

LONDON
MUSEUM
DEVELOPMENT



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Digital Futures Grants 2016 - 17

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Digital Futures Grants 2016-17

2016-2017 saw the first year of the London Museum Development team's Digital Futures Grants. These £500 grants were available for a wide array of different projects, from object digitisation to the purchase of video-making equipment. In all we received 16 applications for 10 grants with a total of £4,901.31 awarded through the 2016-2017 Digital Futures Grants programme. All 10 projects were completed to schedule, with 6 museum providing additional funds towards their final projects.

We have summarised the types of projects funded in the table below.

Purchase of digital equipment to improve documentation of collections	2
Purchase of digital equipment to create video content for sharing online	2
Purchase of digital equipment to be used in learning sessions	2
Purchase of digital equipment to be used within galleries / exhibitions	3
Training session to improve digital literacy of staff	1

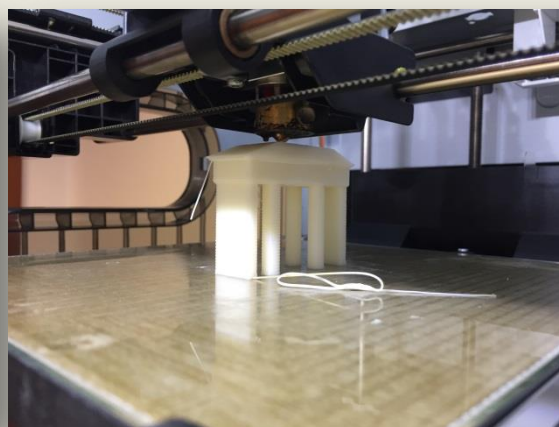
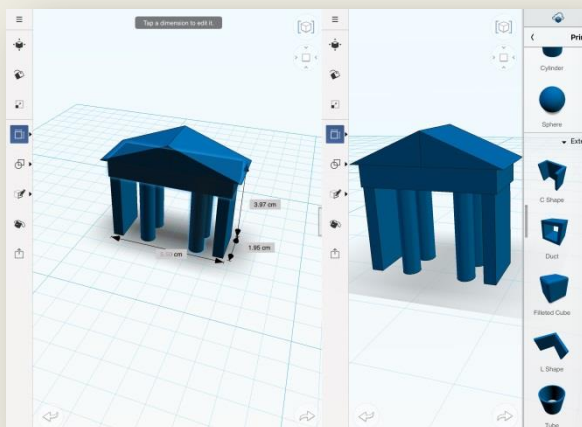
Full descriptions of each of the 2016-17 projects are given below.

Royal Institute of British Architects

£499.99

Project: 'Architecture 3D: Digital Learning at RIBA'

What was achieved: The grant has provided RIBA with the means to make a significant purchase of a 3D printer, which has brought their learning programme several years ahead of where they had initially planned. RIBA worked to imbed 3D printing into their future activities, their next step in 2017 was to have students from schools and lifelong learners from community groups to use and explore the possibilities 3D printing can bring for learning, discovery and enjoyment alongside traditional methods of designing and making such as drawing. This started with the first school visits after the beginning of the new school term in 2017, and in late January 2017 when the first of their lifelong learners visited the RIBA for a creative workshop and exhibition tour.



Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art

£485.66

Project: Purchase of iPads for educational tours, workshops, CPD sessions and for marketing

What was achieved: This was a multifaceted project, with many different arms to the use of the iPads and speakers purchased with the grant. These have been used in different types of educational workshops: schools are able to learn to use digital applications for sketching, shooting videos and taking photographs. The iPads were also used for Take Over Day 2016, in which students took over their Twitter. They've also been used in teachers' CPD Sessions, in which teachers were taught to use digital applications such as Pic Collage on museum visits, as well as for tours around the collection, allowing the tour guides to show images from their archive. These activities sought to embed digital learning into their existing education programme and create a deeper engagement with their collection for early years, schools, adults and families.

London Fire Brigade Museum

£500.00

Project: Purchase of equipment to display a 360 VR video recreation of a fire

What was achieved: The LFB Museum currently has a temporary museum and will be using it to trial ideas and displays. Their first use of digital interpretation is a 360 degree film of a reconstruction of a real fire. The film provides an atmospheric and emotive way to learn about the experience of firefighters. This animates objects in the collection, helping visitors to understand how they would be used by firefighters

tackling a blaze. This supports the museum's aim; to be driven by a strong educational purpose with an emphasis on fire safety and one of the LFB's six strategic aims; prevention. So far, the response from their audience has been very positive, with 80 per cent of respondents rated the experience 5/5. The £500 grant was used to aid in the purchase of a VR headset, smartphones and headphones to run the experience.



The Foundling Museum

£500.00

Project: Purchase of a camera with video capabilities

What was achieved: At the time of the grant, the Museum had one camera which was at least 6 years old. The camera had no video capability and didn't perform well in low lighting, which was often problematic due to the low levels of lighting in the Museum in order to protect items on display. As they did not have equipment in-house, in order to produce films they had to commission external filmmakers which is costly and prohibitive due to their small exhibition and marketing budgets. The grant from the Digital Futures programme has enabled the Museum to acquire a vital piece of equipment to be used by all departments — from marketing to the learning, curatorial and programming teams.

