

**LONDON  
MUSEUM  
DEVELOPMENT**

# **LONDON MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT 2018 LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD**



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# LONDON MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT THE TEAM



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## INTRODUCTION

The Museum of London is very proud to be the host of the Museum Development programme in London. The London Museum Development service plays a crucial role not only in delivering direct development support for museums, but also in brokering skills sharing and best practice across museums of all shapes and sizes right across the capital. Direct development support and skills sharing have both been key features of the 2015-18 programme, and will remain so going forward into 2018-22.

### Looking back at the 2015-18 programme

Over the last three years, the London Museum Development programme has played a key role in nurturing museums in London. We have seen the 'Ready to Borrow' small capital grants scheme already begin to drive new audiences to museums, and resilience support through Accreditation advice and more intensive programmes, such as Survive and Thrive, and Strong and Safe, giving museums a much healthier platform from which to strike out to success. Our training programmes have become ever stronger in their impacts. Not least among these is the innovation in museums that has come from our Digital Futures training strand, and the extra engagement that has come from the incorporation of the Museum of London's collections care expertise into our training activity.

Nationally, it's also been a time of consolidation and strengthening for the Museum Development Network, the partnership of the nine separate regional providers of Museum Development services, which meets regularly to share best practice and identify economies of scale.

### Looking forward to the 2018-22 programme

The 2018-22 programme begins at a time when the profile of the Museum Development programme is rising nationally. Going forward, Museum Development will have a greater role in supporting museums to achieve the vision as set out in the five goals of ACE's strategic framework, Great Art and Culture for Everyone. There is a new role for Museum Development in supporting museums in areas where there is growing public and political expectation for instance the diversity of their workforce and audiences, in the quality of their public offer, and in their work with children and young people.

To be added to this are the tasks for ACE and Museum Development as set out in the Mendoza Review: an independent review of museums in England, published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in November 2017. This is the first government review of museums for 10 years.

It calls for a stronger museum sector development role for ACE, and Museum Development is to play its part in helping supporting ACE with this. In London, the continuation of many of our key resilience and training programmes reflect the Mendoza Review's call to support museums with the ongoing internal strengthening and improvements needed if they are to respond to the above external expectations upon them. The Review also describes the importance of accurate data to the health of the sector. Along with the Museum Development programmes in other regions, we will be asking museums to co-operate with us on new data gathering initiatives to collect the information both we, and the museum, need to make the sector more resilient.

Going forward, the signs for Museum Development, and the museums it supports, are positive. Like the other culture sector support bodies in receipt of ACE funding, the nine regional Museum Development services have been formally designated as Sector Support Organisations (SSOs). The importance of the local knowledge that Museum Development services have, for instance in their ability to link museums with local placemaking initiatives, has also been identified through the work of the Mendoza Review. Like all other support programmes, there is no additional funding available for individual regional Museum Development programmes. However, ACE has responded to a further Mendoza Review recommendation by setting aside an extra £150,000 p.a. centrally to enable Museum Development to become more nationally consistent and regionally responsive. All in all, the recognition of the small and medium size museums sector grows ever stronger, as does the importance of the Museum Development programme which supports it.

For the Museum of London, 2018-22 represents an exciting time as the museum begins its transition from its current site, to a new museum in West Smithfield. The creation of the new museum will offer a range of exciting opportunities for partnerships with the museum sector in London. The Museum Development team will broker these developing opportunities.



# PART 1: LOOKING FORWARD 2018-22

A digital grant enabled the London Fire Brigade Museum to purchase virtual reality headsets, smartphones and headphones which enabled visitors to experience and learn from a re-creation of a house fire.

Credit: © London Fire Brigade

## ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The London Museum Development programme uses ACE funding to drive development and deliver sustainability, resilience and innovation in non-national museums in the capital, so they can maximise their benefits to audiences and communities.

Much of the context for our 2018-22 offer is provided by some key national strategies and policy priorities. Table 1 lists the key strategic drivers and the programmes we will be running in response to them. The five goals of the ACE 10-year strategic framework, Great Art and Culture for Everyone, are among the most important of the drivers. Some of the five goals express public and political expectations upon museums and the consequent pressure upon them to reach an increasing number of people, and increasing diversity of audiences in ever more innovative and dynamic ways. We are running a number of brand new programmes to support museums large and small to respond to these expectations.

Our **Diversity Matters** programme will encourage museums to embrace ACE's Creative Case for Diversity and engage a more diverse range of visitors with the collections they hold, as well as supporting them with long standing issues about the diversity of their boards and workforce. Our **Measuring Up** programme will encourage museums to secure a measurable improvement in collections development and engagement, in line with ACE quality principles. Other programmes such as **Family Friendly**, and our work with **Local Cultural Education Partnerships**, explicitly challenge museums to think about their offer for children and young people.

(Cont'd on page 12)



The Banners for Spain exhibition at Islington Museum. Barriers purchased via our Ready to Borrow small capital grants scheme made the loan of the banners possible.

