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...and much more.

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**Celebrating 40 Years of Scotland's Photography Collection, 26 October 2024 – 16 March 2025**  
National Galleries Scotland: Portrait. Image: Broad Daylight (Tricia Malley and Ross Gillespie),  
Charlie and Craig Reid 'The Proclaimers' from the series 'As Others See Us', Negative 2014, printed  
2020. National Galleries Scotland © broad daylight (Tricia Malley and Ross Gillespie).

## Government news

### Autumn Budget 2024

On Wednesday 30 October, Rachel Reeves delivered her first budget as Chancellor with headlines focussing on the £40bn tax rises to plug the hole in public finances. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport will see an increase in its settlement by 2.6% to £2.3bn in 2025/6. £3 million was also allocated to the Creative Careers Programme. £1.3bn extra funding for local authority services was confirmed, of which at least £600m is committed to social care.

The Budget included plans to raise Grant-in-Aid for National Museums and Galleries to help their long term sustainability, and a commitment to providing a package of cultural infrastructure funding to build on existing schemes 'with additional capital investment to support cultural organisations across the country'. Details of GIA and capital funding are yet to be confirmed but some museum and culture capital projects are potentially threatened with withdrawal of funding, as Government is 'minded to cancel unfunded Levelling Up Culture and Capital Projects' announced at Spring Budget 2024, though consultation with recipients will be undertaken before a final decision.

The Budget recommitted to the Museums and Galleries Exhibitions Tax Relief which was confirmed at the previous Budget, which sets nationwide rates at 40% for non-touring productions and 45% for touring productions.

Reeves also announced that employers' National Insurance Contributions (NIC) will rise to 15% in April and the threshold at which businesses start paying will be lowered to £5,000. Rises to National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage are also due as of 6 April 2025. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations responded to the increase in employer NIC with concern over their impact on charities ([NCVO](#)). [Gov.uk](#) (speech), [Gov.uk](#) (full text budget), [Gov.uk](#) (supporting documents), [BBC](#) (key points at a glance)

Sharon Heal, Director of the Museums Association, said: "While we were pleased to see the increased investment for National Museums in England, and the announcement of much-needed capital investment, we are extremely disappointed that the urgent needs of local and regional museums and galleries have not been addressed in this Budget...And while we welcome measures to support the lowest-paid workers through increases to the minimum wage and National Insurance contributions, we know this will put pressure on already over-stretched budgets and will mean many civic museums will be worse off after the Budget."

Further analysis of the Budget implications and responses from museums and the culture sector can be found at - [Museums Association](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [AIM](#), [Campaign for the Arts](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [NCVO](#) (key implications for charities)

**Recap:** Museum sector bodies make joint submission to Autumn Budget Consultation, [NMDC](#) (13 Sept 24), see further detail at 'State of Cultural Funding' section below.

## Government launches Industrial Strategy - Invest 2035

Rachel Reeves and Jonathan Reynolds, Secretary of State for Business and Trade, published a green paper setting out the government's vision for a modern industrial strategy. The 10 year plan aims to deliver the certainty and stability businesses need to invest in high growth sectors. The eight growth-driving sectors includes the creative industries and the government's next steps will be to prioritise sub-sectors within these broad sectors. There is an online consultation open until 24 November to collect views on the paper. [Gov.uk](#) (Green paper) [Gov.uk](#) (consultation)

**Also:** Lisa Nandy: 'We want to get the nation's great artworks out of the basement and into our communities', [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Guardian](#), [Museums Association](#)

**Also:** Full Culture, Media and Sport Committee revealed, [Arts Professional](#) (£), [Gov.uk](#)

## DfE Curriculum and Assessment Review call for evidence

The Department for Education has opened a call for evidence asking for suggestions and proposals to help them improve the curriculum and assessment system. The call for evidence invites stakeholders to submit proposals on improving the curriculum and assessment system. This step is crucial for the review process, with the gathered material aiding the review panel chaired by Professor Becky Francis CBE in making its first recommendations next year.

The review panel want to hear:

- feedback on what works in the current system
- what doesn't work or isn't helpful
- suggestions for potential improvements

A series of national roadshow events across each region in England is scheduled, to gather the views of experts, parents, teachers, leaders, students and employers.

The call for evidence closes on 22 November. [Gov.uk](#) (review overview) [consult.education.gov.uk](#) (survey page) [orcula.com](#) (roadshow registration)

## Impact of Martyn's Law explored

An impact assessment has been published on the forthcoming Martyn's Law which will require any organisation with a venue that has a capacity of over 200 people or more to institute measures and training to prepare for a terrorist attack. The law was proposed after the Manchester Arena terror attacks in 2017. The assessment suggests the total set-up and on-going cost of Martyn's Law proposals can be estimated between £596 million and £4.94 billion, with a central estimate of £1.83 billion. [Gov.uk](#) (impact assessment), [Gov.uk](#) (Martyn's Law fact sheet)

## NMDC news

### Open letter from NMDC on protests in museums

NMDC sent an open letter to The Times and The Art Newspaper on 11 October on the increasing threat posed to artworks, staff and visitors as a result of protest action. Whilst respecting the right for people to protest, NMDC highlighted the damage to the reputation of UK museums and the stress caused at every level of a targeted organisation. The collections NMDC members hold are irreplaceable and accessible for free but recent protest action leads to the consideration of more barriers between people and their artworks to preserve these fragile masterpieces for future generations. [NMDC \(full letter\)](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Times](#), Coverage can be found in the following publications: [Guardian](#), [Museums Association](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Washington Post](#)

