Holyrood](https://www.holyrood.gov.uk), [Gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot)

Northern Ireland Executive sets out policy goals for museums

The Heritage, Culture and Creativity (HCC) Programme Framework is a 14 page document that sets out the HCC Programme purpose and approach outlining a vision for museums to "strengthen, connect and innovate" over the next 10 years. First announced last year by communities minister Gordon Lyons, the HCC Programme is designed to address what it describes as the policy vacuum in relation to arts, culture and heritage policy in Northern Ireland. It highlights that for Arts Council of Northern Ireland the opening budget for 2011/12 was £14.1m but in 2023/24 it was £9.7m and raises the question of where investment will come from. [NorthernIreland.gov.uk](https://www.northernireland.gov.uk), [Museums Association](https://www.museumsassociation.org)



Ridley Scott: Building Cinematic Worlds (Thelma and Louise). Monday 1 September – Sunday 5 October 2025, BFI Southbank.

Sector news

Museums Association publishes draft of latest Code of Ethics

The Museums Association draft Code of Ethics provides a framework for the practical application of ethical considerations to the everyday work in museums and reflects a contract of trust between museums and the public. The principles include considering climate impacts and social responsibility in all decision making and asks organisations to ensure integrity by resisting attempts from corporations, funders and governments to unduly influence practice and strategic decision making to fulfil their own private or political interests. Point 3.4 also specifies transitioning away from sponsorship from organisations involved with environmental harm (including fossil fuels), human rights abuses, and other sponsorship that does not align with the values of the museum. The Code also asks museums to embed decolonisation principles, taking time to understand how colonialism is relevant to your organisation and recommends using MA decolonisation guidance to support your work. Museums Association members will be able to vote to ratify the new code from 15 September until the MA's AGM, which will take place at their conference in October. [Museums Association](#) (code), 'Museums Association advice calls for 'transition away' from fossil fuel sponsors', [Arts Professional](#), [MA Conference](#)

American museum independence sparks concerns for the wider sector

US museum bodies have been forced to speak out against 'growing threat' of government censorship following intervention from the administration of American President, Donald Trump. The tension has come to a head following a letter written by White House Staff advising Smithsonian Institution Secretary, Lonnie Bunch, of a comprehensive internal review of selected Smithsonian museums and exhibitions. Citing Executive Order 14253, 'Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History' it states the goal of the review is 'not to interfere with the day-to-day operations of curators or staff, but rather to support a broader vision of excellence that highlights historically accurate, uplifting, and inclusive portrayals of America's heritage.' and will include exhibition text, exhibition approval workflows and curatorial guidelines. Unsurprisingly this has generated an outcry from The American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the Organization of American Historians (OAH) and the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). The AAM highlighted the threat this presents to the whole sector - 'This is not just a concern for select institutions. These pressures can create a chilling effect across the entire museum sector.'

In the UK the [Museums Association](#) has written on how 'Trump interference could have 'chilling effect across entire museum sector' and [NEMO](#) the Network of European Museum Organisations have launched a hub on museum independence with toolkits and resources to support museums in challenging political situations. [Whitehouse.gov](#) (letter), [AMM](#) - AAM Statement on the Growing Threats of Censorship Against U.S. Museums, [ACLS](#)- American Council of Learned Societies -Statement Regarding the White House Review of Smithsonian Institution Museums, for further coverage see: [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [MSNBC](#), [Guardian](#)

ACE update after issues with Grantium

Arts Council England Chief Executive Darren Henley has written a blog published on 1 September updating the sector after their grants platform Grantium stopped working on 23 July. ACE restored services such as payments to National Portfolio Organisations but temporarily paused applications for lottery grants. The latest update has confirmed that National Lottery Project Grants for under £30,000 will reopen fully for applications in mid-September. The Pre-Application Access Support scheme is also open after figures reveal a doubling of the number of requests for the service over the last two years, up from 1,888 in 2022-23 to 4,407 requests in 2024-25.

