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In celebration of Art UK's Visual Literacy Week (30 September - 6 October 2024) and The Superpower of Looking learning programme. Photography - David Madden.

## Members' news

### Ashmolean Museum fundraises to save Fra Angelico painting

The Ashmolean Museum at the University of Oxford has until 29 October to raise £4,481,000 to buy a painting of the crucifixion by the Renaissance artist Fra Angelico. The artwork dates to the 1420s and has been in a private British collection for over 200 years, it was attributed to Fra Angelico in the 1990s. The painting has been placed under an export bar by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest. There are no complete artworks by the artist in the UK. [Ashmolean](#), [Gov.uk](#) (export bar), [M+H Advisor](#)

**Also:** Auction of Greek coins fetches surprise £3.1m for Oxford Museum, [M+H Advisor](#)

### Natural History Museum plans 150th anniversary transformation

The Natural History Museum has announced plans to overhaul four existing galleries and reopen two new galleries in time to celebrate the museum's 150th anniversary in 2031. The Financial Times reported on the plans, with funding already committed by the government and a remaining £150m to be raised from philanthropists and businesses. Plans include restoring two unused Victorian galleries that are currently storage spaces, and refurbishing the popular dinosaur gallery and the 1930s whale hall. [Natural History Museum](#), [Financial Times](#)

### 'Just Stop Oil' target National Gallery's Sunflowers again

On the same day that two 'Just Stop Oil' activists were jailed from a previous incident in October 2022, protestors threw soup on two Sunflower paintings in the National Gallery. The two paintings by Van Gogh are part of the recently opened exhibition 'Van Gogh: Poets and Lovers', one of which is on loan for the first time from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The two paintings were removed from display but in a statement from the National Gallery it was confirmed they were condition checked and 'unharmful' by the incident. [BBC](#), [Guardian](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

### V&A gets National Lottery Heritage Fund approval on plans for the South Asian Gallery

The V&A has received first round approval for a funding bid to transform their South Asian Gallery with plans to reopen the space in spring 2028. The £4m bid includes plans to display a rare Kochi Ceiling from India for the first time alongside an engagement programme and online activity. The redesign will also allow the V&A to display contemporary South Asian art and design and bring new transparency to the colonial history of the V&A's South Asian collection. [V&A](#) (press release), [BBC](#), [Evening Standard](#)

**Also:** V&A celebrates a century of national theatre archive with tribute to avid collector, [Guardian](#)

### In the news profiles and interviews

British Museum: Nicholas Cullinan discusses sponsorship, repatriation and recent thefts in this [Sunday Times](#) interview. On the topic of controversial donors Cullinan said; "I think the debate has changed, but what hasn't changed are the two criteria against which you weigh up donations and sponsorship. One is: was the money legally acquired? The other is: will accepting it cause us reputational damage? I think you have to have very good, clear reasons for turning down money that would help to keep the British Museum free to the public." [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Museums Association](#)

V&A: Tristram Hunt is profiled in the Museums Journal in an interview that covers politics and leadership in the era of the culture wars as well as repatriation. In the piece he is quoted as saying: "There are some in the UK who want to wrap themselves in the flag and say none of this should be returned, what's ours is ours. And there are some in source countries who say the only way we'll have this conversation is if you return the object and they think we're just hiding behind the law, when we're obeying the law, as we should. But then if people think you're serious and want to engage in the conversation over the long run, then there's trust. I have always felt around the long-term loan of items there's the transactional element, but then, as we saw in the Manhyia Palace Museum in Ghana recently, there is great work around conservation, curatorial, security, interpretation. It's about thickening those relationships." [Museums Association](#)

In another profile on the Cultur.Art website Tristram reflects on well-being and the power of cultural regeneration. [Cultur.Art](#)

## Images this month

This month we celebrate Art UK's first '[Visual Literacy Week](#)' which runs from 30 September to 6 October. Visual Literacy Week aims to start a national conversation on the transformative skill of visual literacy. Art UK are also introducing their flagship learning programme '[The Superpower of Looking](#)' which provides free learning resources for primary school children across the UK.