Response from [Just Stop Oil](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [M+H Advisor](#)

**Resource:** New guidance offered to protect art and exhibits from protest, [M+H Advisor](#)

## Members' news

### National Gallery bans visitors from bringing liquids on-site

To ensure the safety of staff and the nation's collection of paintings, the National Gallery has announced increased security measures which mean visitors are now banned from bringing liquids into the gallery, with the exception of baby formula, expressed milk and prescription medicines. Since July 2022 the National Gallery has been targeted five times with iconic paintings including John Constable's *The Hay Wain* and Velázquez's *Rokeby Venus* the focus of protest. The most recent incident occurred on 22 September when soup was poured on two Van Gogh paintings including one on loan from the Philadelphia Museum of Art for the National Gallery's 'Van Gogh: Poets and Lovers' exhibition. [National Gallery](#) (press release), [National Gallery](#) (admissions policy), [BBC](#), [Evening Standard](#) (comment), [Telegraph](#)

**Also:** Gaza campaigners target Picasso painting in latest National Gallery protest, [Museums Association](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Independent](#) **Also:** Just Stop Oil activists dress British Museum statue in high-vis jacket, [Blooloop](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

### Pitt Rivers retains Maasi artefacts

188 Maasai items from Kenya and Tanzania, acquired during the colonial era, can remain at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford following a decision by a group of community representatives. The Pitt Rivers has run the Maasai Living Cultures Project since 2017, a collaborative project aimed at building trust and addressing concerns about the portrayal of Maasai culture in museums. A statement from the institution said: "[The group] felt that it was clear that the objects were being well cared for. This decision was reached after much discussion and deliberation and following advice from Mokompo [the group's spiritual leader]." Ruth Sintamei Tuleto, from the Pan African Living Cultures Alliance, said to the BBC: "The Maasai and the museum would like to co-exist for other communities to emulate what we have done - we are talking about peace and reconciliation." [Pitt Rivers](#), [BBC](#) (news article), [BBC Future](#) (In-depth feature), [Museums Association](#)

### The Science Museum Group open their publicly accessible collections centre

The Hawking Building, named in recognition of Professor Stephen Hawking's scientific research and public engagement, houses over 300,000 objects from the Science Museum Group's collections and will be publicly accessible for tours, school and research visits. The collections centre opening marks the culmination of the £65 million One Collection Programme at the Science and Innovation Park in Wiltshire. Sir Chris Bryant, Museums Minister, said: "I'm delighted that the Hawking Building has opened so that even more of the Science Museum Group's marvellous collection can educate and entertain, while offering the public a peek behind the curtain of how this great institution brings the world around us to life." The Hawking Building also enables the Science Museum Group to better store, conserve, research and digitise their collections, while also improving the process of displaying items across the Group's five museums. [Science Museum](#), [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#)

### Horniman Museum breeds threatened coral for the first time in a UK aquarium

Pink Sea Fan coral which is classified as 'under threat' in the UK and vulnerable worldwide on the Red List of Threatened Species, has been bred at the Horniman Museum and Gardens. Dr Jamie Craggs, Principal Aquarium Curator at the Horniman Museum and Gardens, said: "This marks the first time this species has been spawned and reared in the UK and is a major step forward in conserving the species. It's wonderful to see the larvae now starting to settle and grow into juvenile sea fans. The success of the spawning is thanks to the exceptional husbandry skills of the Horniman Aquarium team, who are working behind the scenes of our popular aquarium on a number of exciting coral research partnerships." [Horniman](#), [Horniman](#) (YouTube)

### Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery continues phased re-opening

On 24 October Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery re-opened to the public following closure in 2019 to undergo a £5m revamp for essential repairs. In the Industrial Gallery a new exhibition 'Made in Birmingham' explores some of the people, places and things that make the city unique. Opening from Wednesday to Sunday 10-5pm there are also two new galleries dedicated to children and families that tell stories about nature and the city. The museum shop and Tearoom are now also open. [Birmingham Museum](#), [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#)

**Also:** Who will step in to save Birmingham's crown jewels, [Times](#)

### V&A East opening date is set for May 2025

The Victorian and Albert Museum announced an opening date of 31 May 2025 for their V&A East Storehouse. The David Bowie Centre, housed at the Storehouse will open on 13 September. Spanning four levels, and at 16,000m<sup>2</sup> – V&A East Storehouse is home to over 250,000 objects, 350,000 library books and nearly 1,000 archives and will be free to visit. [V&A](#), [Sky News](#), [Museums Association](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Members in the news this month:

- 'New display at **Tate Modern** highlights role technology can play in expanding the scope of UK museum collections', [Art Newspaper](#) (£),
- '**Imperial War Museum** launches exhibition featuring UKRI research', [UKRI](#)
- '**British Library** installs solar technology on roof', [BBC](#)