The Museums Estate and Development Fund will reopen on Thursday 11 September and the portal for people invited to submit full applications to the Creative Foundations Fund will open on Monday 15 September. [ACE](#) (blog update), [Museums Association](#), [Arts Professional](#) (access support)

DCMS have also confirmed that the upcoming review of ACE will include issues relating to the funding platform Grantium as sector leaders have raised concerns on the impact on artists. [Arts Professional](#) (ACE review), [Equity](#) (Grantium concerns), [WGGB](#) - Writers' Guild of Great Britain (Impact)

Also: Coal mining museum workers set for strike action, [BBC](#)

Cultural funding

The value of museums explored and news on sector closures

A recent [Museums Association](#) article looked at the value of heritage and culture to local communities focussing on a report published by the Mary Rose Museum that demonstrates how its work on community engagement has helped drive its social and economic impact in the region, stating that the museum generated £16.6m gross value added (GVA) for the Solent coastal region and supported more than 370 jobs mainly through the expenditure of 230,000-plus people who visited the ship and the money they spent in the region. Whilst a report published by [Arts Council Northern Ireland](#) (ACNI) has outlined how investment from ACNI generates almost double its value in economic activity. The study suggests that £13.27 million of annual investment made by the funding body in 2023/24 generated around £24m in economic activity. [Arts Professional](#).

In another [Museums Association](#) article published on 22 August Annabel Turpin, CEO of Storyhouse and Co-Director of Future Arts Centres, wrote about the impact of arts centres as community hubs in the face of local council cuts. Whilst Campaign for the Arts highlighted that the 'Health of the UK arts remains a 'profound concern', as reported in a [Museums Association](#) piece on the 13 August. [Campaign for the Arts](#) (snapshot report)

This summer two more venues are at risk of loss as Angela Rayner, recently Deputy Prime Minister, stepped in to try and save Park Bridge Heritage Centre in Tameside in Greater Manchester, [BBC](#) and The Royal Cambrian Academy of Art announced it was closing its doors after 144 years. [Arts Professional](#), [RCA](#)

Collections

Barbara Hepworth Sculpture saved for the nation

Following a successful public appeal, £3.8m has been raised for Barbara Hepworth's Sculpture with Colour (Oval Form) Pale Blue and Red. The Hepworth Wakefield and Art Fund led the campaign to secure the sculpture for the Hepworth's collection as part of the UK's national collection and it will now go on permanent public display for the first time since the sculpture's creation in 1943. This has been made possible thanks to more than 2,800 donations from members of the public and several major grants – including £1.89m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, an exceptional grant of £750,000 from Art Fund, and further impactful support from the Deborah Loeb Brice Foundation, The Forster Foundation, The Garcia Family Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, The Headley Trust, the Hepworth family, The Henry Moore Foundation, The Julia Rausing Trust and many other generous individuals, foundations and trusts. [Art Fund](#), [Guardian](#)

Museums Data Service (MDS) receives three further years' funding

Arts and Humanities Research Council, part of UK Research and Innovation, has provided three years' funding for the MDS worth £800,000. Launched in 2024 following an initial investment from Bloomberg Philanthropies, MDS aims to be the one-stop-shop for object records across all UK museums, providing the raw material for anyone who wants to work with this wealth of knowledge. MDS is a joint initiative between Collections Trust, Art UK and University of Leicester and now has data for over six million objects drawn from over 150 accredited museums. The funding will help MDS reach its aim of collecting data for 100 million object records enabling the service to continue to develop its digital infrastructure for the benefit of researchers across the world and museums across the UK. [MDS](#), [Collections Trust](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Scottish museums grappling with historic links to slavery and racism

The University of Edinburgh's Race Review, commissioned in 2021, has highlighted often lesser-known accounts of the university's historical ties to slavery and colonialism, the legacy of racist teachings and current challenges around race and inclusion. The review includes a recently published report – Decolonised Transformations: Confronting the University of Edinburgh's History and Legacies of Enslavement and Colonialism. This 130 page report includes a look at the Anatomical Museum which holds a large number of ancestral remains that were taken without consent. Next steps from the review include supporting the repatriation of ancestral remains to their original communities along with practical steps to support this aim such as clearer information online about the repatriation process and creating a funded PhD programme to support provenance research. [Edinburgh University](#) (website), [Review](#) (pdf, 130pgs), [Museums Association](#)

The review comes as the Hunterian in Glasgow and Paisley Museum announced a substantial gift of 18th and 19th century paintings from the John Shaw Collection that will enable them to further explore the country's links to the British Empire. The donation includes work from notable Scottish artists, Allan Ramsay and Henry Raeburn. [Museums Association](#), [Herald](#)

Also: Jago Cooper, director of the Sainsbury Centre at the University of East Anglia, explains why he took an unorthodox approach to transforming the museum, [Museums Association](#)



Ridley Scott: Building Cinematic Worlds (Alien). Monday 1 September – Sunday 5 October 2025, BFI Southbank.