Credit: © Islington Museum

**‘We are running a number of brand new programmes to support museums large and small to respond to the public and political pressures upon them’**

**TABLE 1**  
**LONDON MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT 2018-22**

**Great Art and Culture for Everyone**

■ Five ACE goals

The Mendoza Review: an independent review of museums in England (DCMS 2017)

■ Nine 'priorities' for museums

■ Nine areas for internal development and strengthening

**STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

Category	Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
<b>ACE GOALS</b>	1 Excellence is thriving and celebrated in museums (and museums carry out work responding to the Creative Case for Diversity)	x	x			x		x								
	2 Everyone has the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by museums							x							x	
	3 Museums are resilient and environmentally sustainable							x	x	x	x	x				
	4 The leadership and workforce in museums are diverse and appropriately skilled	x				x	x									
	5 Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of museums			x	x			x								
<b>MENDOZA REVIEW: PRIORITIES</b>	1 Adapting to today's funding environment							x	x							x
	2 Growing and diversifying audiences	x		x					x							
	3 Dynamic collections curation and management															
	4 Contributing to place making and local priorities								x							x
	5 Delivering cultural education				x				x							
	6 Developing leaders with appropriate skills															
	7 Diversifying the workforce	x								x						
	8 Digital capacity and innovation						x		x							
	9 Working internationally															
<b>MENDOZA REVIEW: INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING</b>	1 Partnerships							x		x	x	x	x			
	2 Business planning							x		x	x	x	x			
	3 Audience focus							x		x	x	x	x			
	4 Governance							x		x	x	x	x			
	5 Leadership							x		x	x	x	x			
	6 Workforce						x	x		x	x	x	x			
	7 Effective collections management							x		x	x	x	x			
	8 Partnerships							x		x	x	x	x			
	9 Museum sector data															

**LONDON MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**



# ABOUT THE PROGRAMME (cont'd)

More recently we have had the publication of the Mendoza Review, the first government review of English museums for more than 10 years. Some of the priorities it identifies for museums also reflect – like the ACE goals – modern expectations about museums’ public offer (see table 1). Its ‘best practice recommendations’, however, are much more about internal development and strengthening that museums need to undertake in order to respond to those external expectations. We will be running a mixture of new and ongoing programmes to support museums in these areas. Our **Digital Futures** skills programme will address the lack of innovation and strategic approach to digital work identified by the Mendoza Review, caused to some degree by a lack of confidence in this area among museum leaders. Our **Skills Plus** training programme will respond to the greater emphasis called for by Mendoza on developing generic skills such as business planning, management, income generation, marketing and fundraising, and on aptitudes such as flexibility and collaboration. Our own understanding of how to respond to these findings has been greatly enhanced by our recently undertaken training needs analysis of the London non-national museum sector.

One-to-one support from Museum Development Officers (MDOs) will continue as before, with **specialist support** available across the whole of London, and **Accreditation advice** available via an unchanged sub-regional structure (see table 2). There will, however, be increased emphasis on our sub-regional support for the internal development and strengthening for museums, noted by the Mendoza Review as being the pre-requisite to success. In common with all regional English Museum Development services and as required by ACE, we will be using a new **business framework**, aligned to Accreditation, to build a picture of individual museums’ internal development needs.

For museums opting to do a much more comprehensive and in-depth assessment of their business needs, the **Survive and Thrive** programme will continue, giving four museums over the period intensive support from MDOs and trained peers to identify their areas for improvement and also the funding to address them. Meanwhile, the ongoing precarious state of local authority finance is a particular concern in London. Most of the museums supported are in the outer suburbs – the very part of the capital which available data still suggests has the lowest levels of museum and broader cultural engagement. We will, therefore, also be continuing our National Archives-funded **Strong and Safe** resilience programme for local authority-funded museum and archive services.

Museum Development services in London and across England will also take the lead on administering a requirement in the Mendoza Review for a **data return** from museums about their workforce, income, audiences, resilience, finances, closure risk and so on, providing the museum sector with important comparative information, and stakeholder bodies for the first time with a full and consistent overall picture of the regional and national health of the sector.

TABLE 2  
LONDON MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT STAFF STRUCTURE 2018-22

POST HOLDER	POST TITLE	SPECIALIST SUPPORT (PAN-LONDON ROLE)	SUB-REGIONAL SUPPORT (ACCREDITATION, BUSINESS FRAMEWORK, ETC)
YVETTE SHEPHERD (4 days per week)	MDO ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH	ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH	<b>SOUTH AND WEST LONDON</b> Harrow, Brent, Hammersmith and Fulham, Ealing, Hounslow, Hillingdon, Richmond upon Thames, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Sutton, Croydon, Bromley, Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley
RACHAEL CROFTS (full time)	MDO AUDIENCES	AUDIENCES  WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	<b>CENTRAL AND EAST LONDON</b> Camden, Islington, Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Lambeth, Southwark, City of London, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering
ALEC WARD (full time)	MDO DIGITAL & COMMUNICATIONS	DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES	
ELIZABETH CONINGSBY (2.5 days per week)	MDO TRAINING		
BEN TRAVERS (full time)	REGIONAL MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT MANAGER		<b>NORTH LONDON</b> Barnet, Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest

## DIVERSITY MATTERS

The lack of diversity within London's museum workforce, particularly regarding some specific groups, continues to be a matter of concern. For instance whilst 38% of London's working age population is Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME), only 9% of London respondents to the 2016 ACE Character Matters survey<sup>1</sup> were from this group. As the majority of London respondents to this survey were from national and larger museums, it is likely that the figure for small and medium size museums – the main consumers of the Museum Development programme – are even worse. The key aim of ACE's main policy initiative in this area, the Creative Case for Diversity<sup>2</sup>, is that museums should be engaging a more diverse range of visitors with their collections and displays. Creative Case also recognises, however, that in order to get to this point, museums will first need to address the diversity of their boards and workforce.

The underlying cause of the worrying statistics above is almost certainly structural, with a shortage of people from these groups seeking careers in museums – a problem which only larger national programmes of funded apprenticeships and traineeships can hope to address. The London Museum Development programme can, however, have a role in ensuring that museums in the capital are ready to embrace the change that is required, and ensure that their diversity practices are as good as they can be. Under the Diversity Matters programme we will run an annual event which will showcase best practice in embedding board and workforce diversity, how to run programmes to target specific under-represented audiences, and how to deliver the final transformational change of a more diverse core visitor base regularly engaging with displays and collections.