### Images this month

Images this month come from the new exhibition at National Galleries Scotland: Portrait 'Celebrating 40 Years of Scotland's Photography Collection' which shows highlights from Scotland's world-class collection of over 55,000 photographs. Find famous faces, gems of early Scottish photography and new acquisitions which push the boundaries of photography. The exhibition is free and runs until Sunday 16 March 2025. [NGS](#)



*Celebrating 40 Years of Scotland's Photography Collection, National Galleries Scotland: Portrait.*

*Norman McBeath, Jackie Kay, 2001. National Galleries Scotland © Norman McBeath.*

## State of cultural funding

### Concerns continue on local authority funding and the future of civic museums

The English Civic Museums Network wrote an open letter to [The Times](#) newspaper to highlight the threat to local museums following 14 years of austerity. The Network, which represents 75 local authority-funded museums, stated that museums in 18 local authorities face redundancies and the threat of the sale of collections or closure in the next 12 months. [Tony Butler](#) (Twitter/'X')

**Also:** Use them or lose them, [Guardian](#) (letters)

This piece from the [Financial Times](#) on 22 October is a good overview of the pressures of social care on council budgets, noting 8 councils have gone bust since 2018 with an unprecedented 18 receiving emergency financial assistance this year. In a [Guardian](#) opinion piece on 6 October John Harris argued that British history is being destroyed by the brutal cuts to council budgets that are decimating museums and forcing some to close, the results of which are putting our collective history at risk. It notes that in the 10 years to 2020, local authority spending on museums and galleries has fallen in the UK in real terms by 27%.

London Councils, a group representing local authorities in the capital, also published research on London's 33 local authorities which showed an overspend of £600m this year, forecast to reach over £700m in the next financial year with housing and homelessness pressures the fastest growing risk. [London Councils](#), [BBC](#). Whilst a Local Government Association survey has reported that one in four English councils 'may seek bankruptcy bailout' in the next two years. [Guardian](#)

To dig further in the local authority funding crisis take a look at Demos' recently published report 'Beyond the sticking plaster: A vision for long term reform of local government finances'. The 53 page report from the cross-party think-tank argues for a liberated local government with a more focused set of responsibilities but with greater freedom to make decisions and respond to the needs of local residents, in particular focussed on areas such as culture and the arts. [Demos](#) (website), [Demos](#) (report, pdf, 53pgs)

### House of Commons Parliamentary Research Library publish 'Horizon scanning' paper on UK arts and cultural sector

Part of the Horizon Scan series which looks at emerging policy issues for the next five years, the research paper highlights the challenges and opportunities of resources and funding in the arts and cultural sector. It recognises that grant-in-aid funding for UK arts and cultural organisations fell 18% between 2010 and 2023 and whilst 51% of museums have increased their earned income in 2023-24, 32% saw their local authority funding decrease or stop entirely compared to the previous financial year. It summarises 6 key questions for parliament including asking how co-ordinated are national and local funding models for arts and culture and and what changes are needed to creative industry tax relief to keep organisations globally competitive. [Parliament.uk](#)

- **Also:** Arts groups face uncertainty as funding news delayed in Scotland, [BBC](#)
- **Also:** Scotland needs a strategic approach to public funding for museums, [Museums Association](#) (blog)
- **Also:** Attacking corporate arts sponsorship is pointless, Thangam Debbonaire, [Financial Times](#) (£)

## Sector news

### Rising costs continue to pile pressure on museums in latest Annual Museums Survey

Museum Development England which surveyed non-national museums in Spring of 2024 has highlighted the continuing impact of the cost-of-living crisis on museums across the sector with 622 museums completing the survey. The overall increase in income of 15% has been offset by a 20% rise in expenditure despite a growth in donations up 27% and 20% rise in admissions income since 2019/20. The survey also showed:

- Visitor numbers are still lagging behind pre-pandemic levels by 8%.
- More than a third of museums operate entirely on volunteer power.
- Facebook is used by 94% of museums, with Instagram at 73%, Twitter at 65% and TikTok at 14% (in 2023 Facebook was at 93%, Twitter 74%, Instagram 72% and TikTok 13%)

The data is also broken down by region and previous surveys are also available for comparison. [Annual Museums Survey](#) (Museums Development South West)

### Science Museum and Natural History Museum security staff strike

Security guards at London's Science Museum and Natural History Museum, part of the United Voices of the World union, went on strike over pay and conditions for 6 days at the end of October and beginning of November. The BBC reported on 11 October that no further strikes were currently planned. [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

### Touring Exhibition Group changes name

The Touring Exhibitions Group, founded in 1985 as an exhibitions sector support charity, have changed their name to The Exhibitions Group following a strategic review by their Trustees, they have also developed a new logo and visual identity. The Exhibitions Group also confirmed their main annual networking event will take place on at the V&A Museum in London on 29 April 2025. [Exhibitions Group](#)

**Opportunities to collaborate for the anniversary of William the Conqueror in 2027**

To mark this historic anniversary, the British Library will be staging a major exhibition focusing on William and the Norman Conquest, as well as the longer history of the Normans in England, from Emma of Normandy to the accession of Henry II. The exhibition, which will run from 1 October 2027 until 27 February 2028, will draw on the Library's own collection and loans from institutions in England and France. It will be accompanied by online and onsite learning and events programmes. The British Library is collaborating with the Region of Normandy, which is actively promoting the development of cultural events across Europe for the anniversary year. The Library has also organised a working group of UK institutional partners who are planning William the Conqueror activities in 2027. If you would like to join the group please email: [international@bl.uk](mailto:international@bl.uk)



**Celebrating 40 Years of Scotland's Photography Collection**, National Galleries Scotland: Portrait. Oscar Marzaroli, *The Castlemilk Lads*, 1963. National Galleries Scotland. Purchased 1985 © Estate of Oscar Marzaroli.