Climate Emergency

Free Carbon Reduction Training from Historic England

Aimed at heritage organisations based in England, the Carbon Footprint Workshop from Historic England is designed to support organisations in identifying their emissions and measuring a simple carbon footprint over a 2 hour session. The online training will cover:

- Identify your organisations emissions and organise them into scopes
- Calculate your organisations carbon footprint using information about emissions usage and online tools
- Know where to find resources, signposting, and support

The training is open to volunteers as well as staff but you must be responsible for taking forward the measurement of the organisation's carbon footprint. The session is being run on 23 Oct, 5 Nov, and 11 Nov from 10-12pm and on the 9 Dec 2-4pm. [Historic England](#) (booking website), [Historic England](#) (website for Carbon Reduction Training for the Heritage Sector)

AHRC Funding for Cultural heritage and climate change networks

DCMS and AHRC are offering funding to maximise the international partnership brokering and networking policy opportunities of UK arts and humanities research, as a step towards the Horizon Europe Resilient Cultural Heritage Partnership. This funding is for new networks comprised of UK institutions working with European partners, in-country partners in Official Development Assistance (ODA) countries, community practitioners, researchers, and policymakers for twelve months, to explore opportunities for widening cultural heritage and climate change engagement and policy across both the UK and international communities. Applications are welcome that:

- work with local communities to co-create solutions
- connect the stories, turning local narratives into global relevance
- work across disciplines and inter-generationally
- ground a project in a place to extract learnings that are transferable to other cases or policy frameworks

The total fund is £300,000 with the award range between £45,000-£60,000, with a closing date of 14 October 2025. You must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funding. [UKRI](#)

TEG Environmental Responsibility Hub

The Exhibitions Group have lots of resources on their Environmental Responsibility Hub which are specifically relevant to exhibition making and touring. It includes an Arts Council England commissioned report into the carbon impacts of international lending and borrowing and a Rethinking Touring Exhibitions Toolkit which is a resource to support the reduction of the environmental impact of exhibitions, loans and tours. [TEG](#)

Also: Museum hit with six-figure flood bill plans new defences, Derby Museum of Making, [Arts Professional](#)

Also: Attendance at Natural History Museum's new gallery reveals demand for climate solutions, [Blooloop](#)

Digital

AI² - Artificial Intelligence in Arts and Industry

This Albertopolis collaboration running from 10-11 September is on the future of creativity and innovation. Hosted at the Natural History Museum it brings together voices from across Exhibition Road including the Royal Albert Hall, Royal College of Art, Royal College of Music, Imperial College London, the Natural History Museum, the V&A, and the Science Museum, for a bold, cross-institutional exploration of Artificial Intelligence as it transforms the creative and cultural landscape. The event will explore how AI is reshaping creative practice, design, collections, policy, education and public engagement, with sessions covering:

- Interdisciplinary AI – music, art, performance, design, science
- Education, simulation and the audience experience
- Policy, IP, ethics and rights in the age of AI
- Sustainability, economic and cultural impacts
- Codifying knowledge and the human imprint in AI

Tickets for this event are free and the full agenda is available on the Eventbrite website. [Eventbrite](#)

Charity Digital Skills report show uptake of AI

The annual Charity Digital Skills Report comprises valuable insights from 672 charities on their use of digital with sections on skills, funding and support needs, that are a useful barometer for the museums sector. The cost of living crisis continues to squeeze the sector, with 69% of charities saying that their strained finances remain the biggest barrier to digital progress. In terms of AI, research reveals substantial growth in AI adoption, with 76% of charities now using AI tools compared to 61% in 2024. However, many charities rate their CEO and board's AI skills as poor, with many reporting that their AI governance is lacking. The report underscores the ongoing need for capacity, funding and skills development across the sector. When it comes to social media more than half (51%) of charities have either left or reduced their use of X (a dramatic increase from the 18% moving away from X last year) with 20% changing how they post content on social media. In terms of leadership just under a third (30%) of charities have a digital trustee. However, the proportion of digital trustees has barely changed since 2024. [Charity Digital Skills](#)