## Government news

### Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy's interview highlights planned funding review and repatriation

Interviewed in the [Guardian](#) on 24 September, Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy stated the Conservative Government's 'violent indifference' to the arts had resulted in communities getting poor access to culture. She also revealed ministers are already holding discussions with institutions including the British Museum on issues of repatriation and said she wanted the government's position to be consistent. [M+H Advisor](#)

**Also:** Labour Conference: Chris Bryant seeks to 'rescue arts from financial black hole', [Arts Professional](#)

### Government cultural tax reliefs show near three-fold increase

Arts Professional reported on the near three-fold increase on cultural tax reliefs paid to museums, theatres and orchestras in for the 2022/23 tax year. The increase is from £75m paid out in 2021/22 to a record £240m in 2022/23. Of the three sub-sectors theatres received £178m, orchestras £33m and museums £29m. In 2021/22 museums received £9m. The 2022/23 figures represent 325 companies in the Museums and Galleries Exhibition category with a total of 330 claims. A full breakdown of the figures can be found on the HM Revenue & Customs website. [Gov.uk](#), [Arts Professional](#)

### Caroline Dinenage re-elected as Chair of Culture, Media and Sport Committee

Conservative MP Dame Caroline Dinenage has been re-elected as Chair of the Culture Media and Sport Committee. She previously held the position from May 2023 until the General Election this year. On her appointment Dinenage said: "I'm delighted to be re-elected to Chair the Culture, Media and Sport Committee and entrusted to build on our achievements in the last parliament. These sectors are our global economic super-power, they have remarkable abilities to drive regeneration and bring communities together. I will continue to work cross-party to ensure the government doesn't take them for granted and they continue to fire on all cylinders." [Parliament.uk](#) (appointment), [Parliament.uk](#) (parliamentary career and voting record)

### Jack Sargeant appointed Welsh Culture Minister

Jack Sargeant, Member of the Senedd for Alyn and Deeside, has been appointed Minister for Culture, Skills and Partnerships. In 2018 Sargeant became the youngest ever Member of the Senedd, he is an advocate for mental health and has previously sat on the Children, Young People and Education Committee. [Gov.Wales](#) (biography), 'X'/Twitter [@JackSargeantAM](#), [Senedd Cymru](#) (Senedd activities)

**Also:** Government delays planned review of Arts Council England, [Arts Professional](#)

## Sector news

### DCMS economic data shows slowdown in the value of the creative economy

The most recent estimates of the contribution of DCMS sectors to the UK economy for the 12 months to June 2024 was £123.74bn, down 1.3% on the £125.36bn recorded the previous year. Reporting on the statistics Arts Professional highlighted that whilst they are provisional and subject to revision they are useful for identifying general trends. Looking at the quarter as a whole, in the three months to June 2024, GVA (gross value added) by DCMS sectors is estimated to have grown by around 2% compared with the three months to March 2024, in contrast to the UK economy as a whole which is estimated to have grown by 0.6%. [DCMS](#) (data), [Arts Professional](#)

## Culture and Place Data Explorer from ACE

Arts Council England have launched a new interactive data tool that allows users to map investment in culture and creativity. There are over 200 data indicators that can be used to explore the impact of ACE funding across England. The data can be divided across local authorities, towns, cities, regions and parliamentary wards and constituencies. The website allows users to produce and download customisable and detailed reports, charts and tables. [ACE](#)



Art UK's 'Visual Literacy Week' 30 September - 6 October. Photography - David Madden.

## Cultural funding

### Arts & Culture Funding report

Produced by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and commissioned by The Arts Funders Group, the Arts & Funding for Culture: an overview of data 2019-2022 report covers 18 different trusts and foundations. The data shows that in 2020/21 trusts and foundations increased their expenditure on arts and culture by 38%, reaching £124.5m. However total expenditure fell in 2021/22 to £83.1m, and capital funding also fell during 2020/21 - this may be due to some trusts and foundations pausing capital funding because of Covid. The report highlights the importance of arts and culture funding from trusts and foundations for smaller organisations, where funding from this source made up a larger proportion of overall income. [PHF](#) (website), [PHF](#) (report, pdf, 22pgs), [Arts Professional](#)