## Leadership and workforce

### 'Imagine it Different' new report from Clore Leadership

The 'Imagine it Different: Interventions for Change' report has been published by Clore Leadership in partnership with Arts Council England, UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and is a major study into the evolving workforce dynamics of the arts and culture sector. Leaders report that the demands on them have grown worse over the last 5 years, whilst many remain positive about their work they are increasingly stretched with growing pressures. Leaders' responses suggest a continued reliance on hierarchical leadership styles in the sector, drawing most often on 'leader led' solutions, rather than a systems leadership approach which is recognised as more effective in other sectors. The 'Leadership Now' Insights report highlights a number of observations including:

- Significant staff turnover in the sector and loss of organisational memory, alongside increase precarity in the sector with the loss of jobs leading to a decrease in capacity.
- Paying board trustees as a way of broadening membership and increasing diversity.
- The urgent need to improvement management training to equip leaders with conflict management resolution and change management skills.
- Advocacy for the sector emerged as a critical priority for driving meaningful change and recognition, with the necessity for a unified voice that advocates for value and impact.
- Concerns regarding the sector's capacity to keep up with the rapid pace of AI and digital developments.
- It also reports short term funding cycles were exacerbating the sectors ability for long-term strategic planning when it comes to environmentally sustainable practice.

The 19 page report also scopes out a range of interventions for systematic change focussing on Continuing Professional Development (CPD), Board and Governance, Models / Organisational Development and Advocacy. [Clore Leadership](#) (website), [Clore Leadership](#) (report, pdf, 19pgs), [Museums Association](#), [Arts Industry](#)

**Also:** Chair of the Board, Is the job even doable? [Arts Professional](#)

### Cultural Freelancers Survey 2024

The Arts Council have published the results of the 2024 Cultural Freelancers Survey which collected combined feedback from more than 5,000 freelancers working across museums, theatres, visual arts, and dance. An executive summary of the report has highlighted the following:

- 73% of freelancers reported earning less than £25,000 pre-tax despite significant numbers holding degrees and post-graduate qualifications with numerous freelancers reporting being offered rates of pay below union or government minimums.
- 70% of freelancers reported that support such as mentoring, advice and supervision was not available when needed.
- 47% of current freelancers reported thinking that the creative sector is 'not very' or 'not at all' inclusive.
- Poor working conditions have a significant impact on the freelance communities health and wellbeing.

In the wider context of working in the sector freelancers acknowledged that reduction in real terms funding since 2010 was disproportionately affecting grassroots arts venues and arts education in particular. Freelancers also strongly advocated for increased investment in arts education and creative opportunities within state schools, highlighting the increasing need for comprehensive accessibility. It is also worth noting that 66.5% of freelancers described themselves as female and 10% of respondents mainly worked in the museums sector. [ACE](#) (website), [ACE](#) (report, pdf, 103pgs), [M+H Advisor](#), [Museums Association](#)

**Also:** AIM (Association of Independent Museums) are running a Safe Access heritage freelancers survey which aims to create positive change for the sector in creating safe and inclusive working environments for diverse communities. [Survey](#)

## Heritage Pulse Survey results look at careers and opportunities in the sector

The latest Heritage Pulse Survey which was published on 7 October reports on 205 responses to questions that focussed on careers and opportunities in the sector. 36.7% of respondents had never taken part in or offered any initiatives, programmes or events to promote careers in the heritage sector, barriers to offering such experiences included funding and capacity. With only 4.4% of roles offered to young people involved in leadership and management and 7.1% in governance. The main barriers to increasing engagement and access for underrepresented groups in the local area was lack of funding at 68.9% and lack of time at 51.1%. [Heritage Pulse](#)

**Also:** Museums Association update their sector salary research and recommendations, [Museums Association](#)

## Reports and toolkits

### AIM reports on the economic impact of the independent museum sector

The Association of Independent Museums has published their Economic Impact of the Independent Museum Sector for 2024. Key findings include:

- **Employment Impact:** The independent museum sector supports over 7,200 jobs, equivalent to 4,700 full-time positions. Significantly, over 70% of these jobs are local to the museums.
- **Procurement Power:** Independent museums spent £131.4 million on goods and services in 2023, the equivalent of 2,900 full-time jobs.
- **Volunteer Contribution:** The sector benefits from the efforts of 38,900 regular volunteers, who contributed nearly 518,000 volunteer days in 2023 with an estimated economic value of £41 million.
- **Visitor Spend:** Independent museums attracted 19.5 million visitors in 2023, their spending is estimated to have contributed over £497 million to local economies. Over £279 million of this spending occurred off-site, with an impact equivalent to 3,800 full-time jobs.
- **Economic Impact:** When combining direct employment, procurement, and visitor spending, the sector's gross economic contribution is estimated at 11,300 full-time equivalent jobs, representing £531.8 million in expenditure. Factoring in indirect and induced effects, the total impact rises to approximately 17,900 jobs and £838.7 million in economic contribution.

