

## Association of Independent Museums

### AIM E-News – October 2014 – Number 62 – **EXTRACTS**

**Have you benefited from an AIM Sustainability Grant – now's the time!  
300 eligible members yet to apply  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation increases its support by 25%**

AIM has re-launched its Sustainability Grant Scheme, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, with revised grant criteria and more cash for small and medium-sized museums. The scheme began in 2006, since when over 240 museums have benefited from grants totalling over £600,000 to help them improve their organisational sustainability. An independent evaluation of the programme earlier this year found that in many areas there were no similar funding schemes available to museums, and that there were over 300 eligible AIM members who had yet to benefit from a grant. As a result the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation not only agreed to renew the scheme for a further three years, but also increased the amount available for grants from £60,000 to £75,000 per year. There have been some changes in the eligibility criteria, guidance notes and assessment criteria, so please use the new application form and see the new guidance at <http://tinyurl.com/owwaks2>. The next closing date is 15 January 2015. The grants will continue to fund similar projects to those supported in previous rounds, such as innovative ideas for the generation of income. However, AIM is keen to see more applications that focus on the long-term sustainability of a museum by looking at its organisational health (e.g. through governance reviews, business planning etc). AIM's administrator, Justeen Stone, is very happy to discuss your application with you before you apply: contact her at [aimadmin@aim-museums.co.uk](mailto:aimadmin@aim-museums.co.uk)

#### **New Museum Resilience Fund open for applications – first deadline 6 November**

Arts Council England (ACE) has opened its Museum Resilience Fund for applications with a £30 million budget to spend over the next three years (£10 million per year). Applications for the first round must be made by 6 November. The Fund, which aims to help museums become more sustainable, replaces the Renaissance Strategic Support Fund, and is designed to complement ACE's Major Partner Museums (£22.7 million), the Museum Development Fund (£3 million) and national programmes such as Accreditation and Designation (£5 million). ACE has aimed to remove as many barriers as possible, lowering the limits on minimum grants, visitor numbers and turnover, enabling it to be open to the vast majority of museums. Projects can last up to three years, with grants ranging from £20,000-£300,000. Applications can be made by partnerships, and Subject Specialist Networks can apply. The fund is excluded to Major Partner Museums and National Museums (unless they are within a network for sharing expertise and advice). <http://tinyurl.com/kuhaevx>

#### **Museum Development Fund network 2015-18 announced**

Nine partner museums have been appointed in round two of Arts Council England's (ACE) Museum Development Fund (2015-18) to deliver its £3 million Museum Development programme in England. The successful applicants will contribute to a national network of support, expert advice, and development for Accredited museums and those working towards Accreditation, whatever their size. The partner institutions are: Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives (South West); Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust (West Midlands); Leicestershire County Council (East Midlands); Manchester Partnership with Cumbria Museums Consortium (North West); Museum of London (London); Norfolk Museums Service (East of England); Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove with Chatham Historic Dockyard, Oxfordshire County Council & Hampshire County Council (South East); Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (North East), and York Museums Trust (Yorkshire). <http://tinyurl.com/l6j5m98>

#### **Giving to Heritage – learning session at Westminster**

The Heritage Alliance's Heritage Lottery Fund-supported Giving to Heritage scheme continues, with a peer to peer learning session at the Institute of Fundraising office in Westminster on 14 November. Workshop attendees will have the chance to get together to discuss their burning issues and learn from each other, facilitated by an IoF fundraising trainer. Meanwhile workshop dates coming up include: Developing a heritage plan (4 November/Ironbridge Museum, Telford); Making the case for heritage (6 November, Brading Roman Villa, Isle of

Wight); Community fundraising in heritage (12 November/St Geroges, Leeds); Major donor funding (18 November/Bluecoat, Liverpool); Corporate partnerships (25 November/The Gallery, London EC1), and Trusts & foundations (4 December/Great North Museum, Newcastle). Free one-hour telephone or face to face conversations with an expert are available on 5 and 19 November. And mentor matching sessions for heritage fundraisers are on 11 November (Soho House, Birmingham); 12 November (People's History Museum, Manchester); 20 November (London SW1); 21 November (St George's, Bristol). The £500,000 scheme aims to empower heritage enthusiasts with the skills they need to improve their fundraising capability and diversify their income through training sessions - AIM is represented on the programme steering group. Workshop places cost just £20. Book at [www.givingtoheritage.org.uk](http://www.givingtoheritage.org.uk) - and for further information about the programme contact [mark.webb@theheritagealliance.org.uk](mailto:mark.webb@theheritagealliance.org.uk) (tel 020 7222 3982).

### **New project aims to improve museums' financial performance**

A new digital research project, Insight, has been launched with the aim of increasing financial performance in museums and other cultural attractions. The project partners are aiming to recruit 200 cultural organisations nationwide to take part in a free trial before 31 October - AIM members are invited. Insight will use sophisticated 'predictive analytic' techniques, which have transformed industries such as financial services, retail, and highway safety, to provide site-specific performance projections allowing cultural organisations to plan with greater effectiveness than has previously been possible. Insight is being delivered by enterprise experts and cultural sector consultants Black Radley, software developers Ryan O'Neill Partnership and researchers from Bath Spa University's Centre for Creative Computing. The project is supported by the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts - Nesta, the Arts & Humanities Research Council, and public funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England (ACE). Professor Peter Latchford OBE of Black Radley, the lead project partner, explains: "In recent years, cultural organisations have had to rely much more heavily on earned income - a trend that is set to continue. Given the growing pressure on resources in the sector, the question has to be 'how do we leverage the market information available with a method that is cost-effective, accurate, requires very little staff time and enables us predict better, plan better, and to maximise income?'" Museums, art galleries, historic sites and houses, and other cultural attractions are encouraged to register their interest in the Insight trial by contacting project manager Peter Collins at [insight@blackradley.com](mailto:insight@blackradley.com). For more information contact Peter at [peter\\_collins@blackradley.com](mailto:peter_collins@blackradley.com) or 07896799748.