### Northern Ireland reports decrease in arts, exhibitions and performance events

The 2023-24 Annual Funding Survey from Arts Council Northern Ireland shows that the number of activities or events delivered fell 22% from 2022-23, with the greatest fall recorded by smaller organisations. The reduction in activity was reflected in the levels of engagement with fell by 10%. There was no change in the overall size of the workforce although the proportion of those employed in part-time contract and freelance roles continued to grow. The sector is also heavily reliant on formalised and informalised volunteers to support its operations. Income from all sources fell by 2.65% compared to the previous year. Despite the current financial landscape nearly three quarters of the 84 organisations that responded to the survey continued to undertake international activity. [Arts Council NI](#) (website), [Annual Survey](#) (pdf, 19pgs), [Arts Professional](#)

## Figurative launches to drive innovation and investment into the cultural sector

Figurative is a not-for-profit, independent organisation comprising Arts & Culture Finance (formerly part of Nesta) and New Philanthropy for Arts & Culture. Publicly launched in September 2024, Figurative has a focus on three main pillars of work: The Arts & Culture Finance funds and development of new ones; innovation programmes supporting organisational development and capacity building; and research and advisory services developing thought leadership in the UK and overseas. [Figurative](#)

## Suffolk Council U-turn on cultural budget cuts

Following a decision in January by Suffolk County Council to cut all arts funding, cultural organisations have been invited to apply for a share of £500,000. Nine organisations had previously received funding but the new fund is open to all in the sector. There are three types of grants that organisations can apply for with the largest one worth up to £50,000. Smaller grants of up to £15,000 and £1,500 are also available. [Suffolk County Council](#) (grants), [BBC](#), [Guardian](#) (January cuts)

**Also:** Holyrood and Creative Scotland in talks to save culture jobs, [Arts Professional](#)

## Six local venues benefit from capital funding in Wales

Grants from the Welsh Government's Cultural Transformation Capital Grant Programme will support six local museums and libraries in Wales. The Museum of Welsh Cricket will receive £246,000 towards a project that will celebrate the diverse culture and history of cricket. Other projects include: £300,000 for the refurbishment of Cwmbran Library, £300,000 for the refurbishment of the ground-floor House of Death gallery at the Egypt Centre and £82,000 to improve the main exhibition room at Plas Newydd in Llangollen. [Gov.Wales](#), [Museums Association](#)

## Reports and reviews

### Fabian Society publish report with recommendations for the arts and creative industries

'Arts For Us All' was published on 18 September by the Arts and Creative Industries unit of the Fabian Society and draws together proposals to help inform Labour's Sector Plan for the Arts and the Creative Industries. Recommendations include:

- Embedding arts and creativity in the curriculum.
- A British Culture Pass available to young people at 16.
- Require museums and galleries to provide a loan-box scheme to primary schools.
- Make museum/gallery loans easier so people can enjoy art where they live and promote an open data policy, including free access to digital images.
- Equipping the future workforce with the skills to work in heritage.
- A full financial review of arts funding and new funding models, including a review of National Lottery Heritage Funding.
- Introducing a city tourism charge.

Alison Cole, director of the Fabian Society Arts and Creative Industries Policy Unit, said: "[The report] calls on the government to recognise the arts as some of the most powerful engines of change: raising spirits, enlarging horizons, fuelling innovation and driving significant economic growth." [Fabian Society](#) (website), [Fabian Society](#) (report, pdf, 50pgs), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

### First comprehensive review in 20 years reports on Scotland's Treasure Trove system

Commissioned by the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, the review recommends a number of reforms to the current system which in Scotland requires finders of archaeological material to report all finds. It notes the dispersed nature of leadership and responsibility for the current system. Consultation highlighted issues including lack of available resources, delays in casework and slow communication which have proven to be barrier to participation. The Museums Association also highlights the current state of museum funding; 'The current system "assumes that the museums who supply the expertise, funds and space to build and refine their archaeology collections can perform their function by collecting Scotland's archaeological heritage and sharing it with the public", but "feedback indicates that the funding environment for many of Scotland's museums means the maintenance of this function at present levels should not be taken for granted"'. [KLTR](#) (website), [Treasure Trove Review](#) (pdf, 78 pgs), [Museums Association](#)

