



Association of  
Independent  
Museums

# AIM Bulletin

June 2022

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**The Foundling  
Museum: Transforming  
lives through creative action**

# Welcome to AIM Bulletin!

## The value of networks

“You know everyone!” my two children often say after I’ve been to an event, which of course isn’t true. Over the years, however, I’ve been fortunate to build a pool of people from various sectors and backgrounds. As one of the directors of Creative Black Country, part of my role is to grow and maintain networks to build meaningful relationships. I have been reflecting on how I do this, and why I stay connected.

**Volunteering** – whilst there was no logic in choosing a couple of roles back in my early twenties – volunteering at a local summer scheme for young people and being part of a Junior Chamber of Commerce to run a public speaking competition for school children – it increased my understanding of the youth sector and led to good connections.

**Digital Platforms** – LinkedIn and Twitter enable access to a global network of people and organisations, helpful in reaching folks to help spread the word about what we do. They also enable you to follow peers from whom we can learn.

**Attending events and saying hello** – This took some courage in the early days and needed more effort. Over time, I have picked up a few tips: get to the venue early so you do not walk in a room full of people; ask for a delegates list so that you can find out in advance who you want to connect with; ask the host for an introduction if you’re a bit shy; if someone give you a business card, scribble on the back a quick note of what you talked about/where you met, so you remember later.

The bigger part of this is *why* networks are important.

- Meeting and growing a network of people can really help expand your world view and help to bring innovation into your own field of work.
- It is much easier to ‘phone a friend’ and ask someone for a second opinion if you’re struggling or need that bit of encouragement.
- Having built and supported your networks, you will be in a stronger position to apply for funding as a group of organisations.
- They are your cheerleaders – the best compliment for you, or your organisation, comes from others, so having your advocates will build mutually beneficial connections.

Networks are not built overnight. It takes time to build the trust needed to establish strong relationships, so keep going. Eventually people around you and your network will trust you and be more open to help you reach your goal. Well done if you pull on those contact strings, do always thank them. Contacts are precious and should be treated with respect! And if there isn’t a network around you, start one up about something that you have interest in.

Finally, the most important value amongst everything that we do is *building trust*, the foundation of any network and relationship.

Sajida Carr  
AIM Trustee and Director of Operations and  
Development, Creative Black Country  
[www.creativeblackcountry.co.uk](http://www.creativeblackcountry.co.uk)



## Front cover

Image of Lemn Sissay with care-experienced trainees (c) The Foundling Museum. The Foundling Museum’s mission is to transform lives through creative action, it tells the story of the Foundling Hospital, established in 1739 by the philanthropist Thomas Coram, to care for babies at risk of abandonment. The Hospital was the UK’s first children’s charity and became its first public art gallery. Read our profile on page 19.





# Six AIM Hallmarks Grants awarded

**Funded by Arts Council England, six projects recently received AIM Hallmarks Grants focused on Tackling Inequality.**

## Aerospace Bristol

£10,000

From grounded to take-off! Launching Aerospace Bristol's Equality Action Plan. The project's goal is to support the museum to diversify its Board, workforce and future programming through the creation of a People Plan that will embed EDI throughout the organisation.

Martha Lewington, Development Manager at Aerospace Bristol, said, "I am most grateful for this incredible support, which will enable Aerospace Bristol to transform and make the organisational improvements needed as a modern museum."

## American Museum in Britain

£10,000

Increasing the diversity of stories and histories we tell to create a more comprehensive history of America. Creating a more inclusive experience in our American Heritage galleries to include a diverse range of voices and provide a more comprehensive offer.

## Ditchling Museum of Art & Craft

£10,000

We are Here. Making visible hidden narratives in our collection and content and building knowledge and skills in the whole museum community, improving visitor welcome and audience diversity.

## Jewish Museum London

£9,200

Collecting Inclusive Stories Tour. A joint year-long programme between the learning and collections team to tour 20 sites across the UK to collect narratives missing from our collection. The 400 images collected will be accessioned and an online exhibition created.

Frances Jeens, Director, Jewish Museum London, said, "I'm so pleased to receive this funding. We've been working hard on the preparation for over a year and have several of the partner communities very eager to start, so they will also be thrilled!"

## National Paralympic Heritage Trust

£9,000

In Our, the first Voice, will explore the history of the Paralympics through the stories and voices of those who made it happen and fought for their equal rights as people with disabilities. The oral testimony collected will be used to augment the displays and provide first person interpretation at the centre.

## Macclesfield Museum

£5,150

'Silk and Sight Loss - Revealing Past, Present and Future Perspectives.' Macclesfield Museum will be working with East Cheshire Eye Society to further access and representation of the visually impaired at the museum.