Book: Digital Content in Museums: Delivering Discoverable, Usable and Strategic Content in Museums, Galleries and Heritage Institutions by Georgina Brooke, published by Facet Publishing. Due to be published in September this book provides a comprehensive grounding in the skills, best practices and tools needed for digital content editors and managers to succeed in the museums, galleries, libraries and heritage sector. It features case studies from the National Gallery, The National Archives and Museums Galleries Scotland and includes a section on producing strategic and creative content to forward mission and vision. [Facet Publishing](#)

Also: AI Mode and the future of search: What it means for cultural organisations, Katie Moffat writes about Google's AI-powered search is changing how people find information, [Arts Professional](#)

200 Creators Network from the National Gallery enters a second year

The National Gallery has launched an open call for 50 UK-based content creators to join the next phase of the digital programme which began in its Bicentennial year, bringing together a mix of digital voices to connect the nation's paintings with new audiences. At the heart of the initiative were 20 Creative Collaborators - a small group of hand-selected creators who worked closely with the Gallery to co-create bold, original content. In total, the 2024 programme saw creator content reach over 42 million views and generate more than 2.2 million engagements across social media. Building on this success the Gallery will recruit 50 creatives to join the programme, whilst it isn't a paid opportunity there are a limited number of travel bursaries, membership to the Gallery and an opportunity for 4 creatives opportunities to create content for the Gallery throughout the year with a fee of £4,000 each. [National Gallery](#)

Workforce and volunteering

Arts Pay Survey shows freelancers struggling the most with annual pay

Preliminary findings from the 2025 Arts Pay survey which covers the whole of the creative industries shows that freelance arts workers are earning an average annual salary 20.5% less than the benchmark set by the Living Wage Foundation's 'Real Living Wage' with a median average of £20,000. Compared to the figure recorded for the previous Arts Pay Survey, conducted in 2022, freelance arts professionals are making just 1% more than their average annual salary from three years ago. Salaried, full-time workers in the sector this year reported an average annual salary of £40,000, up by 16.2% from £34,000 in 2022, while their part-time counterparts saw yearly earnings rise by 15.4% from £30,000 to £35,000. Meanwhile, just 19.8% of full-time, salaried arts and culture workers feel "very positive" about their experience in the sector, with only 14.3% of freelancers expressing the same level of enthusiasm. This survey can be taken in context with the latest DCMS employment estimates for the sector which show the number of jobs supported by the creative industries fell in the 12 months up to December 2024. The fall was in full-time creative jobs whilst for the same period creative freelance roles rose from 675,000 to 696,000. Drilling down into the museums, libraries and galleries sub-sector shows the workforce bounced back to 99,000 jobs, up from 91,000 in 2023, after a decline from 96,000 in 2022. [Arts Professional](#) (Arts Pay Survey), [DCMS](#) (Economic estimates: employment), [Arts Professional](#) (employment figures)

New free online platform aims to match volunteers to organisational need

A new digital volunteering platform launching this October has been created to reach and inspire a new generation of volunteers, helping organisations find and mobilise the support your organisation needs. The free, 'always on' platform aims to save time and help build a new, robust pipeline of identity-checked supporters. Delivered by Royal Voluntary Service (RVS), it is funded by players of the People's Postcode Lottery. You can download a briefing pack to find out more about the platform and how to join. You can also sign up for a webinar for more information. Webinar dates are 15 September 2-2.30pm, 1 October 11-11.30am and 16 October 2-2.30pm. [RVS](#) (briefing pack), [RVS](#) (webinar), [RVS](#) (sign up)

Apprenticeship opportunities overlooked in the creative industries

The latest Creative PEC report, Creative industries employers' perspectives on skills initiatives: 2025, published in July, has shown a lack of understanding about apprenticeships. Whilst 99% of employers in the creative industries have heard of apprenticeships, only 46% had awareness of what they involve and only 5% of employers have them, compared to the national average of 11%. Other findings include:

- Older workers aged 50+ are less likely to be recruited, despite 93% of creative employers reporting they were happy with their work readiness when they did draw talent from this group.
- Creative industries employers are more likely to recruit graduates to their first job compared with school or college leavers.
- Creative industries employers are more likely to have had someone on a work placement compared to all industries, despite this the firms are however less likely to offer employment after a placement compared with all sectors. [Creative PEC](#) (website), [Creative PEC](#) (report, pdf, 58pgs)



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Funding news and opportunities