AIM have also published an Economic Impact Toolkit designed to help museums quantify their economic contribution at local and regional levels. [AIM](#) (website), [AIM](#) (report summary, pdf, 21pgs), [AIM](#) (toolkit)

### Art Fund guidance and toolkits

A number of resources for guidance and toolkits can now be found on the Art Fund website. Currently there are three resources, listed below with more to be added in future.

- [Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief](#) - with guidance on how to claim the relief which is set at 40% for exhibitions and 45% for touring exhibitions.
- [Community Engagement Toolkit](#) - developed in collaboration with 22 small to mid-sized museums as part of the Going Places programme. The toolkit practical advice and actionable steps.
- [Environmentally Responsible Touring](#) - Created in partnership with the Design Museum, and the Touring Exhibition Group, it is a step-by-step planning tool to promote environmentally responsible decision making. [Art Fund](#)

**Also:** Association for Cultural Enterprises releases new Benchmarking Report (full report is only available to members), [Blooloop](#), [Arts Professional](#) (£)

## AI and digital news

### AI interventions with museum collections

Jonathan Lami, an independent AI engineer, has produced 'The Living Museum' which is an experimental interface using the British Museum data that uses AI to bring digital collections to life. Created independently of the British Museum using a Creative Commons Licence, the project allows users to create their 'exhibits' and have 'conversations' with artefacts in the collection. [The Living Museum](#), [M+H Advisor](#). Leeds Castle are launching an AI interactive experience in 2025 with a life-sized AI version of Queen Eleanor of Castile. Created in collaboration with SKC Games Studio the experience will allow visitors to converse with a digital recreation of the medieval queen in the three languages that she likely spoke - Spanish, English and French. [Experience UK](#). Whilst at the University of Cambridge's Museum of Zoology you can have an AI chat with a Dodo, one of 13 specimens chosen for two-way conversations as part of a collaboration with Nature Perspectives, providing insights into what visitors want to know about the displays. [BBC](#)

### Digital access to collections and resources

The Lapworth Museum of Geology in Birmingham, has opened up their collections by launching a digital platform that offers a fresh approach to exploring the Earth's history. The new virtual platform brings the museum's collections fully online, with high-resolution 3D models and interactive displays which gives digital access to rare geological specimens. [Lapworth Museum](#), [Experience UK](#)

### UKRI publish policy on the use of AI in funding applications

UK Research and Innovation have published their policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence during funding applications and the assessment process. The policy applies to all UKRI funding opportunities and sets out applicant responsibilities, assessor responsibilities and their responsibilities as a funder. It cautions on putting sensitive or personal data into generative AI tools whilst understanding that generative AI has potential for research and innovation. [UKRI](#)

- **Also:** 10 ideas for purpose-driven digital leadership in museums from Dr Oonagh Murphy, [LinkedIn](#)
- **Also:** How to get your GLAM organisations to invest in digital, Trish Thomas, Head of Digital Innovation at The London Museum, [LinkedIn](#)
- **Also:** How a museum understood the TikTok assignment - Beamish Museum, [BBC](#)



*BDS*

*Celebrating 40 Years of Scotland's Photography Collection, National Galleries Scotland:  
Portrait. Brian David Stevens, Amy Liptrot, 2016. National Galleries Scotland © Brian David Stevens.*

## Climate crisis

### 'Fixing Our Broken Planet' event in Wales

The Natural History Museum is running a 'Fixing Our Broken Planet' Community of practice event in Wales on 11 and 12 November. The programme supports practitioners in museums to network and share learnings about how museums can respond to the planetary emergency. This event in Cardiff on 11 November and Torfaen on 12 November will be focussed on the theme of resilience and aims to engage and empower young people. The event is free to attend. [Sign up form](#)

### Environmentally Responsible Learning Practice from GEM

Beginning in January, this new course from GEM will focus on developing environmentally responsible learning programmes in a museum and heritage learning context. The 5-week online course offers fundamental theory alongside practical case studies. Running from 10am-1pm on the 7, 14, 21, 28 January and 4 February, the course costs £275 for members and £300 for non-members. [GEM](#)

## Collections

Detectorists split £4.3m Norman coin hoard, [BBC](#), [South West Heritage Trust](#), [Independent](#), [Museums Association](#)

Unique Bronze Age hoard saved for the nation, [BBC](#), [Museums Association](#), [Sky News](#), [NMS](#)

## Inclusion and accessibility

### Curating Visibility opens applications for a new cohort of Curatorial Fellows

Screen South, through its Accentuate Programme, are recruiting for 15-month Curating Visibility fellowships running from February 2025 to April 2026. The salaried roles funded by Arts Council England offer on the job experience in one of the 6 partner museums across the country. The museums involved in the next round of fellowships are Charleston, London Museum and Barnsley Museum. The roles are for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people to research collections and share over-looked and under represented stories. Fellows will be paid a salary of £23,933 per annum based on 35 hours a week. The deadline for applications is 10am on Monday 25 November. [Screen South](#)