Support will be provided for museums to develop an equality action plan setting out the work they will do to make these changes. 11 museums over the period will then benefit from a £1,000 grant with which they can implement one of the projects in their equality action plan. The priority for grants will be projects which engage diverse visitors with collections and displays, for instance a contemporary collecting project or co-produced exhibition. Where the grant fund does not stretch to cover all museums making an application, MDO support will be available to help museums identify other funding sources for proposed projects.



Visitors at the opening of Making Her Mark, an exhibition at Hackney Museum developed in partnership with the East End Women's Museum.

Credit: © Hackney Council

**‘Museums should be engaging a more diverse range of visitors with their collections and displays’**

# MEASURING UP

Measuring Up is a new programme which will encourage museums to adopt ACE quality principles of self-evaluation, and peer and audience review as a way of securing a measurable improvement in collections development and engagement. The initial emphasis in the Measuring Up programme will be on self-evaluation and peer review.

Our collection grants will be modified and four made available each year to enable museums to more effectively assess the quality of how they develop, research, care for, interpret and share their collections. Grants might be awarded for consultancy to develop more strategic collections development policies, to plan rationalisation programmes, purchase an iPad for collections recording in-store, or for conservation of an object or picture frame for display.

We will invite another four museums per year to participate in a mystery shopper exercise to investigate via peer review the quality of collections engagement through their interpretation and programming. In our year 1 trial the four museums will conduct reciprocal anonymised mystery shopper exercises of each other's exhibitions or programmes, with moderation and support provided by an MDO. Finally, four digital grants similar to those provided in the past will be available annually to enable museums to address both collections development and collections engagement. Awards might be for purchase of cameras to capture collection images for online research, iPads or Raspberry Pis for use as interactives in galleries, or for equipment for 3D imaging or film-making.

In all, 12 museums per year will be supported to demonstrate and measure quality in relation to collections development and engagement. The programme will be run on a trial basis in year 1, and will evolve based on this and in the light of the successor to ACE's quality metrics framework, to be rolled out to National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) from 2019.



The new Ark Gallery at the Garden Museum Lambeth, opened with support from our Ready to Borrow small capital grants scheme.

Credit: © John Chase

**‘12 museums per year will be supported to demonstrate and measure quality in relation to collections development and engagement’**



## FAMILY FRIENDLY

This new programme is designed to encourage museums to sign up to and embed the Kids in Museums manifesto. Each year we will run an event with Kids in Museums which will showcase current best practice in family-friendly activities and provide zero-cost tips to help museums meet the Kids in Museums manifesto. From year 2, those museums which have signed up to the manifesto will be able to apply for a small grant to embed an aspect of it in their work. Grants could be used for purchasing a range of equipment such as baby-changing facilities, family friendly signs, easy-to-use activities for families, or for tablets to be used by children in galleries.

By year 4 we are hoping that 60% of London's non-national, non-NPO museums will have signed up to the manifesto. We will be agreeing separate targets with ACE in due course for the number of museums embedding the manifesto into their work via grants and other means.

A Skills Plus session with Vocaleyes inspired many access improvements at the Foundling Museum, including establishment of a handling collection for visitors with visual impairments or learning difficulties.

Credit: © Dan Weill Photography

## LOCAL CULTURAL EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS (LCEPS)

LCEPs are partnerships whereby the ACE-funded regional Bridge organisation (in London, A New Direction) works with schools, the local authority, voluntary and community bodies and cultural organisations to improve the formal cultural education offer for children and young people in their locality. There is an interest in growing the museum participation in LCEPs in order to further improve the formal learning offer to children and young people, and Museum Development services are being requested to assist the regional Bridge organisations in this recruitment exercise.

London Museum Development already works very successfully with A New Direction in this regard, and already there are 11 non-national non-NPO museums actively engaging with one of the LCEPs in London. By year 3 we will have worked with A New Direction to ensure that at least another six museums are engaging with LCEPs.

## DIGITAL FUTURES

We have decided to continue our Digital Futures skills programme in the light of recent surveys of workforce need which show that museums are still behind other parts of the cultural sector in this area of practice. The Mendoza Review echoed the Digital Culture report<sup>3</sup> which preceded it by finding that a lack of digital literacy among museum leaders and managers sometimes prevented their organisations from being able to take a strategic or innovative approach to these issues. A related finding was that museum staff tended to focus on specific digital activities, with less of an understanding of the broader picture of other digital solutions for specific issues.

We intend to address these issues by providing a new structure for the Digital Futures skills programme. We will deliver the same format and scale of programme, but will group it into broad modules such as creating digital content or digital marketing. Each module will have an introductory event looking in brief at the different approaches to the theme. These scene-setting events may be of particular benefit to managers and leaders. Each module will also include a number of events looking at different approaches to addressing the theme in more detail. So, for instance, an introductory event on creating digital content could be followed by others on taking photographs of collections, creating 3D digital models, basic film-making or managing a blog.

The London Fire Brigade Museum used their Digital Futures training on mobile devices to devise a programme showing families how to make animations on the theme of fire safety.

Credit: © London Fire Brigade



## SKILLS PLUS

We will continue our broader Skills Plus training programme to the same scale and format, but here also recent workforce surveys have led us to update our approach to the subject content of these events. The Mendoza Review reflects surveys which preceded it such as Building a Creative Nation<sup>4</sup> and Character Matters, in describing how the skills needed for a museum career are changing. In the words of these reports, the greater emphasis going forward on skills such as flexibility, collaboration, business planning, income generation, marketing and fundraising calls for a need for 'T-shaped' people, those who can retain their specialist heritage knowledge whilst at the same time develop those broader generic skills.