Freud Museum

£500.00

Project: Training sessions to improve digital literacy

What was achieved: In November 2016, staff from the Freud Museum attended two workshops to improve in-house digital literacy. The workshops, run by Jisc, focused on improving the reach of digital collections, optimising them for discovery and evaluating their usage. Their digital strategy identifies digital literacy and access to collections as key areas for improvement, and, with a major website redevelopment on the horizon, they were keen to improve their understanding of how audiences engage with their online offering in general and with digital collections in particular. On the basis of the workshops they have revised their sitemap and robots.txt to improve search indexing, and made improvements to their use of Google Analytics to monitor user journeys more often and track what people are searching for within their site. They also implemented structured data in some areas of the site, and boosted their social media output for collections. They disseminated what they learned to their colleagues through their digital committee, and will be including it in a digital literacy session planned for staff and volunteers. As a result, their staff will be more confident and aware as they move into new territory with their online offering.

Garden Museum

£500.00

Project: Developing two interactives exploring the work of two of Britain's most important figures from Britain's gardening history.

What was achieved: These interactives have formed part of their interpretation for the new displays in the museum, when it reopens in spring 2017, and will allow visitors to explore Humphry Repton's and Gertrude Jekyll's design process and career in greater detail. Aspects of the project enabled the Garden Museum team to develop a number of new image editing skills and new research for the interactives helped inform their understanding of the album and how Jekyll worked as a photographer. The Curatorial staff and Education Officer had not worked with a professional AV company before. Staff developed an insight into how digital interactives are produced. They gained a greater understanding of the variety of digital formats that there are available and how different formats can be utilised in varying ways to engage with different learning styles. The project has encouraged them to be more ambitious with their digital offer and they have therefore applied for, and have been accepted onto Culture24's Digital Skills in Museums programme.

Gunnelsbury Museum

£465.71

Project: Purchase of photographic equipment

What was achieved: There are a number of small projects which have either started, or will soon be started, based on the grant. Recently Gunnelsbury Museum has begun work with volunteers to photograph collection items intended for display, to document their pre-conservation condition. From July onwards, they began a new project with volunteers to photograph objects and documents that supports the future exhibition displays; for example, they featured the Sanderson's wallpaper factory in the Industry Gallery, and wooden printing blocks used to produce wallpaper were mounted on the walls. These photographs will be added to an expanded 'Collections' section on their website, allowing visitors to delve a little deeper into areas of interest. In Autumn 2017 they will also begin to photograph 100 'star' objects, a project proposed in their Activity Plan. These will be selected from different areas of the collection by staff and volunteers based on personal response to the item and the type of story they can tell about our local area.



Hackney Museum

£449.95

Project: Purchase of camera equipment for in-house film production and collection of born-digital oral histories

What was achieved: This grant allowed Hackney Museum to remove the major obstacles to them being able to effectively incorporate filmed material into their exhibitions, mainly their reliance on staff members providing access to their own personal equipment. This had raised

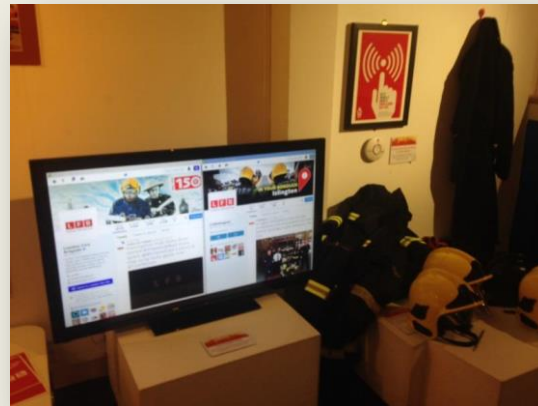
issues with the quality of the footage and audio, an inability to train staff and volunteers due to lack of reliable access. It also meant that their use of original filmed material was unsustainable as it was vulnerable to any staff changes. Now that they have consistent access to quality digital recording equipment, the museum is able to begin a programme of recruiting volunteers to record oral histories. In particular, this played a significant role in the launching of the London Borough of Hackney's first ever LGBT+ history month, where they asked people to help them preserve and share personal accounts of LGBT+ and other 'hidden' histories through filming interviews for their collection.

Islington Museum

£500.00

Project: 'Capturing Our Borough Project'

What was achieved: The 'Capturing Our Borough' project ran alongside the development phase of Islington Museum's new project, 'Islington's Pride' which created a new LGBTQ+ archive of Islington both on and offline. Initial consultations both within the museum/heritage space and out in the community have been greatly facilitated by the two tablets purchased with this grant, allowing individuals and groups to record themselves and allowing personal stories to be captured in a simple and non-intrusive way. This has enhanced their understanding of the communities they will be working with and allowed them to develop broader plans for digital collecting. These consultations were directly fed into their January/February 2017 exhibition, which showcases their existing LGBT collections and appealed for additions to those collections. They also used the stand to allow them to simply facilitate information capture within the exhibition – for people to indicate what material they have, their stories and what they can donate. Their Raspberry Pi was put to use in the Islington Burning exhibition, allowing them to display live Twitter feeds from the London Fire Brigade and Islington Fire Brigade. Their previous set up did not have enough power, but the Pi allowed for continuous live feeds. They have also used the tablets to begin to take quick records of people of the borough in the field. This project has enabled them to work with equipment they may otherwise have struggled to afford, and has already made a strong impact on their projects and future planning.



The View

£500.00

Project: 'Ehive cataloguing: Improving Consistency & Quality'

What was achieved: This project has enabled The View to take consistent and quality photographs of their collection. This helped them to improve both their documentation and extend public access to their objects, using their online ehive cataloguing system, through their website.