### Historic Environment Skills Forum launches England's first Sector Skills Action Plan

Co-ordinated by Historic England through the Historic Environment Skills Forum the plan sets out the current state of play: with a quarter of heritage construction firms experiencing skills shortages and 15% having to turn down work on pre-1919 buildings due to a lack of available knowledge and skills, and a third of conservation organisations reporting challenges with recruitment. The plan sets out a number of strategic objectives including improving the perception and recognition of historic environment roles. It also highlights key skills areas that currently have the highest priority nationally including skills for retrofit (Climate Change Adaption), carpentry/joinery, post excavation specialists, industrial heritage conservation, and skills to manage change to the historic environment. The report also summarises priority actions that need to be put into effect to plug the skills gaps. [Historic Environment Skills and Careers Action Plan](#) (pdf, 33pgs)

## Dates for the diary

### Welsh Museums Festival 2024

Running over half-term from Saturday 26 October to Sunday 3 November, the Welsh Museums Festival will immerse museums visitors in the history, culture and traditions of Wales. This year the Wales History Trails Passport Challenge will span the length and breadth of the country. There will also be ghost hunts and Halloween trails to enjoy. [Wales247](#), [Museums.Wales](#) (Wales History Trails Passport Challenge)

### Heritage Debate 2024 – 20 November 2024

This year's Heritage Debate from the Heritage Alliance will take place online on 20 November with a focus on 'Balancing the Books'. The free webinar will run from 12-2pm and you will be able to join sector leaders, volunteers and professionals. There will be an expert panel debating the benefits and pitfalls of public, private and philanthropic approaches to funding. The debate will also feature case studies from the sector. [Heritage Alliance](#)

### Museum Shop Sunday December 2024

This year's Museum Shop Sunday will be on 1 December 2024. Run by the Association for Cultural Enterprises, the day will see over 2,100 arts, heritage and cultural attractions come together to showcase their shops and unique products with events and promotions in-store and online. You can also follow Museum Shop Sunday on [Instagram](#). Sign up to take part and access Museum Shop Sunday logos via the website. [Association for Cultural Enterprises](#)

## 2025 festival to mark the birth of the modern railway

The 9-month S&DR200 (Stockton & Darlington Railway 200) festival will celebrate the bicentenary of the first steam-powered railway. Taking place across County Durham and Tees Valley from March to November 2025, there are four central museum partners taking part including: Hopetown Darlington Museum, Locomotion in Shildon, Preston Park Museum & Grounds, and The Story in Durham City. The festival programme includes a range of exhibitions, activities and art installations alongside large-scale events. Railway 200 also launched a toolkit for organisations who are interested in taking part. You can sign up for a newsletter to keep up to date with the latest events and find the festival programme on their website. [S&DR200](#), [Railway 200](#) (toolkit)



Art UK's 'Visual Literacy Week' 30 September - 6 October. Photography - David Madden.

## Early Years and future careers

### Mini Wonders - Early Years Innovation in Museums

Art Fund has partnered with Nesta for an innovative research and development programme with UK museums to support the formative experiences of early-years children. Mini Wonders – Early Years Innovation in Museums is funded for two years and will develop and test a new early-years intervention in partner museums and encourage a wider range of families to visit museums and galleries more often. Having worked with 3 partner museums in 2023 (Fitzwilliam Museum, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, and the Whitworth) as a proof of concept, insights from this early work will now be applied to the pilot. The 8 selected museums for the pilot include: Amgueddfa Cymru–Museum Wales, Leeds Museums & Galleries, Mansfield Museum, National Galleries of Scotland, National Museums of Northern Ireland, Norfolk Museums Service, Tate Britain and Great North Museum: Hancock. You can sign up to their Community of Interest for more insights on the programme. [Art Fund](#)