Our own training needs analysis<sup>5</sup> conducted of museum managers and supervisors found there was a consensus on the need for greater skills around income generation and fundraising. Business and management skills however were felt to be a lower priority. In order to address this mismatch we will be experimenting with training which has museum topics as its main theme, but which at the same time incorporates practical content as to how better generic skills could improve delivery of the relevant museum theme. So, for example, we may work project management into sessions on exhibition or collection management project planning, or we may use the hook of our popular volunteer management training to introduce better general practice on management and leadership of all staff.

We will continue to deliver stand-alone sessions on museum topics which continue to score highly with London museum managers, such as audience development, collections documentation and visitor experience, and similarly will run sessions exclusively on generic, non-traditional topics. But alongside these we will also be running events aiming to provide a practical combination of the two. For both approaches, we will be evaluating both take-up and the organisational impact.

## ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT

The structure for providing one-to-one support from MDOs will remain broadly unchanged (see table 2). **Specialist support** from MDOs covering organisational health, audiences and digital will continue to be available to museums right across London, with a similar service on collections care available from the Museum of London's Regional Collections Care Development Officer. The sub-regional structure for delivering **Accreditation advice** will also continue, with MDOs providing this support according to specific geographic areas. Within this sub-regional and locally provided support, however, there will also be an increased emphasis on the type of internal development and strengthening favoured by the Mendoza Review, as described on page 4. In common with all English regional Museum Development services and as required by ACE, we will be using a new **business framework**, aligned to Accreditation, to build a picture of individual museums' internal development needs. Museum Development services will remain free but from 2019 it is probable that the picture built via an individual museum's business framework will increasingly be used to help guide museums to appropriate Museum Development support.

**'We will be using a new business framework to build a picture of museums' internal development needs'**

A collection grant from London Museum Development enabled Brent Museum to purchase equipment for the safe handling of archive collections in their search room.

Credit: © Brent Museum and Archive service

## SURVIVE AND THRIVE

For museums opting to do a much more comprehensive and in-depth assessment of their business needs, the Survive and Thrive programme will continue. In 2018-22 this process will again give museums intensive support from MDOs and trained peers to identify their areas for improvement, and the funding to act upon them and address them. The support provided goes well beyond the level of the new business framework, and remains an

important opportunity for all types of museums to strengthen ahead of challenges facing them such as continued cuts in public funding and steadily reducing opportunities for trust funding. We will support four museums through the programme – two in each half of the funding period – and £4,000 per service will be available to implement improvements identified by going through the process.



## STRONG AND SAFE

### **A** The National Archives

The ongoing precarious state of local authority finance is a particular concern in London. Most of the museums it supports are in the outer suburbs – the very part of the capital which available data still suggests has the lowest levels of museum and broader cultural engagement. We will, therefore, also be continuing our Strong and Safe resilience programme for local authority-funded museum and archive services.

At the time of writing the 2018-22 programme has not been finalised but is likely to again feature training events on subjects such as influencing and advocacy, evidence and outcomes and income generation. Museum and archive services are often jointly located or managed within London local authorities – indeed they have had to work ever more closely together as cuts take effect and remaining staff take on a wider variety of duties. The opportunity for museum and archive colleagues to share ideas and insights at these events has been a key strength of the programme so far, and the programme will remain open to both sectors. Repeat funding means that, for year 1 at least, this will continue as an MDO-run, National Archives-funded programme.

**‘The ongoing precarious state of local authority finance is a particular concern in London’**

## SECTOR INFORMATION

Information services such as the weekly e-update for museums, London Museum Development twitter account and web pages will continue. In addition to this support, there will be greater emphasis on the data that museums need to place their business activity in context and enable them to benchmark against each other and other culture providers. Museum Development services in London and across England will take the lead on the requirement in the Mendoza Review for an **annual data return** which will collect from museums data about their workforce, income, audiences, resilience, finances, closure risk and so on. In year 1 this will include questions about audience data collection practice, as we investigate the possibility of standardised systems which might make possible the better sharing of audience information.

Once all the data is processed, museums and stakeholder bodies will for the first time have proper comparative information giving a full and consistent overall picture of the regional and national health of the sector. All museums will be invited to participate in the first data collection exercise in London, taking place in 2018-19. The resulting data will hopefully be available to the sector in 2019-20, with the exercise being repeated each year.



Organisers of the 2017  
London Volunteers in Museums  
Awards event at City Hall.

Credit: © London Heritage  
Volunteer Managers Network  
Photo: Marie Stewarts



# PART 2: LOOKING BACK 2015-18

'Tour de Store': some sessions in the Skills Plus programme were delivered by collection care staff at the Museum of London working alongside Museum Development Officers.  
Credit: © Museum of London

## INTRODUCTION

The capital's non-national museums help make London's cultural offer one of the richest to be found anywhere in the world. The collections of these small and medium-size museums tell a huge range of unique stories. Whether it's the niche collections of eclectic art, medical history, different faiths or famous personalities which typify the centre, or the stories of diverse and dynamic local communities which typify outer London, museums give a richness to London's cultural landscape which should be cherished and celebrated.

Over the last three years, the London Museum Development programme has played a key role in nurturing these museums, supporting them to be innovative and as resilient as possible during a period of ongoing economic difficulty. The Ready to Borrow small capital grants scheme has been a most welcome and substantial addition to the funding offer from Museum Development services across the country including in London. We are already seeing the first signs of how these capital improvements are making possible new loans from the great national collections and driving new audiences to smaller museums.

MDOs working on the ground with services right across London have been busier than ever. With MDOs taking direct responsibility for Accreditation advice, the amount of one-to-one support given increased nearly three-fold. This support has helped museums keep a focus on their resilience during the ongoing tough financial times, thus minimising the number of service contractions and closures. Our training programmes have put in a very strong return with 75% of managers believing that attendance of their staff at these had led to organisational improvements. The Museum of London's collection care expertise has been a valuable extra draw to these events. The Digital Futures training and related grants programme in particular has been a breath of fresh air for smaller museums, giving them a chance to innovate in areas as diverse as 3D printing, virtual reality, film-making and live streaming.