Museums Galleries Scotland award £125K to Community Catalyst Projects

The Delivering Change Programme from Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) aims to improve access to culture for all people in Scotland, the programme has been developed by MGS and an Expert Advisory Group. Five projects have received funding totalling £125K which will see community groups partnering with museums. The projects include -

- Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities, will work with V&A Dundee to develop a multi-sensory, interactive, and accessible exhibition.
- Romano Lav will collaborate with The National Galleries of Scotland to create a physical timeline that traces the roots and ongoing impacts of Roma discrimination, while also celebrating Roma identity and culture.
- LGBT Youth Scotland is partnering with The Whithorn Trust to highlight LGBTQ+ stories in rural Dumfries and Galloway.
- Sikh Sanjog is partnering with Museums and Galleries Edinburgh to create an exhibition that showcases the contributions of Scotland's Sikh community.
- Northern Corridor Community Volunteers (NCCV) and Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life will work together to help tell the stories of people who lived during the period of extractivism in the Northern Corridor. [MGS](#) (Community Catalyst Projects), [MGS](#) (Delivering Change)

Esmée Fairbairn Communities and Collections Fund grantees announced

The first round of the reimagined Esmée Fairbairn Communities and Collections Fund, which supports projects using museum collections to improve inclusion and equitable working with community partners, have been announced. 7 projects received funding including NMDC members:

- National Maritime Museum & National Windrush Museum, £100,000 for a National Windrush residency at the National Maritime Museum.
- University Museum of Zoology Cambridge & The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire, £99,951 to increase access for audiences that have limited opportunities to engage with museums and wildlife and empower them to engage with

social and climate crises.

- Manchester Jewish Museum, £100,000 to support collective healing between Manchester's Jewish and Muslim communities through art and cultural exchange in the context of ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

Other projects include the Whithorn Trust, Building Futures Galloway Ltd & Youth Work D&G who will use their £100,000 to pilot an approach to engage excluded young people to create a full-scale, research-led, medieval carpenter's workshop offering accredited non-academic pathways into heritage and addressing a skills gap. [Museums Association](#)

Collection Care Grants from AIM and the Pilgrim Trust

The Pilgrim Trust fund these grants for Collections Care Audits for AIM members with fewer than 50,000 visitors a year. Larger museums are encouraged to apply for funding to the Pilgrim Trust directly. The funding from the Pilgrim Trust supports small to medium sized museums to care for those collections effectively and efficiently, and to meet the standards required for Accreditation. Collection Care Audits of £1,200 plus travel and VAT (if applicable) are available to cover the cost of a fully accredited conservator undertaking a three day audit. The grants are paid retrospectively. The closing date for the autumn round is 5pm on Friday 26 September. [AIM](#)

Acquisition grants from Art Fund

Every year Art Fund give grants totalling between £3m and £4m to help museums and galleries acquire art for their collections. They can also support the commission and acquisition of important new work, and welcome proposals for exceptional projects with significant public impact. Grants can range from a few hundred pounds, to hundreds of thousands. The grants cannot pay for staff time or installation costs. Applications are welcome from UK public museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives who are open for at least half a week for at least 6 months of the year. Small grants (£20,000 or less) are considered on a rolling basis and Main grants (above £20,000) are considered at one of the 5 trustee meetings a year. [Art Fund](#)

Curatorial Research Grants from the Paul Mellon Centre

Curatorial Research Grants are offered annually to help towards the costs of appointing a curator to undertake research for a specific project. The grant is an award of up to £40,000. Curatorial Research Grants are specifically designed to help organisations, galleries or museums towards the costs of appointing a research curator to undertake research for either:

- an exhibition or installation of British art or architecture, or related topic
- a cataloguing project on part of a collection or archive that will result in a printed or online catalogue

Alternatively, an organisation may apply for a Curatorial Research Grant to provide replacement staff costs and give temporary cover for a curatorial staff member to work on a specific exhibition or cataloguing project. Applications close on 30 September. [PMC](#)

Conferences and events

MuseumsCamp - an unconference this September in Birmingham

In your vision for the future what do museums look like? MuseumsCamp 2025 will convene on Friday, 19th September at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute, Birmingham. The topic will be the Future of Museums. Organisers Linda Spurdle and Mark Macleod invite everyone interested in museums, today and tomorrow, to come and share their thoughts and ideas about the future of museums. The event will be run in the style of an unconference or open space conference. This means attendees set the agenda on the day. Everyone has the power to make the day what it is, rather than it being pre-programmed by the organisers. Tickets cost from £17.50 for students/unwaged to £50 for salaried professionals and freelancers. [Eventbrite](#)