### Discover! Creative Careers Week 2024

Running from Monday 18 to Friday 22 November, Discover! Creative Careers Week is an industry-led initiative designed to provide young people from England with encounters and experiences of the creative industries through in-school, workplace and online opportunities. Visit the website to register your interest and hear case-studies alongside ideas for involving young people in your organisation. [Discover! Creative Careers](#)

## Decarbonisation and climate change

### Phase 4 of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme guidance

The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme is aimed at public buildings including, museums, libraries and galleries, helping them to achieve net zero and switch to cleaner heating and save on energy bills. The scheme is run by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and delivered by Salix. There are guidance notes to support your application but note there is a minimum recipient contribution of 12% of total project costs for a like-for-like replacement of the existing fossil fuel heating plant. There are some changes from previous rounds including:

- Targeted allocation – instead of a first-come, first-served basis for allocation, funding will be prioritised by the application's grant carbon cost.
- Calculating the grant carbon cost will be a result of dividing the requested grant value by the direct carbon savings.

The scheme was launched on 23 September 2024 with guidance notes, the application portal will open mid-October and close on 25 November 2024. Applications will be assessed once the portal closes. [Salix](#)

### Eco Mindsets gives audience insights to help plan environmental engagement work

Hosted on the Arts Marketing Association website, the Eco Mindsets segmentation from MHM (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre) can help organisations understand what drives people to act for the environment, and what they can do to encourage greater action in future. The eight Eco Mindset Groups look at the motivations and ways to engage sections of society and could help when planning engagement strategies. [AMA](#) (website), [Eco Mindsets Booklet](#) (pdf, 5pgs)

**Catch up:** Scotland's Climate Week ran from 23-29 September, you can catch up with some of the climate action projects that museums in Scotland have been taking part in, which include biodiversity gardens and using historic herbarium collections, on the Museum Galleries Scotland website. [MGS](#)

**Also:** Sustainability organisation Gallery Climate Coalition shuts down volunteer programme, citing lack of funds. [GCC](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

## Digital

### Digital strategy template for Welsh museums

Produced by Headland Design for the Welsh Government, the template is designed to support staff, volunteers and trustees working in museums to look strategically at their digital activities and to consider how they could better use digital technology across all aspects of their work. [Gov.Wales](#), [Template](#) (pdf, 14pgs)

**Also:** 'What is the museum of the future?' The National Gallery's forward-looking digital strategy, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

## Inclusion and accessibility

### CHWA Guide to Accessible Projects and Events

The Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance have launched a new resource that will help organisations embed access into creative health events and projects. Their aim is to highlight the real cost behind creating a truly accessible event. The 26 page guide has advice on budgets and time management and has many points to consider when planning an event. The guide also provides case studies and could prove a useful starting point when planning your first accessible events. [CHWA](#) (website), [CHWA](#) (guide, pdf, 26pgs)



### All In appoints disability-led charity Attitude is Everything to create accessibility standards

All In, the new UK arts access scheme for d/Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people, have appointed disability-led charity Attitude is Everything to create the UK's first accessibility standards for creativity and culture. The standards aim to harmonise the many examples of good practices across the UK to create a consistent, high quality experience for disabled audiences in theatres, galleries, museums, libraries and more. Attitude is Everything will work on four key areas including: the built environment, digital communication, customer services and access to commissions, events and programming. [All In](#), [Attitude is Everything](#)

### Dementia Friendly Heritage Network Event in Wales for 2025

The Dementia Friendly Heritage Network (DFHN) are running a two-day event at St Fagan National Museum in Cardiff on Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 April 2025 from 10-4pm each day. The DFHN are an informal group aiming to share knowledge and skills to support others to develop and deliver dementia-friendly initiatives at heritage sites. The event in April will aim to have a mix of presentations, panels and hands-on workshops. Proposals to speak are welcome, the deadline for submissions is Friday 20 December. [DFHN](#) (proposal), [Historic Royal Palaces](#) run the DFHN



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## Repatriation

### Online museum shares histories of looted antiquities

The Museum of Looted Antiquities (MOLA) is an online virtual gallery of looted antiquities that have been returned to their country of origin. The museum's aim is to preserve, display and study the ownership information that often gets lost when an object is returned. They have currently collected information on more than 860 cases involving nearly 1 million artefacts. The website launched with 100 cases available to view. [MOLA](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