No less important has been the slower burn of intensive development projects such as Survive and Thrive, and Strong and Safe, involving a smaller number of museums but with a more intensive process across whole organisations, leading them safely away from dangers, such as closure, and often, some years down the line, to great success.

This brief look back celebrates some of the key successes, and also takes a look at the scale of the programme and the number of museums, staff and volunteers it has reached over the last three years.



A collection grant enabled the Charles Dickens Museum to commission specialist scans which confirmed the provenance of their portrait of Catherine Dickens. See case study on page 41.

Credits: © Hamilton Kerr Institute  
© Charles Dickens Museum London



# MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

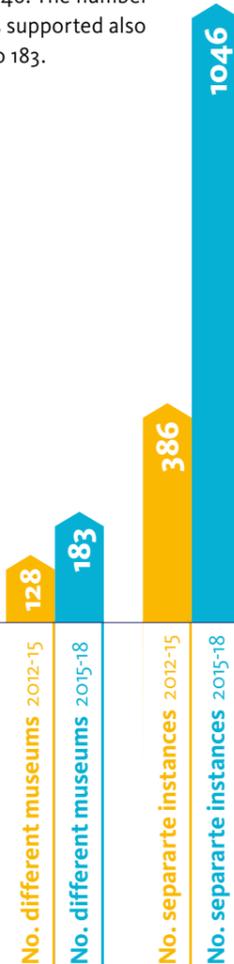
MDOs work with non-national museums right across London, providing a one-to-one support and development service on all areas of museum operations. The matrix structure of the team continued whereby MDOs with lead specialist responsibilities in areas such as organisational health and audiences also provided more general advice and mentoring to museums according to geographical sub-regions. Instances of significant support given by MDOs increased nearly three-fold on the last funding period, to 1,046. The number of different museums supported also increased, from 128 to 183.

This London increase was largely caused by Museum Development services being given formal responsibility by ACE for advising on Museum Accreditation over the period 2015-18. In the biennial MDO Impact Survey last carried out in 2016, all respondents bar one who had accessed Accreditation support in London, said they had found the MDO assistance either very or quite effective. London Museum Development also took on London Museum Group's former responsibility for skills sharing during the 2015-18 period. This change was also successful with the MDO team either sourcing or co-ordinating 180 zero-cost skills shares, presentations or peer-to-peer mentoring sessions, either directly between museums or across all the various museum networks and the training programmes described below. These expert case studies freely given by colleagues working in the London museums sector has greatly added to the quality of the delivery, at the same time making programme budgets go much further.

Museum Development Officers run training programmes and provide one-to-one support for museums right across London.  
Credit: © Museum of London



Figure 1: Significant one-to-one support provided by MDOs



**‘Instances of one-to-one significant support increased nearly three-fold to 1,046’**

# TRAINING PROGRAMMES



Museum of London collection care staff delivering the 'Tour de Store' training.  
Credit: © Museum of London

The largest training programme run for museum staff and volunteers during 2015-18 was **Skills Plus**. The programme provided practical half or full-day events on a range of topics divided according to the three major themes of accreditation – organisational health, collections and audiences. These fully funded sessions sometimes drew on freelance trainers but many were led by the MDO team and the majority also drew on presentations delivered by museums staff from across the London sector and beyond, bringing case studies and expert skills and knowledge to the sessions at no charge.

Another important training programme run during 2015-18 was **Digital Futures**. This programme was designed to excite the London museums sector with the possibilities for digital technologies, with a range of practical how-to sessions encompassing all areas of digital practice in museums. It was based on a digital skills needs survey initially undertaken in 2015 and has been regularly reviewed since. The emphasis across the programme was on the potential of digital for audience engagement, taking in for instance subjects as diverse as social media strategy, mobile devices in galleries, live streaming, making interactive stories, and also sessions on key back-of-house aspects of digital work such as good practice in creating films and digital photographs, digital asset management and rights management. Whilst some of the back-of-house sessions were delivered with Collections Trust, in most cases delivery was

led by the MDO Digital and Communications, and, like the Skills Plus programme, drew heavily on expert presentations and case studies from colleagues across the museums sector.

Overall in April 2015 to December 2017, 88 events were provided across the Skills Plus and Digital Futures programmes, with 1,321 delegates attending from at least 80 different museums across London. Across all events the tendency for bookings to exceed the number of places available has grown over the period, and, in the case of the Skills Plus programme, demand has grown by 61% at a time when a significant amount of museum training was also available from other providers.

With one exception, all courses achieved an average rating from delegates across a range of indicators of good or excellent. More important was the excellent impacts revealed by long-range questions asked of managers and supervisors of all those who attended training sessions in 2015-18. These responses were measured against the worldwide Kirkpatrick standard for evaluating the effectiveness of training. Of those managers and supervisors responding, 84% felt the delegate had put their learning into practice (Kirkpatrick level 3 Behaviour), and 75% felt that the training had enabled the organisation to improve in that area of operation as a result (Kirkpatrick level 4 Results – the highest level). The case study from The Charterhouse gives a good example of one museum putting its learning into practice.

