

Extract from AIMS – August 2016

Giving to Heritage continues for a further year

The Heritage Alliance (HA) has been awarded £250,000 to extend its Giving to Heritage programme for another year, and has announced a new series of workshops as well as 'masterclasses' for more experienced fundraisers. Workshops cost £20 per person. The Alliance, the largest coalition of heritage interests in England, runs training events in partnership with the Institute of Fundraising to support improvement of skills and confidence in fundraising. Coaching, webinars and other training events at locations across England will be supplemented by workshops on applying for social investment funds and how to set up a community shares project. In its first two years the programme trained more than 12,000 heritage staff and volunteers representing nearly 600 different organisations. Evaluation results show a 97% rating of 'good/excellent' for the training sessions with many organisations raising large sums of money by putting their learning into practice. HA chairman Loyd Grossman said the project had been an overwhelming success, "bringing new confidence and new funds to the independent heritage sector". For new dates and more information go to www.givingtoheritage.org.uk.

More guidance to Code of Ethics

The Museums Association (MA) has launched additional guidance to its revised Code of Ethics. It includes best practice examples and case studies, links to legal frameworks and other codes of practice. The code contains the three principles that museums should work to (supported by AIM), public benefit and engagement, collections stewardship and institutional and individual integrity. <http://tinyurl.com/gp6dsjo>

Mapping independent museums

A new project will map and analyse the development of the UK independent museums sector from 1960-2020. *Mapping Museums: The history and geography of the UK independent sector 1960-2020* will be led by Dr Fiona Candlin, reader in museums studies at Birkbeck, University of London, and supported by Alex Poulavassillis, professor of computer science. AIM is represented on the project's steering group.

Between 1970 and 1989 some 1,300 new museums opened in the UK. The vast majority were independent, founded by community and special interest groups and individual collectors. "They differed from public museums to such an extent that they were judged to have 'revolutionised' the sector", says Dr Candlin. "There are now about 1,600 independent museums in the UK, but despite the extraordinary boom in their numbers we know very little about them."

Regional and national funding bodies and museums associations collect data but it has been limited to specific remits and areas of interest, she adds. Records on when museums opened and if they close are not available, and the information that exists cannot be easily searched.

In the first phase of the project existing information will be gathered to establish a searchable database covering location, date of foundation, subject matter, size and type of museums, and will be hosted on a project website by the Bishopsgate Institute. In the second phase, the database will be used to identify patterns in the emergence, development and closure of independent museums and seek to account for trends and anomalies through historical and interview-based research.

The research will enable long-term trends to be established – whether there are links between where they opened and their subject matter, if there are areas where few museums survived, and how these patterns correlate to broader cultural and social factors.

"It will produce the first evidence-based history of the UK museum boom, show how the sector has changed, and provide an insight into the grass roots concerns at a regional and national level", says Dr Candlin. "It will contribute to our scholarly understanding of British culture, be useful for policy makers and arts funders, and of interest to the general public."

AIM Bulletin will bring further news of the project as it unfolds. Members can ensure they are included in the database (Micromuseums Archive) by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/hrm7apn>

Maximising income from donations boxes

AIM has welcomed the Government's new proposals for its Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme, with a raised limit on which Gift Aid can be claimed on small donations from £5,000 to £8,000. The announcement was first made in the 2015 Budget, and the new limit came into effect in April this year.

Alongside the increased limit, the Government has been consulting on simplifying the processes and requirements for the scheme, which AIM regards as necessary to improve take up of the scheme.

The aim of the scheme is to enable all charities to benefit from Gift Aid and was designed to ensure smaller charities did not miss out. The Government accepted that it was not always possible or practical for all charitable donations to be accompanied by a Gift Aid declaration, for instance from donation boxes. The scheme enables charities to claim Gift Aid on small cash donations of £20 or less. The scheme also enables groups of charities to similarly make claims under the scheme's 'community buildings' rules.

For most museums the benefit is in being able to claim Gift Aid on the contents of their donations boxes. If you are not claiming on your box donations yet, contact your local HMRC office for advice. To maximise your income from donations boxes go to AIM's Quick Guide *Donations Boxes in Museums* written by Judy Niner and Amy Richards of Development Partners which can be downloaded at http://www.aim-museums.co.uk/content/quick_guides/

HMRC has published an update to its Gift Aid guidance on digital giving and social giving accounts. The move is in recognition of the increasing number of new and innovative ways of giving to charity through digital platforms. <http://tinyurl.com/pkbbhgq>