**Also:** Repatriation of objects is on the government's agenda, says UK culture secretary, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

**Also:** The Netherlands has returned 288 stolen artefacts to Indonesia, [Smithsonian Magazine](#)

## Trustees and governance

### Heritage Trustees 101 from AIM

The Association of Independent Museums are running one of their free Heritage Trustees 101 events in London to help prepare potential trustees for joining heritage organisations. The session also provides networking opportunities for those considering a trustee role in the independent museum sector. The session will be held at the Postal Museum on Wednesday 23 October from 4.30-7pm. The event is also ideal for those outside of the sector looking to understand the key governance issues and realities of Board work in museums. [AIM](#)

### Youth Advisory Board Toolkit

The Council for British Archaeology (CBA) have produced a very useful toolkit for those interested in involving young people in the decision making processes of their organisation. Developed in partnership with Participation People and funded by Historic England, although it has CBA participation staff in mind it also has lots of relevant topics to consider when working with young people. It includes sections on remuneration and incentives, recruitment and retention, and how to tackle in-person and online sessions. [CBA](#) (information), [CBA](#) (toolkit, pdf, 33pgs)

### Decision-making for charity trustees

The Charity Commission have refreshed their guidance for trustees to support them in making decisions. The guidance covers the 7 decision making principles that can guide trustees in their roles and the importance of clearly recording your decisions. [Gov.uk](#)

## Funding opportunities

### LUCIA funding from AHRC for community-driven research networks

The Arts and Humanities Research Council have launched LUCIA – Locally Unlocking Culture through Inclusive Access funding to form a community-driven research network to enhance access to culture. Funded networks will create partnerships across communities, researchers and policymakers to promote urban cultural renewal. The total fund is £400,000 with the full economic cost of the network up to £100,000. The programme is aimed at funding partnerships which amplify seldom heard voices and respect diverse cultural identities. The duration of funded networks is 12 months. The closing date for applications is 10 April 2025. [UKRI](#)

### Royal Society of Chemistry's Outreach Fund for engagement activities

The Royal Society of Chemistry offers small (up to £5,000) and large (£5,001 and £10,000) grants to support chemistry-based public and schools engagement activities. The deadline for applications is Monday 11 November 2024. You can also see case studies and examples of previous grants on their website. [RSC](#)

### Friends of the Nations' Libraries Fund

Previously known as Friends of the National Libraries Fund, the FNL give acquisition grants to regional and national libraries, archives and museums supporting the acquisition of manuscripts, archives, rare books and fine bindings. Grants range from £500 to £25,000 and applications that are non-urgent will be considered at Trustees' meeting (apply by 1 March, 1 June and 1 November) but urgent applications can be considered at any time. [FNL](#)

### Paul Hamlyn Foundation webinars in preparation for the opening of their Arts Fund

The next round of the Arts Fund from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation opens on 4 November and closes on 31 January 2025. The fund offers between £90,000 to £300,000 across three years for organisations who are working at the intersection of art and social change. PHF will not support capital projects and equipment purchase but organisations with a turnover of no less than £60,000 per year can apply for core costs to enable your organisation to become more sustainable and deepen the impact of your work. The webinars are on [7 Nov](#) at 10am and [6 December](#) at 11am via Zoom. [PHF](#) (Arts Fund)



Art UK's 'Visual Literacy Week' 30 September - 6 October. Photography - David Madden.

## Conferences and events

### Call for Speakers – Museums, Health & Well-being Summit

MuseumNext have opened a call for speakers at their next Museums, Health & Well-being Summit which will be held on 28-29 January 2025 online. They are looking for 20 minute presentations covering how museums support visitors and staff. Examples could include dementia programmes, improving mental health in the community and preventing burn-out of staff. The deadline for submissions is 15 October, all talks will be pre-recorded with speakers available for a live Q&A.