LONDON MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAMMES 2015-18

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT MUSEUMS ATTENDING  
**80**

NUMBER OF TRAINING EVENTS  
**88**

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL DELEGATES ATTENDING  
**1,321**

## CASE STUDY: THE CHARTERHOUSE



The Skills Plus retail training gave The Charterhouse the confidence to expand their product range and display them in a more appealing way for visitors.  
Credit: © The Charterhouse

The Charterhouse – a historic site on the edge of the City of London dating back to 1348 – opened to the public for the first time in January 2017 with a small museum, learning centre, coffee house and shop. Ellie Darton-Moore's wide-ranging role at The Charterhouse as Museum and Collections Manager includes management of the museum shop, something she had no previous experience of. In July 2017 Ellie attended London Museum Development's Skills Plus course, Introduction to retail. She found the part of the day led by Polly Redman, Retail and Marketing Manager at Braintree District Museum, particularly inspiring, especially the range of practical tips.

Through the training and a follow up visit from Polly, Ellie was able to get to grips with an area of retail she found the most challenging, visual merchandising. Together Polly and Ellie took every single product off the shelves and piled them up on the floor. Polly encouraged Ellie to think about the visitor journey through the shop and how products should tell a story. Successful visual merchandising can help customers to link products, and it was clear that shop stock could be merchandised more effectively alongside clear themes running through The Charterhouse museum.

The course gave Ellie the confidence to expand the product range and display them in a way which makes them appealing to visitors. She has focused on products which are unique to The Charterhouse, for example those by local makers, which result in impulse buys because visitors know they can't buy it elsewhere, and which also work well on social media as a way to raise awareness about the organisation generally and the shop specifically.

Whereas previously many visitors did not even look in the shop on their way out, it is now getting more traffic. The museum's volunteers also feel more invested in the shop and make an effort to keep it tidy, restock bare shelves and advise visitors which merchandise would suit their interests.

## DIGITAL GRANTS



Image of a 3D digital model and subject, taken during a Digital Futures training event.

Credit: © Museum of London

Between 2016 and 2018 we ran a programme of funding for small-scale digital projects across London's Accredited museums. These small grants of £500 enabled museums to bid for low cost items and services and filled a funding gap not covered by other providers. They proved highly successful with the fund being oversubscribed in both years with good quality applications.

In all, 21 grants of a total value of £10,500 were awarded to London museums. These grants have been used for a variety of different projects. Projects ranged from the purchase of a 3D printer for printing models from historic architectural drawings to using virtual reality headsets to enable visitors to experience and learn from a re-creation of a house fire. Many of the projects were inspired by insights gained from the Digital Futures training programme. The case study below describes a project which shows the versatility of digital technologies and how they can be used to create engaging content for offline and online audiences.

## CASE STUDY: HACKNEY MUSEUM



The opening event for the Making Her Mark exhibition at Hackney Museum.

Credit: © Hackney Council

Hackney Museum's exhibition programme is rooted in local needs and interests, with exhibitions, public programmes and learning provisions being created in partnership with local community groups. Staff were achieving good results by using their own equipment to make digital film recordings for incorporation in these exhibitions, but the museum needed to purchase its own equipment in order to establish a sustainable strategy for training and best practice on digital film recording.

Once in possession of the new equipment provided by the grant, the museum was able to begin a programme of recruiting and training volunteers to record oral histories. This made possible the launching of the London Borough of Hackney's first ever LGBTQI+ history month, where the museum asked people to help preserve and share personal accounts of LGBTQI+ and other hidden histories, by filming interviews for their collection. These videos were used for work with young people from Project Indigo, a local group working with vulnerable LGBTQI+ youth, to encourage them to open up and reflect upon the challenges they still face today. This resulted in Hackney Museum's exhibition, *From Bedroom to Battleground*.

Three of the interviews from the LGBTQI+ oral history project are currently available in Hackney Museum's current exhibition on women's activism entitled *Making Her Mark*, which was developed in partnership with the East End Women's Museum. Having access to the filming equipment meant that the museum could also produce interviews and filmed content in this exhibition exploring themes and stories that were missing from their existing collections, but important to their community members who were helping them to co-curate the exhibition. Interviews included one with Diane Abbott MP and another with an independent domestic violence advisor working within the African and Caribbean community.

Since receiving the grant and becoming more confident in their ability to provide quality videos, Hackney Museum has begun sharing existing films on their YouTube account, surpassing 15,000 views and reaching new audiences with their content.

# READY TO BORROW SMALL CAPITAL GRANTS



The new Ark Gallery at the Garden Museum Lambeth, opened with support from the Ready to Borrow small capital grants scheme.  
Credit: © Sin Bozkurt

The Ready to Borrow small capital grants scheme was administered on behalf of ACE by Museum Development services across England during 2015-18. Its purpose was to enable museums to upgrade their buildings and exhibition spaces to meet the environmental and security standards of the Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS), thus enabling them to take loans from national and other larger museums.

London Museum Development awarded funding of £281,000 to 12 different museums. In some instances awards went to museums already engaged in major capital projects who focused on specific items, for example high specification display cases, as the finishing touch necessary to meet GIS standards. In other instances awards were for security barriers, room alarms or shutters, or for programmes of work to improve environmental conditions, for instance UV filming programmes or conversion of conventional lighting to LED. All of this is enabling a much richer sharing of notable objects in new and different parts of London, enabling more people to see, learn from and enjoy these great treasures. Exhibitions being made possible by the scheme range from a display of Spanish Civil War banners at Islington Museum, to national treasures relating to gardening pioneer Tradescant coming home to the Garden Museum in Lambeth. The upgrading of museum spaces at the Royal College of Physicians near Regent's Park provides a striking case study of the impact these grants can have.

**THE AVERAGE  
SIZE OF  
GRANT PROVIDED  
UNDER THE  
READY TO  
BORROW SMALL  
CAPITAL GRANTS  
SCHEME**

**£23,417**

## CASE STUDY: ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS MUSEUM



Acclaimed author Jeanette Winterson (left) with members of the RCP Museum team at the opening of Scholar, courtier, magician: the lost library of John Dee.  
Credit: © Rupa Photography

The modern building which houses the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Museum is a celebrated Grade I listed post-war construction. It has extremely large, two-storey spanning windows on the south side, facing onto two floors of gallery space where oil paintings hang, and where the museum puts on its main exhibitions.