Look out for case studies from all these projects and more at

[aim-museums.co.uk/helping-organisations/case-studies](http://aim-museums.co.uk/helping-organisations/case-studies)



Image supplied by Museum of Youth Culture

# New round of New Stories New Audiences

**Funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund, New Stories New Audiences is open to all AIM members in the small museum category (up to 20,000 visitors). AIM members in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are all eligible to apply.**

We know that museums need to widen their audiences to enhance their sustainability, and to widen participation to groups that are currently under-represented. We want New Stories New Audiences to inspire museums to stay relevant to their audiences and to increase their impact.

We will fund projects up to £15,000 that result in a wider range of people

being involved in heritage at your organisation. We expect you to have identified a new story that you wish to tell and undertake some initial research to identify who the new audience will be. We also expect you to work with a new partner, to work differently and to try something new.

**Previous projects include:** Provan Hall received £15,000 to collaborate and create an educational resource with local communities to interpret their built heritage and history.

The Museum of Youth Culture (pictured) received £14,500 for a project working with young people from Hackney's Black African and Caribbean communities to collect stories, curate and produce an exhibition.

The Scottish Fisheries Museum received £11,896 to create a touring exhibition and series of activities to showcase island life in the Forth, including climate change impacts.

Edeyrnion Heritage and Cultural Society (Corwen) received £18,825

for a project designed to bring together a deprived rural community with an immersive display, bilingual walks, outdoor interpretation boards, in person guided walks and a launch event, all centred around local heritage and landscape.

Birkenhead Priory received £11,600 to develop a 3D tour of the grounds and learning resources for KS1 and 2, collaborating with the area's multi-faith communities and schools.

Sturminster Heritage Trust received £14,000 to work with young people in Sturminster and in Newfoundland to the explore history of people emigrating to Canada from the 1600s to the 1800s.

**For further details, including of all those awarded funds in the first round visit**

[aim-museums.co.uk/for-aim-members/grants/new-stories-new-audiences](http://aim-museums.co.uk/for-aim-members/grants/new-stories-new-audiences)

**Contact Margaret Harrison, AIM Head of Programmes**

[margaret@aim-museums.co.uk](mailto:margaret@aim-museums.co.uk)





# Understanding emotional connections to museums

**During the pandemic we saw many passionate local people getting together to support and 'save' their local museums or similar cultural organisations. Our new research project asks 'How might we harness that passion and energy all the time?'**

Co-sponsored by Art Fund, AIM is working with M.E.L Research to explore public engagement with museums and cultural provision at an emotional level, with the goal of translating this into actionable insights museums can use to connect even more strongly with their communities.

Elliot Simmonds, Client Solutions Director, is leading the project for M.E.L:

"Museums and heritage assets represent many things to many people. They are places of education, family engagement, fun and enjoyment – and they are places of space and solitude, to think, to challenge and to reflect. As the sector moves forward, we hope this work will help organisations engage audiences in the best possible way, and create long-lasting, strong and impactful relationships between people and their museums."

One of the outputs of the study will be an easy-to-understand toolkit, providing a set of wide-ranging principles which can be adapted by individual museums, as well as example case studies of how those principles work in practice.

The research, which is in the engagement phase at the time of writing, will involve several key phases lead by M.E.L.

- in-depth conversations with a handful of 'Community Leaders', individuals who have shown a clear commitment to a museum
- online work with a larger group of those from the 'community' side will take place over several days, allowing a deep rapport to be built and exploration of a range of different motivations and perspectives.
- an online survey open to both those working in museums and those passionate about their museums in their communities.

"It's really important that we see communities in their broadest sense," says Elliot. "We're not limiting ourselves to geography, we want to capture communities of shared ideas, communities of interest – emotional connections are not limited to place."

The team will undertake analysis of the findings using a range of theoretical frameworks, as well as through the lens of behaviour change and behavioural economics (a type of analysis which recognises that not all decision-making is 'rational').

The findings will also be contextualised by other studies undertaken in similar sectors e.g. work by the National Trust on connection to place.

Finally, resulting findings and initial recommendations will be 'played back' to museum teams to gain feedback and generate examples of how the recommendations might be implemented. This will then be utilised when preparing the final report and toolkit.

**If you would like to know more about the research or to be involved, please contact [Elliot.Simmonds@melresearch.co.uk](mailto:Elliot.Simmonds@melresearch.co.uk)**

*M.E.L Research Ltd is a social research agency deeply rooted in social value. The team has extensive experience of the heritage and cultural sectors.*

[Melresearch.co.uk](http://Melresearch.co.uk)

# News in brief

## AIM members recognised in Art Fund Museum of the Year shortlist

Each year Art Fund, the national charity for art, shortlists five outstanding museums for the Museum of the Year prize and four of the five nominees in this year's list are AIM members.