[MuseumNext](#)

### What goes into a social media strategy? From Digital Culture Network

This webinar is for anyone working in the creative and culture sector who wants to create a social media strategy but isn't sure where to start. Particularly of use with the decline of 'X'/Twitter in recent months. The session will include looking at resources, content plans and how to measure success. The webinar is on Tuesday 22 October at 11am on Zoom. The event lasts one hour and is free. [DCN](#)

### Online symposium from the Queer Heritage and Collections Network

Running from 22 to 23 October the Queer Heritage Collections Network Symposium is a hybrid event but bookings are now only being taken for online attendance. Drawing inspiration from the 'Untold Lives' exhibition at Kensington Palace, the event will explore different approaches to researching and publicly presenting previously overlooked, marginalised or silenced queer lives. Tickets are free. [QueerHCN](#) (website), [Symposium](#) (eventbrite)

### Timeless Archives Conference at the British Library this October

The British Library are hosting a 'Timeless Archives, Timely Connections: Preserving Endangered Documentary Heritage and Inspiring Collaboration' conference from 31 October to 1 November. Organised by the Endangered Archives Programme it will include sessions on comparative costs of preserving the physical archive versus the digital, new risks in the digital world and engaging more diverse audiences. The conference will be held online and in-person. Tickets in-person cost £70 and access is available online for free. [British Library](#)

### Digital culture: emerging trends in museums online from Creative PEC

Part of the Creative PEC seminar series, this one hour online session will look at the value of museums online based on two examples: the online museum shop and the perception of younger generations. This free seminar will be on Thursday 5 December at 3pm via Zoom. [Creative PEC](#)

### Save the date – ICOM UK Conference 2025

The two day ICOM UK Conference will be held in Liverpool on Thursday 1 and Friday 2 May 2025. The theme of the conference will be sustainable futures. [ICOM UK](#)

## Awards

### Marsh Trust Awards for volunteers announced

At a ceremony at the British Museum on the 23 September the regional and overall winners were announced for The Marsh Trust Awards 2023: Volunteers for Museum Learning. 12 regional winners celebrated volunteers across the country whilst the overall winner was 'The Closer Look Tours' from the V&A, which support those living with dementia and their families to come together and share stories inspired by objects. Volunteers research and shape their own tours, taking into account the accessibility needs of their participants. [Marsh Awards](#), [V&A \(Tours\)](#)

### Digital Culture Awards open for nominations

Celebrating and showcasing the best in digital transformation, digital engagement, and the use of technology across the creative and culture sector in England, the Digital Culture Awards are run by Arts Council England and the Digital Culture Network. Submissions are open across five categories and will close at 12pm on Wednesday 23 October. Entries are sought for; Digital Marketing, Digital Content, Using Data, Digital Inclusion and Digital Ambassador. Winners from 2023 included the Crab Museum and the Watershed Arts Trust. [DCN](#)

## Openings and closures

### Chelsea Pensioners Museum opens from 1 October after 3-year refurbishment

The museum is part of a £3.2m Soane Stable Yard transformation project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Alongside the museum will be a café, shop, activity room and Veterans Outreach Centre. The Royal Hospital Chelsea is home to around 300 army veterans, including those who have served in Korea, the Falkland Islands, Cyprus and Second World War. The site itself is situated on 66 acres in the centre of London and includes an important architectural legacy – with Grade I and II listed buildings designed by Charles II and Sir Christopher Wren over 300 years ago. [Chelsea Pensioners Museum](#), [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

### Warburg Institute in Bloomsbury opens after £14.5m refurbishment

The Warburg Institute, a centre dedicated to the study of global cultural history and the role of images in society, in London, has introduced its first gallery space as part of a £14.5m renovation that includes a 140-seat auditorium. Funding for the project, which opens on 2 October, came from the University of London with an investment of £9.5m alongside a major gift from the Hamburg-based Hermann Reemtsma Stiftung. The opening display 'Memory & Migration' is focussed on the Warburg Institute's journey from Hamburg to London. Future exhibitions include 'Tarot: Origins & Afterlives' which will open in January 2025. [Warburg institute](#), [M+H Advisor](#), [Guardian](#)