By 2015 the museum's exhibitions were becoming increasingly high profile and were including a growing range of loan material. The environmental conditions however stipulated by the lenders had often been very challenging. The museum had added UV film to display cases, but the large windows had meant that the museum was still unable to bring light levels down sufficiently for some lenders, ruling out some artworks.

The small capital grant enabled the RCP Museum to carry out the large-scale UV filming programme that was required to replace expired film on the large main windows and add additional protective film to windows in display areas not previously covered. As a result, light levels that were 263 lux and 66 UV were reduced to 30-90 lux and 33 UV. The museum was, therefore, able to achieve GIS coverage for a key

loan for its 2016 exhibition Scholar, courtier, magician: the lost library of John Dee. The painting, from the Ashmolean Museum Oxford, was important as it is believed to be the only contemporary portrait of John Dee made during his lifetime. The exhibition reunited the painting with Dee's lost library of books, now held by the RCP, and other items belonging to Dee from national collections.

The exhibition really galvanised the team at the RCP Museum, which undertook one of its most extensive ever event programmes, and contracted in specialist media support to help with online and public relations activity. The exhibition was shortlisted in the Museum and Heritage Awards in the category of best marketing campaign. More important, the exhibition was such a success that it went on to become the best attended in the college's history, exceeding the number of visitors of any previous show within the first month. In 2017, the museum followed this up with another very successful exhibition, Cabinet of Rarities: The curious collections of Sir Thomas Brown, which featured a loan from the Natural History Museum of The Herbarium, a very rare book from the Hans Sloane collection requiring strict light levels.

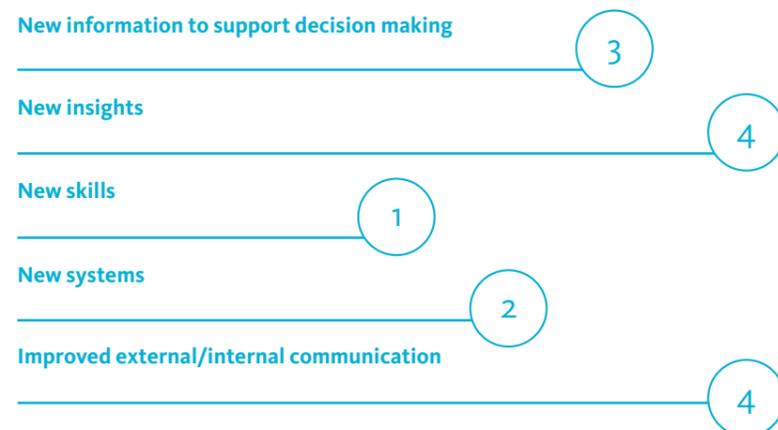
**‘The exhibition went on to become the best attended in the College’s history, exceeding the number of visitors of any previous show within the first month’**

# SURVIVE AND THRIVE

The 2015-18 period remained tough for museums, with sources of public and trust funding dwindling and competition for private income intense. The Survive and Thrive programme continued, supporting museums to refresh and refocus their organisational priorities, improve their financial sustainability and respond to change. MDOs, working with specialty trained museum peers, supported five museums through a process of self-assessment and peer review, enabling them to identify strengths and areas for improvement. A total fund of £24,000 was available for museums to carry out the improvement projects identified. Improvement projects ranged from governance review to gathering community engagement data and audience development research.

All five museums confirmed that they had found the self-assessment and peer review process beneficial. Figure 3 shows the different ways in which the funded improvement projects made a difference to the museums. The experience of the Brunel Museum provides a good example of how participation the programme can help museums strengthen in crucial areas.

Figure 3: Survive and Thrive – how the five museums said the programme made a difference



## CASE STUDY: THE BRUNEL MUSEUM



As a result of participation in Survive and Thrive, the Brunel Museum has a detailed audience profile and clear audience development objectives.

Credit: © Benedict Johnson

The Brunel Museum is located near the famous Brunel train tunnel in Rotherhithe. For many years it had hosted popular events programmes, such as the Midnight Apothecary cocktail bar in its gardens. The improvement planning process had, however, shown that it needed to develop a deeper understanding of its current and potential audiences in order to most advantageously develop its displays, programmes and facilities.

As part of its funded improvement project, the museum, therefore, commissioned an audience development specialist to run focus groups with existing visitors, non-users and teachers. It also signed up to the Association of Independent Museums' Visitor Verdict audience data gathering tool. Rather than risk the low response rate which would probably result from volunteers trying to collect data from audiences directly, this process required no more of the volunteers than to collect email addresses from visitors, so that survey information could be collected from them subsequently online.

The museum's understanding of who visited them began to improve, and the next step was to develop a deeper understanding of who was not visiting. The museum therefore commissioned the Audience Agency to produce an area profile report which enabled it to identify the demographic segments which were under-represented in its audiences. The two key target audiences identified through all this research were primary schools within 30 minutes travel time, and local families. A further specialist, this time in Learning, was commissioned to help the museum think through how it could best develop its offer for schools and families.

As a result of all this work the museum has a detailed audience profile and clear audience development objectives. By September 2017 it had launched a new schools learning programme and for the first time was offering family learning activities at weekends and during school holidays. Perhaps most importantly, the visitor profile and audience development priorities were used to inform a capital bid for the development of displays and the school offer, which they have now submitted to Heritage Lottery Fund.