### Museum Development South West receives Lottery Funding to embed inclusive practices

The new National Lottery Heritage funded project 'Growing Together: Embedding Inclusion and Collaboration in our Museums' will look to embed and enhance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practice facilitated by Museum Development South West. The £230,000 project will support a cohort of up to eight museums, the project is also supported by Arts Council match funding and local authority support. [MDSW](#)

### National Coal Mining Museum secures funding to enhance educational and family resources

The National Coal Mining Museum has secured £20,000 from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to develop and expand their educational and family resources. In particular they will be piloting new outdoor events designed for visitors with special education needs (SEN) and dementia. The museum will also introduce volunteering and work experience opportunities tailored for young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND), helping them gain confidence and build valuable skills. Key parts of the project were funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. [NCMM](#)

## Funding news

### AHRC unveils funding for 31 heritage science and conservation projects

The Arts and Humanities Research Council have announced 31 projects that will grow the UK heritage economy and protect cultural heritage for future generations. The projects will share £37m from the Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science (RICHeS) programme funded by an £80m investment from the UKRI Infrastructure Fund which is being delivered by AHRC. Tate, National Trust, Historic Environment Scotland and London's National Gallery are among the 100-plus partners from across all four nations of the UK and overseas that are participating in the programme. Projects include:

- Scotland's Archaeological Human Remains Collection (SAHRC), National Museums Scotland, a project to increase the care and curation of archaeological human remains in Scotland including the appointment of the first dedicated Curator of Human Osteology. [M+H Advisor](#)
- Establishing Tate's Conservation and Heritage Science Archive (CHSA)
- Empowering Safety: Hazardous Materials Awareness, Identification and Management, Science Museum
- The Reynolds Digital Research Resource: access to rich heritage science data in its multidisciplinary context and a template for future initiatives, National Gallery
- Multiscale Heritage X-ray Imaging Centre, British Museum
- Accessing Modern and Contemporary Art Materials Research, Tate

For the full list of projects please see the UKRI website [UKRI](#), [Museums Association](#)

### National Lottery Heritage Fund celebrates 30 years with £30m funding news

15 projects will benefit from the announcement of £30m worth of funding to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the National Lottery Heritage Fund which falls on 19 November. Projects include £4.7m to Crystal Palace Park in South London, £4.5m to Tullie House Museum in Carlisle and £900,000 to Reimagining Margam Castle in Port Talbot. [Heritage Fund](#)

### Art Fund award £1 million Reimagine grants to local museums and art galleries

A total of 20 museums and galleries will receive a share of £800,000 from Art Fund with an additional £200,00 distributed through Museum Development UK. The grants aim to support organisations to build resilience through partnerships with bodies outside the cultural sector such as education providers, mental health support services and community organisations. Projects include:

- Turner Contemporary, Margate - £50,000 to develop a Young Environmental Leaders Programme
- Birmingham Museums Trust - £49,728 for Collections in the Community, that will help to create new partnerships and establish a Community Partner Panel.
- Fermanagh County Museum, Enniskillen - £42,000 for Art In Our Hands, working with rurally isolated groups and people with health conditions or those who have experienced trauma.

Art Fund's Director, Jenny Waldman said: "We're extremely pleased to offer £1m in support to local authority-reliant museums and galleries across the UK – from Carmarthenshire to County Fermanagh. The projects showcase the incredible value local museums have for communities and demonstrate their remarkable ambition, resilience and entrepreneurial spirit in the face of growing challenges." [Art Fund](#), [Museums Association](#)

## Funding opportunities

### Two opportunities from Art Fund

The **Freelands Art Fund** is an opportunity for a museum to acquire contemporary art by women artists in the UK. The Freelands Foundation and Art Fund offer grants of up to £60,000 and are open to public museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives based anywhere in the UK that are open for at least half the week for at least 6 months of the year. The award supports mid-career artists who may not have had public recognition for their work. The deadline for expressions of interest is 15 November 2024. [Art Fund](#) Art Fund are also offering the **Weston Loan Programme** which helps regional and smaller museums borrow works of outstanding quality and significance from national and major lending institutions. Grants of up to £35,000 are available to cover the practical elements of strategic loans. Applications close on 6 December. [Art Fund](#)

### Capital Investment Ready Programme opens from Julie's Bicycle

The Capital Investment Ready Programme is for Arts Council portfolio organisations to help prepare for when capital funding opportunities arise in order to take strategic steps towards the decarbonisation of your cultural building. The free Arts Council programme will support a cohort of 10 organisations who will benefit from bespoke mentoring and coaching, peer-sharing opportunities and quick response surgeries. Applications close on Sunday 24 November. [Julie's Bicycle](#)



***Celebrating 40 Years of Scotland's Photography Collection, National Galleries Scotland: Portrait. Zed Nelson, David Tennant, b. 1971. Actor, 2011. National Galleries Scotland © Zed Nelson.***

## Conferences and events

### **Last chance - Museums Association Conference 'The Joy of Museums' 2024**

A reminder of the MA Conference which this year will be held at the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds from 12-14 November. Digital access to the whole conference is available for as little as £50 for student, retired, volunteer and unwaged members and single day in-person access from £180. Chris Bryant, Minister of State at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport will be giving a keynote speech on Tuesday 12 November. [Museums Association](#)