The Exhibitions Group training this Autumn

The Exhibitions Group (TEG) have announced a number of dates for online training this autumn covering topics including touring exhibitions, courier training and community engagement. Members pay £69 and non-members £99. They will also be offering 10 slots for an online sharing sessions for TEG Members as part of their AGM which will be on Mon 13 October from 12-2pm. TEG members can share their latest exhibitions and projects, whether just a seed of an idea that you're looking for partners to collaborate with, or a fully formed exhibition available for tour.

- Introduction to UK Touring Exhibitions takes place on Tues 30 Sept and Tues 7 Oct from 9.30-12pm.
- Courier Training takes place on Wed 15 and Wed 22 Oct from 10-1pm
- Community Engagement for Exhibition Making will run on Fri 21 and Fri 28 Nov from 10.30-12.30pm. [TEG](#)

Association for Heritage Interpretation (AHI) Conference heads to Wales

The 2025 AHI 50th Anniversary Conference runs from 8-10 October in Cardiff at the Holiday Inn in the City Centre. The conference which includes a visit to St Fagans National Museum of History has sessions on inclusive heritage for sight impaired visitors, audience-centred design and reusing interpretation materials. There is also a look at the Toolkit for Queering Heritage Spaces and a Museums Association Meet Up on the 8th. Tickets cost from £530 for the full conference residential rate for members, tickets are also available for each day. [AHI](#)

British Library hosts webinars on climate change

The British Library are hosting a number of webinars focused on libraries and the climate crisis. The aim of the series is to bring together international library leaders to share their different responses to the climate emergency. The next session will be on Thursday 30 October from 4-5.30pm. This session will explore global examples of how libraries are building their capacity in climate literacy and engagement with a wide range of communities. Speakers include Laragh Quinney, Programme Lead for the National Library of Scotland's Climate Action Plan. The webinars are free to attend. [Eventbrite](#) (tickets), [Eventbrite](#) (future events)

Conference proposals for AIM and V&A events

The Association of Independent Museums have a call out for speakers for their annual conference in 2026 which will be held at Ushaw Historic House and Gardens, and Beamish in County Durham on 10 and 11 June, with a focus on business models. The call out runs to 5pm on Wednesday 24 September and speakers for the breakout sessions can submit a topic which reflects the three themes:

- **Relevance for resilience** – developing a fundable offer e.g. through modernising interpretation and display, capital transformation, community outreach, new stories/new audiences, data and insight, digital offer
- **Building the brand** – turning organisational ancestry, legacy assets (collections and buildings), and own stories into unique and placemaking visitor offer
- **Entrepreneurialism** – running effective (charitable) businesses, developing a commercial mindset, taking risks, strategy and vision, and futureproofing and risk management. [AIM](#)

The V&A Culture in Crisis Programme is also looking for papers for a conference on Ukrainian Cultural Heritage and UK Institutions: Shifting Perspectives and Practice, which will be taking place on 15 September 2026. Topics discussed may include, but are not limited to:

- How do objects reflect the complex history of the Ukrainian nation, its shifting identities, and geographies across time?
- How have Ukrainian objects entered UK collections, whether through histories of acquisition, donation or looting?
- How are institutions today examining and reassessing the cataloguing of Ukrainian collections?
- How is the work being done by institutions made visible in public facing ways?
- How has the ongoing war impacted heritage and cultural institutions in Ukraine, and how have UK institutions responded?

20 minute papers are sought from researchers across an inter-disciplinary spectrum. The deadline for submissions is 12 December 2025. [V&A](#)



Ridley Scott: Building Cinematic Worlds (The Martian). Monday 1 September – Sunday 5 October 2025, BFI Southbank.