### **Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund ninth round**

The Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund has announced its ninth funding round, with grants of between £20,000 and £100,000 available to organisations seeking to carry out collections work outside the scope of their core resources. Administered by the Museums Association, the fund has £1 million a year to spend. Applications should be submitted by 17 April 2015, when a shortlist will be selected for a full application by 28 May. <http://tinyurl.com/mgs4ex6>

### **Sustainability grants from Low Carbon Innovation Fund**

The Low Carbon Innovation Fund (LCIF) is offering grants from £10,000 to help museums and galleries grow their business in a sustainable way. Backed by the European Regional Development Fund and based at the University of East Anglia, the LCIF is keen to encourage organisations in the heritage sector to reduce their carbon footprint. Making buildings more energy efficient and digitising collections are two ideas they could be interested in funding. The fund has already invested more than £43 million in small businesses to make simple changes in work practices such as installing energy efficient lighting and introducing shared transport. Contact [www.lowcarbonfund.co.uk](http://www.lowcarbonfund.co.uk)

### **Could your museum benefit from a loan?**

Direct from the AIM blog, here is some useful news from [Civil Society Finance](#). It points out that a loan can be a self-empowering way for charities such as museums to fast-track their plans to increase income, reduce their reliance on donations and reduce their long-term costs, and is an option that trustees should look at more readily

than perhaps they do. Read more here - <http://tinyurl.com/np7wde8>. To discover other gems on the AIM blog go to <http://aimuseums.wordpress.com>

### **New guide to online giving**

The Charity Finance Group has published a new guide to online giving, *Making the Most of Digital Donations: A practical guide to selecting and using online giving platforms*. It says: "Online giving platforms have been in existence for over a decade and there are now a large number of operators offering a range of services. As charity supporters have become increasingly familiar with digital financial transactions, taking donations online has become essential." The guide "will also be particularly useful for smaller charities that may be less sure about how online giving platforms work or what they need to do when working with different partners." <http://www.cfg.org.uk/onlinegiving>

### **Museum Freecycle portal grows**

The Museum Freecycle UK portal is proving a big success with 170 members signed up in its first few months. The site enables museums to recycle their showcases and other exhibition build items for free and is run by exhibition designers/architects Urban Salon with SHARE Museums East and The Collections Trust. Members range from large national museums to small museums countrywide – all can join in. Dulwich Picture Gallery exhibitions officer Nadine Loach says: "I have found Museum Freecycle to be really useful and thoroughly recommend it to everyone I meet. We had a great response to our request for showcases and were very impressed with the offers. The first response was from a National Trust property who sent someone to visit to see the showcases and then later arranged to collect them all." Membership is free. For more information contact Caroline Keppel-Palmer at [caroline@urbansalonarchitects.com](mailto:caroline@urbansalonarchitects.com) or visit <http://tinyurl.com/qyuzwy6>

### **Museums + Heritage Awards for Excellence – nominate your project now**

The Museums + Heritage Awards for Excellence celebrate best practice within the world of museums, galleries, cultural and heritage visitor attractions. Generating very public recognition for the winners and shortlistees, these awards give all organisations – no matter what size – the opportunity to enjoy the spotlight. With 10 categories to choose from, plus a special nomination award run in partnership with the Guardian's Cultural Professionals Network, the awards reflect all aspects of the cultural sector – from exhibitions, both temporary and permanent, through to educational initiatives, marketing campaigns, innovations and restoration projects plus, of course, trading and income generation – there is something for everyone. The awards are judged by a panel of industry leading lights and the closing date for entries is 30 January 2015. Further information can be viewed online at [www.museumsandheritage.com/awards](http://www.museumsandheritage.com/awards)

The **new executive of the Charity Commission, Paula Sussex**, has suggested considerable change is on the way at the Commission during a speech to the Charity Finance Summit. Priorities include toughening up on wrongdoers and being more proactive about tracking them down using a specialist team rather than waiting for complaints. The Commission would become more aggressive in using its powers, with less interaction with charities and 'hand-holding'. She promised more efficiency, greater transparency, improved online interaction, and hinted in discussion after her speech that charities may have to pay the Commission in the future. <http://tinyurl.com/mgl5lar>

The **highest monthly visitor numbers to museums in England** since records began were recorded in August according to the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) – 5,899,043 visits. Culture minister Ed Vaizey said it was "outstanding news. Our museums are world beaters with their priceless collections, their scholarship and their impeccable customer service." <http://tinyurl.com/mc9upqu>. Meanwhile 68% of children aged 5-15 have visited a heritage site in the last year according to the DCMS Taking Part 2013/14 Annual Child Survey. The findings confirm a downward trend in the proportion of children aged 11-15 visiting during school time since 2012/13 when the figure was 33.1%. <http://tinyurl.com/ou3m3hn>

Following our E-News items on the **recent changes in copyright** as they affect museums and galleries here are two useful links for anyone interested who has not yet caught up with them. <https://www.gov.uk/exceptions-to-copyright> and <http://tinyurl.com/pzfq3c>