## Edinburgh's People's Story Museum closes citing financial pressures

Edinburgh Council were proposing to close The People's Story Museum, which focuses on working class histories of Edinburgh, for seven months due to an urgent need to cut costs in the face of a £26.7m overspend in their budget. It was reported that the museum has already been closed to the public citing 'staffing pressures and a need to manage expenditure'. Scottish Labour Councillor, Katrina Faccenda said: "The People's Story was opened in 1984 by Edinburgh's first Labour administration to create a collection which reflected the working class history of Edinburgh and our proud story of protest and organising for the rights of people at home and around the world. Its location in the Canongate is an important reminder that Edinburgh's Old Town until a few decades ago was home to thousands of working people, often living in poor housing conditions, but their story and their community is equally important to those remembered in our castles and palaces."

[Edinburgh Museums](#), [Edinburgh Live](#), [STV News](#)

## Obituaries

### Dame Elizabeth Esteve-Coll

Dame Elizabeth was the first female director of the V&A from 1987 to 1995, following in the footsteps of Roy Strong. She first joined the V&A as a librarian and Keeper of the National Art Library. In an obituary on the V&A website current director Tristram Hunt referenced a quote by Elizabeth on the BBC's Desert Island Discs: when asked to sum up her achievements after a ten-year tenure at the V&A she said: "To make the V&A much more part of the national subconscious. To get it into the nation's bloodstream. That it was a real and very living, very important part of our culture. It wasn't elitist. It wasn't something that was only for the art historian. There's something in the V&A for everybody – that is what I'd like everybody to know." On leaving the V&A she went on to become Vice-Chancellor of the University of East Anglia. Dame Elizabeth died on 16 September 2024 aged 85. [V&A](#), [Guardian](#), [Times](#), [Telegraph](#)

## Appointments

The Royal Academy of Arts announced that **Axel Rüger** will be leaving to join the Frick Museum in New York. Rüger who has been the RA's Secretary and Chief Executive since 2019 will replace Ian Waldropper who retires next year after 14 years in the role. [Frick](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [NYT](#) (£)

Turner's House in Twickenham have appointed a new Director and Chair with immediate effect. **Jennifer Francis**, most recently Director of External Affairs at the Museum of London, also brings experience from senior positions at the Royal Academy of Arts and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Turner's House, which is the only surviving home of the artist Joseph Mallord William Turner, also welcomes **Lucy Littlewood** as Chair. Littlewood was previously Director of the St. Martin-in-the-Fields Trust. [Turner's House](#), [M+H Advisor](#)

## Catch up

Webinar: 'Future-Proofing Heritage: Sustainability and Resilience' – London Festival of Architecture, International National Trust Organisation and World Monuments Fund and V&A's Culture in Crisis Programme, June 2024, [YouTube](#) (1hr 55mins)

Man and son jailed over £1m National Trust Fraud, 21 September 2024, [BBC](#)

An open letter to Chris Bryant, the tenth UK arts minister in ten years, 13 September 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Co-owner of right-wing broadcaster GB News buys UK art magazine Apollo, 12 September 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£), [Artlyst](#)

Palace of Westminster's refit to tie up craftsmen 'for 40 years', 12 September 2024, [Times](#)

First projects delayed by fit-out company closures, 9 September 2024, [M+H Advisor](#)

## International news

Vikings invade the Nordic museum landscape with three themed institutions in the pipeline, 22 September 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

'A tremendous opportunity': Utah's unique skiable outdoor museum, 20 September 2024, [Guardian](#)

Inside New York's museum-building boom, 17 September 2024, [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

Tehran Art Museum reports 30 missing paintings, 17 September 2024, [Hyperallergic](#)

Smithsonian launches biggest fundraising campaign in its 178-year history, [Smithsonian](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (£)

## Jobs

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

- [Preventative Conservator and IPM Coordinator - Royal Museums Greenwich](#)
- [Visitor Operations Manager - National Galleries Scotland](#)
- [Fundraising Manager, Grants - National Portrait Gallery](#)
- [Co-creation Manager - British Library](#)
- [Digital Futures Project Assistants - Imperial War Museums](#)
- [Librarian - The Wallace Collection](#)

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