Openings

Shoemakers Museum to open on 18 September

The Shoemakers Museum in Somerset celebrates the shoemakers and stories behind Clarks shoes with a collection of over 100,000 objects which celebrate 200 years of shoemaking. Somerset was once the largest producer of footwear in Britain and the Quaker family business Clarks was at the forefront. The Alfred Gillett Trust is a registered charity that cares for the Clark's family collections and Quaker archives and in 2021 the Trust purchased the Clarks Shoes corporate collections creating a unique archive of British business history. The Museum also contains the Alfred Gillett collection of fossils. [Shoemakers Museum](#), [BBC](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

September sees the opening of Dulwich Picture Gallery's ArtPlay Pavilion and Sculpture Garden

South London's Dulwich Picture Gallery will open their new ArtPlay Pavilion and Sculpture Garden from 6 September. The ArtPlay Pavilion, designed by leading architects Carmody Groarke, is a new permanent space for play and creative exploration for under 8s and the Sculpture Garden features works by contemporary artists, including the newly-created Lovington Sculpture Meadow, designed by land architect Kim Wilkie. Tickets cost £9 for the ArtPlay Pavilion with concessions for visitors on Universal Credit and Pension Credit, there are also free sessions for local community groups and schools. The site's Gallery Cottage has also be extended to create The Canteen, which will serve as a school lunch area as well as a family café and shop on weekends. [Dulwich Picture Gallery](#) (ArtPlay Pavilion), [DPG](#) (Sculpture Garden), [Financial Times](#) (£), [Museums Association](#)

Leicester's Jewry Wall Museum opens

On the 26 July Jewry Wall Museum reopened following a major redevelopment which cost £16.8m. The project reintroduces one of Britain's largest Roman civilian bath sites with new multimedia exhibits, interactive displays and more than 100 Roman artefacts discovered across Leicestershire. Ticket prices cost £12.50, children 5-15 tickets cost £6.25. There are options for family tickets and concessions available including English Heritage Member discount. [Jewry Wall](#), [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#)

Museum of Youth Culture to open in Camden

The Museum of Youth Culture which contains a collection of 150,000 photographs, objects, and oral histories related to young people's experiences, will open the world's first museum dedicated to youth culture from December 2025. The new location will be based in Camden and will host screening, talks and events, will feature a 'Subculture library', slide archive, bar, and cafe. [Museum of Youth Culture](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

Appointments

Tilly Blyth is stepping down from the role of Director of the Weald & Downland Museum after 10 months in post. Blyth who spent 20 years working at the Science Museum is joining the Imperial War Museum as Executive Director of Collections and Curatorial. Taking up her role from September, she will be leading the narrative and content, exhibitions, collections management, collections operations and research teams across IWM's five sites. **Clare de Bathe** will be joining Weald & Downland Museum as their Interim Director, she has spent the past 13 years as Chief Executive Officer of Chichester Community Development Trust (CCDT). [Museums Association](#)

Samira Ahmed has been elected as the new President of the Twentieth Century Society becoming the fifth female president in the Society's 46 year history and succeeding Catherine Slessor, who stands down after four years in the role. Ahmed is a journalist, broadcaster and writer who presents the BBC's flagship arts and culture show 'Front Row' on Radio 4 and 'Newswatch' on BBC1. [C20](#), [Apollo Magazine](#) (interview)

Catch up

Design Museum chief: 'Some people call me the Barbie guy', 2 September 2025, [Times](#)

Bath's Holburne museum to unveil 'art chamber' of Renaissance masterpieces, 2 September 2025, [Guardian](#)

Aberdeen museums following 'robust' recording system despite ongoing loss of 1200 artefacts, 19 August 2025, [Arts Professional](#)

British Art Show 10 curator and cities announced for most extensive presentation to date, 7 August 2025, [ArtDaily](#)

National Glass Centre row ignoring local views, suspended politician claims, 6 August 2025, [Arts Professional](#)

International news

Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam threatens to close doors in funding row, 27 August 2025, [Times](#) (£), [Independent](#)

Artwork looted by Nazis 80 years ago spotted in estate agent ad, 26 August 2025, [BBC](#)

Saxon museums uncover Nazi-looted art in local collections, 11 August 2025, [ArtDaily](#)

'Restoring humanity': Paris exhibition showcases 5,000 years of history in Gaza, 9 August 2025, [Guardian](#)

Smithsonian digitizes pollen from 18,000 plant species, 5 August 2025, [ArtDaily](#)

Jobs

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

- [Executive Assistant to the Director - Tullie](#)
- [Curator: MasterPlan - British Museum](#)
- [Head of Archives, Research and Libraries - British Museum](#)
- [Trusts & Foundations Manager - National Museums Liverpool](#)
- [Senior Managers, Collections Management \(2 posts\) - University of Oxford](#)

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