The winning museum will receive £100,000, and the other four shortlisted museums will each receive £15,000 in recognition of their achievements.

The 2022 edition champions organisations whose achievements tell the story of museums' creativity and resilience, and particularly focuses on those engaging the next generation of audiences in innovative ways.

The shortlisted organisations are:

- Derby Museums, Museum of Making (Derby)
- Horniman Museum and Gardens (London)
- People's History Museum (Manchester)
- The Story Museum (Oxford)
- Tŷ Pawb (Wrexham)

Art Fund director Jenny Waldman, who chairs the prize's judging panel

"An abundance of applications to be Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022 shows the creativity and resilience of museums right around the country, despite the immense challenges of the last two years. The five superb finalists are all museums on a mission who are tackling the vital issues of today – from combating the climate emergency to improving literacy or exploring migration – and reaching diverse communities as they do so. Each is working hard to encourage the next generation to get involved, both to inspire them and to equip them with essential skills."

The judging panel includes Dame Diane Lees, Director-General, Imperial War Museums; artist and educator Harold Offeh; cultural historian and broadcaster Dr. Janina Ramirez; and BBC Radio 6 DJ and broadcaster Huw Stephens. The award ceremony takes place on Thursday 14 July 2022 at the Design Museum, London.

[#museumoftheyear](#)

## DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund 2022-24 opens

The DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund 2022-24 is now accepting applications for capital projects at eligible organisations. DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation have worked together for 20 years to jointly fund grants to support museums as they improve displays, enhance collections care and make exhibitions more accessible to visitors.

The deadline for applications is 1 August 2022 and guidance (including a list of institutions eligible to apply to the fund) and the bid pro forma are available at

[www.gov.uk/guidance/dcms-wolfson-museums-and-galleries-improvement-fund-2022-24](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dcms-wolfson-museums-and-galleries-improvement-fund-2022-24)

## Museum and Heritage Awards 2022

The Cleveland Pools Volunteer Team at Cleveland Pools Trust were announced as 'Volunteers of the Year' in the latest edition of the Museum and Heritage Awards.

The AIM sponsored category also saw Jennifer Morgan of the Museum of Bath Stone; and the Plas Mawr Volunteer Team, Cadw, Welsh Government at Plas Mawr Tudor House, highly commended.

Anand Mangal: Our Culture, Our Journey Leicestershire County Council Participation Team and Museums Service; Harry Pearson North York Moors National Park and Neolithic Longhouse at La Hougue Bie volunteers, Jersey Heritage were also shortlisted for the award.

Details of all the categories and winners can be found at

[awards.museumsandheritage.com/2022-winners](https://awards.museumsandheritage.com/2022-winners)



Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill, Museum of the Year finalist 2022, © Emli Bendixen/Art Fund.





'My Four December Weddings and a Funeral' zine quilt (C) David Shenton.

## Love Stories at The Cartoon Museum

A new exhibition presents an intimate display of cartoons and comic art from The Cartoon Museum collection alongside works and reflections from artists Dave Gibbons, David Shenton, Dominique Duong and Ros Asquith.

Part of a specially curated season of new content including an LGBTQ+ trail through the permanent display, a participatory Lonely Hearts art installation inspired by the romance comics of the 1940s-60s, and a spotlight display of British girls comics from the 1950s-70s, the season will culminate with a special Late Night Love event

celebrating London Pride in summer 2022.

Curator of Love Stories, Emma Stirling-Middleton asked the four artists about their exploration of romantic love and relationships in their work. Each artist selected a work of their own and work from The Cartoon Museum's collection as an anchor for their reflections.

**From *Downton* to *The Repair Room*, *Gentleman Jack* to *Peaky Blinders*, many AIM members host production teams for both the small and silver screen. But what does it entail, and can it be a reliable additional income stream?**

# Lights! Cameras! Action!

For major tv and film productions rising Brexit costs, pandemic grounded flights and the insatiable demand for streaming content that recent lockdowns inspired have coalesced to increase demand for UK based locations. The unique settings that the heritage sector can provide are increasingly attractive, with many AIM members leveraging that interest into novel income streams.

Whilst its beautiful Grade I architectural features are still intact, uniquely, Wentworth Woodhouse near Rotherham in South Yorkshire is largely an empty building. But the lack of a collection is, paradoxically, a positive for a film crew.

Filming and Events Manager, Helen Flower explains

“Up until this point, we’ve been able to manage a film crew and remain open to the public because we’ve got the space. We’ve had a couple of big projects: *Jonathan Strange*, the ballroom scenes for *Downton*, we’ve been Winston Churchill’s war rooms in *The Darkest Hour* and in *Gentleman Jack* series one and two, and *Mr. Norrell* was almost entirely filmed in Wentworth.”