## STRONG AND SAFE

The part of the London museums sector most at risk of cuts or closure throughout the 2015-18 period remained local authority-funded services. Their survival is critical as these constitute the most significant type of museum service in the outer London boroughs, where cultural participation is generally much lower than in the centre. Many are co-located or co-managed with borough archive services, and in 2016 we held a conference with The National Archives which brought together managers and staff to hear keynote speakers and case studies, and join in a discussion about the support they needed to plan routes towards survival and success.

The result was London Museum Development's Strong and Safe programme, jointly funded by The National Archives, which provided specialist training on topics such as influencing and advocacy, developing evidence and outcomes frameworks and personal resilience, mixed with more informal twilight events which made time for museum and archive staff to network effectively and share examples of good practice. We also provided a grant programme to encourage services to explore new ways of raising their profile within councils, to take risks and pilot new ways of working. A very interesting case study is provided by the grant awarded to Kingston Museum and Heritage Service.

**'We ran a grant programme to encourage local authority services to take risks and pilot new ways of working'**

### CASE STUDY: KINGSTON MUSEUM AND HERITAGE SERVICE



Storing collections at Kingston Museum and Heritage Service.

Credit: © Kingston Museum and Heritage Service

Kingston Museum and Heritage Services' Strong and Safe grant came at an opportune moment. There had been two unsuccessful Heritage Lottery Fund applications to address the service's long-running collections storage issues. Much of the museum and local studies collection had been sent to a commercial storage facility in Oxfordshire, meaning a two-week turnaround for public access requests. The remote location also limited the ability of staff and key local partners like Kingston Archaeological Society to work on the collection. Neither could the accommodation of public records at Surrey History Centre Woking suffice as a permanent arrangement. The council's position was that whilst there might be capital support, minimising revenue costs was a priority for any solution.

The heritage team were aware that other council departments were also struggling with their own storage issues, and were facing similar cost pressures such off-site commercial storage. They realised that this might be an opportune moment to commission a detailed piece of work which could look not only at the storage needs of heritage collections, but also other services such as records management and music. The heritage team secured a Strong and Safe grant to commission the National Conservation Service to carry out research not only of the above departments but also other key stakeholders such as the asset management team and the Borough Valuer, as well as key customers and community groups. This process opened many new conversations for the heritage team across the council, further strengthening its profile. Most importantly, the study found that the economies of scale from an initial capital investment of £3 million could lead to potential revenue savings of £150,000 a year. The next step is for the heritage and records management teams to work with the assets team to use the study to build a case for securing support and committee approval.

## COLLECTION GRANTS

Between 2015 and 2018 we ran a programme of funding for collection management and care across London museums. This time around we provided smaller grants, typically of just £500 and with a simpler application process, thus enabling museums to bid for low cost items and services and fill a gap in collections funding not covered by any other provider. This approach proved successful as the fund was oversubscribed in every year with good quality applications.

In all 69 grants of a total value of £34,000 were awarded to London museums. Many were for the purchase of equipment or materials to enhance collection care or management projects, whilst some were to enhance environmental monitoring or for conservation assessment of objects. The case study below describes a project which generated considerable publicity for the host museum, and shows just what can be achieved with a grant as small as £500.

**'69 grants of a total value of £34,000 were awarded to London museums in 2015-18'**

### CASE STUDY: CHARLES DICKENS MUSEUM



The confirmation that they did indeed hold the original Maclise portrait of Catherine Dickens had the museum 'swinging from despair to elation.'

Credit: © Hamilton Kerr Institute

The Charles Dickens Museum is located in Doughty Street, the first house in London which the author rented together with his wife Catherine. A portrait of Catherine Dickens by Daniel Maclise had been acquired by the museum in 1995 but a Maclise expert later raised doubts about the provenance of the painting, and subsequently two conservators noted that up to 70% of the original surface had been overpainted. The museum was no longer sure whether the original painting lay underneath, or indeed whether they owned an original Maclise portrait at all.

The museum applied for a collection grant for specialist investigative work to be undertaken. The painting was de-framed, packed and driven to the Hamilton Kerr Institute at the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge, where it underwent a full infrared scan and x-ray analysis. This revealed that the original Maclise portrait – recorded in a contemporary drawing – did indeed lie underneath. His original sketch in charcoal also showed up under the paint layer, and revealed that details around the face, head, hands, dress and background features such as curtains had been changed significantly during the overpainting. Having carried out research on the painting's history, the museum believe the overpainting may have occurred in an attempt to rectify damage sustained whilst it was in or on its way to the United States in the 1940s.

The news that the museum did after all own the original Maclise portrait was a cause for celebration for the museum. As the museum's director Cindy Sughrue said 'this has been an interesting process... and one that has seen us swinging from despair to elation'. The next step will be to investigate the possibility of a full restoration of the original painting. This will require fundraising, although the considerable media interest generated by the scan will hopefully help this effort.

## LONDON VOLUNTEERS IN MUSEUMS AWARDS



Winners at the 2017  
London Volunteers in Museums  
Awards at City Hall.

Credit: © London Heritage Volunteer Managers Network  
Photo: Marie Stewart

Over the 2015-18 period London Museum Development has been the main sponsor and sat on the judging panel for the annual London Volunteers in Museums Awards. These awards are organised by the London Heritage Volunteers Managers Network and celebrate the key role played by volunteers in sustaining museums of all shapes and sizes right across the capital.

As public funding cuts deepen, volunteers are ever more essential in keeping museum services going. Whether as individuals supporting staff, teams of volunteers running key activities, trustees or museums which are completely run by enthusiastic volunteers – without these individuals many museums in London would not be able to open to the public as often as they do. For the volunteers themselves, the process can offer valuable work experience and fair and accessible entry routes into museum employment. London Museum Development, therefore, has remained an enthusiastic supporter of these awards.

**‘As public funding cuts deepen, volunteers are ever more essential in keeping museum services going’**



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**London Museum Development 2018:  
Looking back, looking forward**

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