### Reminder - Towards a National Collection Final Conference

Online tickets are still available for the final conference of the Towards a National Collection (TaNC) programme on 20-21 November in Manchester. In-person tickets are now sold out but online places are available for free. At the conference TaNC will launch their policy recommendations aiming to help and inspire the UK cultural heritage sector and its funders to transition to a common set of standards for collections. [TaNC](#)

### ICOM UK Conference 2025 - Save the Date

The 2025 ICOM UK conference "Regenerative Museums for Sustainable Futures" will take place on 1 and 2 May 2025 in Liverpool, UK. This conference aims to discuss ideas, share inspirational projects, and reflect on challenges related to climate and social emergencies through sustainability, sustainable development, and regenerative design frameworks. Practical examples from around the world, shared through presentations, debates, workshops, and roundtables will support and inspire the conference delegates to develop creative ways of implementing regenerative development in their own institutions. [ICOM UK](#)

### Artistic Commissioning course from the Exhibitions Group

Running across two online sessions in December, this new training is in response to sector needs on commissioning and delivering projects in collaboration with artists and creative practitioners. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the benefits and risks associated with commissioning and the issues and complications that can arise from complex partnership agreements. The sessions run on Thursday 5 December and Thursday 12 December from 9.30-12.30 and cost £64 for members and £94 for non-members. [Exhibitions Group](#)

### Museums+Tech: Who is this for? And why should they care?

The Museums Computer Group (MCG) 2024 Conference will be held at Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum on Friday 6 December from 10-5pm. This year the focus will be on audiences and looks at how projects can show the value of museums. The day will include sessions on digital storytelling, creating digital intimacy and a session from the National Gallery on their '200 Creators' network for their bicentenary celebrations. Tickets cost from £22.38 for students and unwaged members of MCG to £81.96 for non-members. Livestream access is also available for £27.80. [MCG](#)

### Let's Get Real Conference 2025

The Audience Agency will be running the 'Let's Get Real Conference' in Bristol at MShed on Friday 24 January with a theme of 'Value?'. The day will feature insights from 19 of the 'Let's Get Real' cohort including the Wellcome Collection and the National Trust. Participants will explore how digital can add value for cultural organisations, not only looking at what is working but how to evidence it. Limited edition Early Bird tickets are currently available for £99. Standard full price tickets are £179 after 1 Jan 2025. [Audience Agency](#)

### REMIX Summit London 2025

The REMIX Summit will be hosted at the Royal Academy of Arts and Here East (Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park) on Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 January. The event provides an opportunity to explore how to harness revolutionary ideas that are transforming culture and the creative industries. Speakers include Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning, National Programmes and Young V&A, Tamsin Ace, Director, East Bank, Esme Ward, Director, Manchester Museum and Lawrence Chiles, Head of Digital Services, National Gallery. Early Bird tickets are currently available with prices ranging from £180 (+ £36 VAT) for a digital ticket to £345 (+£69 VAT). [REMIX](#)

## Awards

### Young V&A wins Kids in Museums Family Friendly Museum Award

Family judges for the Kids in Museums Family Friendly Museum Award praised the newly refurbished Young V&A's overall design, community atmosphere and interactive elements after the museum in Bethnal Green came out on top for the 2024 awards. The awards which were announced in Yorkshire on 8 October included a number of category winners from across the country, listed below.

- Best Large Museum and Overall Winner - Young V&A, London
- Best Small Museum - National Civil War Centre, Newark
- Best Medium Museum - Turner Contemporary, Margate
- Best Accessible Museum - The Cooper Gallery, Barnsley
- Best Museum Youth Group - Tees Valley Museums

[Kids in Museums](#), [BBC](#), [Guardian](#), [Museums Association](#)

### Awards open for nominations

The **Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance Awards** are open for nominations with three categories of award - Collective Power Award / Practising Well Award / Health People and Planet Award. The deadline for applications is 5pm Friday 29 November 2024. [CHWA](#)

The **M+H Awards** are now open for museums, galleries and heritage sites across the country. New for 2025 there is the Visitor Accessibility Award which will recognise cultural institutions that have made significant strides in improving access for visitors. The award will be open to all areas of the visitor journey both in-person and online. Entries close on 31 January 2025. [M+H Awards](#), [M+H Advisor](#) (new category)

The **Collections Trust Award** which highlights the often-unsung achievements of those managing collections awards a winning museum £1,000 to spend on an agreed collections management activity. Entry is open to all UK museums that are Accredited or working towards Accreditation. The deadline for entries is 9am on Monday 13 January 2025. [Collections Trust](#)

**European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2025**, which celebrate exceptional achievements in the protection, conservation, research and promotion of cultural heritage are open for applications until 20 November 2024. There are five categories of entries including; Conservation & Adaptive Reuse, Research, Education, Training & Skills, Citizens' engagement & Awareness-raising, and Heritage Champions, with the winner receiving a Grand Prix of €10,000 and there is an additional Public Choice Award of €10,000. 2024 winners included Gideon Tapestries, Hardwick Hall and Westminster Hall, London. [Europa Nostra](#)

**Also:** Bloolooop 50 Museum Influencer List 2024, [Bloolooop](#)

## Museum openings and closures

### UCL Art Museum closes with lack of clarity on re-opening plans

The Guardian reported that University College London staff were concerned over the closure of the Art Museum as part of plans for the university's bicentenary celebrations. The collection which comprises 10,000 artworks, including the holdings of the UCL Slade School of Fine Art, will be decanted while the museum space is transformed and remodelled into a 'flexible space to support events'. [UCL](#), [Guardian](#), [Cheese Grater](#)

### Shipwreck Treasure Museum collection put up for auction after closure

Following the closure of the Shipwreck Treasure Museum based in Charlestown, Cornwall, the privately owned museum site was put up for sale at a cost of £1.95m. A buyer has not been found and subsequently the Guardian reported the museum's collection has been put up for auction. The museum contains over 7,000 objects salvaged from over 150 wrecks and is owned by Sir Tim Smit, co-founder of the Eden Project. The museum was founded in 1976 by Richard Lara, a former navy diver and historic shipwreck expert. The auctioneers website ([Lay's Auctioneers](#)) reported that an institutional home had been found for many of the most important objects and they had been removed from auction due to be carried out on 6 and 7 November. The Maritime Archaeology Sea Trust (MAST) announced on 4 November that they had purchased the Protected Wreck collection, [MAST](#). [Guardian](#) (auction), [BBC](#) (August / Closure), [Museums Association](#) (August / closure)

**Also:** Poole Museum announces new leader and opening date, [M+H Advisor](#) **Also:** The National Maritime Museum Cornwall will temporarily close for 6 weeks from January 2025 for essential roof repairs, [BBC](#)

## Appointments

The Association of Independent Museums (AIM) has appointed **Rhiannon Goddard** as its new Chair. Goddard is currently Head of Public Engagement Projects and Business Management at Historic Royal Palaces and has worked for 20+ years in the sector. Andrew Lovett OBE is due to step down as Chair in the New Year, a role he has held for six years and after three terms as a Trustee. [AIM](#)

The British Museum has appointed **Judith McNicol** as Managing Director from 2025, McNicol is currently Director of the National Railway Museum in York and will lead on departments including Human Resources, information, Visitor Services and Security. Laura Cooke, who is currently Acting Director of Resources has become Director of Finance with immediate effect. [British Museum](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

**Rebecca Lawrence** has been appointed as the new Chief Executive at the British Library succeeding Roly Keating who has been in post since 2012. Lawrence was Chief Executive of the Crown Prosecution Service from 2019-2023 and was founder and first CEO of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. Keating has brought forward his departure to the end of 2024 with Lawrence commencing her role from 2 January 2025. [British Library](#)

**Matt Moore** has become the Director of the Science Museums Group new Science and Innovation Park in Wiltshire. Moore joined the Science Museum 25 years ago as an Explainer and will now lead the operational, commercial, and access teams at the 545-acre site which houses the Science Museum Group Collection. **Sian Williams**, Programme Director, who led on the redevelopment for 8 years, will also leave at the end of 2024. [M+H Advisor](#)

Glasgow Life have announced that **Jane Rowlands** who has been Acting Head of Museums and Collections since August will take on the role permanently. Rowlands has worked for Glasgow's museums for more than 20 years and has been a Senior Museums Manager since 2011. [Glasgow Life](#), [The Herald](#)

The Weald & Downland Living Museum in Chichester has appointed **Tilly Blyth** as their new Director whose experience includes 20 years as Head of Collections and Principle Curator at the Science Museum. Blyth joins from the University of Leicester as Professor and Head of the School of Museum Studies. [Weald & Downland](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

**Clare Barlow** is leaving the Foundling Museum to take on the role of Director at the People's History Museum in Manchester. Barlow replaces Katy Ashton who has been in the role for 14 years. [Museums Association](#)

## Catch up

### Books

Heritage at War: Plan and Prepare, Edited by Mark Dunkley, Lisa Mol and Anna Tulliach, [White Horse Press](#), published 15 October 2024.

Ethics of Contemporary Collecting, Edited by Jen Kavanagh, Ellie Miles, Rosamund Lily West, and Susanna Cordner, [Routledge](#), published 9 October 2024.

### UK news

New World Record attempt for most museums visited in 24 hours, 28 October 2024, [M+H Advisor](#)

The crisis gripping the UK's 'offensive' museums, 27 October 2024, [Telegraph](#)

'Art is being squeezed out': Royal Academy poster campaign calls for increased arts education in UK schools, 24 October 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

'An irreplaceable portal to the past': English Heritage launches campaign to help preserve more than one million artefacts, 8 October 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [English Heritage](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

### International news

A new study seeks to establish ethical collecting practices for US Museums, 29 October 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

The Whitney Museum will be free for all visitors 25 years old and younger, 22 October 2024, [Wall Street Journal](#)

Long-awaited Grand Egyptian Museum partially opens - but Tutankhamun Gallery remains closed, 16 October 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [BBC](#), [Guardian](#)

How artists, writers and scientists of the past documented climate change, 8 October 2024, [Smithsonian Magazine](#)

Ireland extends basic income for artists scheme, 3 October 2024, [Arts Professional](#)

## Jobs

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

- [Public Programme Producer - Black Country Living Museum](#)
- [Apprentice Curator, Sound - Imperial War Museums](#)
- [Archives Officer - Tyne & Wear, Archives & Museums](#)
- [Development Manager - Sir John Soane's Museum](#)
- [Senior Corporate Relationships Manager - Science Museum Group](#)
- [Project Curator - V&A](#)

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