But how do these locations get found? It’s remarkably ‘old school’ explains Helen

“The industry relies on location scouts, essentially freelancers on the lookout for a hidden gem, a place that’s never been used before. I think, once you’ve done one production, word of mouth is

the way forward – because it is such a small network if you give them a great experience the chances are that it will lead to another production. There are lots of location databases out there that you can register with too, and organisations like Screen Yorkshire are important.”

It is a view shared by Ilona Harris, Head of Commercial at Weald and Downland Living Museum, which has hosted TV hit *The Repair Shop* since it started.

“We made a concerted effort in the last 18 months to make sure we’re listed in the places that location managers tend to go. Creative England and Sussex Film Office were a good source of help with that – *The Repair*







Above and below left, images from *The Colour Room* (Sky & Caspian Films).

**Shop** came to us via the Sussex Film Office. It's great for us in terms of visibility. There's a real connection between the audience who watch the show and the people that enjoy coming to a museum like ours."

Given this focus on word of mouth between location managers 'Its very hard to 'go out and get' filming contracts' so the more you do, even the little projects, the more your opportunities will grow to do more and more" says Chris Price, CEO of North Yorkshire Moors Railway, which has worked with Channel 5 on documentaries, as well as on blockbuster movies with stars such as Harrison Ford and Tom Cruise.

"It's very difficult to grow a business initiative around filming contracts because they are sporadic. You have to play the contacts game, when those opportunities come out of the blue, take them!"

All the organisations we spoke to highlighted that balancing the profile and income raising opportunities of hosting a production crew with the potential impact on visitors is a key consideration.

Ilona and her team have established some broad rules to help

"We're a visitor attraction and a conservation and education charity, not a venue. So, we've made rules for ourselves like we won't close the museum to visitors, we set in place a

rate card. It's important to know your value, and to know when you need to turn something down."

Black Country Living Museum has provided the location for several films and TV series in recent years, explains Carolyn Sankey co-Director of Development, including Sky Cinema's *The Colour Room* – the story of English ceramicist Clarice Cliff, and the smash hit *Peaky Blinders*.

## “The unique settings that the heritage sector can provide are increasingly attractive, with many AIM members leveraging that interest into novel income streams.”

"Income from filming activity itself isn't generally as lucrative as people might think, but the associated PR and other benefits can be. *Peaky Blinders* brought the Museum to new audiences – it's broadcast in over 180 countries – and led to us becoming an official licence holder for the Peaky brand.

Like others, ensuring that the impact on visitors is minimised is fundamental to the approach at BCLM.

"Balancing filming requests with the visitor experience is paramount for us. Whilst sometimes filming onsite when we're open can give an added 'wow factor' for visitors, where schedules allow, we ask productions if they are able to film on closed days in the autumn/winter".

Carolyn also highlights the importance of considering the resource implications of bringing a crew on site. At BCLM, staff members support production companies with all manner of operational requests – and there can be many.

"Don't underestimate the amount of staff time it will take to facilitate filming at your museum and factor this into any fee you will be negotiating. There's a large amount of client

management and planning required in terms of logistics, ranging from where technical or catering units can be located, whether they want to change any of the 'set', or use special effects.

Risk assessments and adequate insurance are vital, and we also have our own location agreement that we can issue. Plan as much as you can and ensure the wider museum team is briefed on the shoot and where their support is needed. Expect the unexpected! Above all, enjoy it, whether you get the chance to be on set or viewing the finished production."

[www.wealddown.co.uk](http://www.wealddown.co.uk)

[www.nymr.co.uk](http://www.nymr.co.uk)

[bclm.com](http://bclm.com)

[wentworthwoodhouse.org.uk](http://wentworthwoodhouse.org.uk)



Image supplied by Barnsley Museums

Barnsley Museums have delivered the 'Feels Like Home' project in partnership with Barnsley Refugee Council, since 2018.

Aimed at anyone new to Barnsley for whom English is not their first language, the group meets every week at Experience Barnsley, a social history museum in Barnsley Townhall, shortlisted for Museum of the Year in 2021.

The group develop their English language skills through learning to understand the culture and traditions of the UK, particularly of Barnsley. Feels Like Home welcomes all ages; families learn together in a safe and happy place bringing together different generations.

A recent AIM Hallmark Grant funded the *Taking Root* project, which took members of Feels Like Home to visit historic gardens. The visits allowed the group to explore their personal journeys through the national flowers of their countries of origin, flowers that have made the journey here too. The project used Barnsley's beautiful outdoor heritage sites – Cannon Hall Park, Worsbrough Mill Country Park and Wentworth Castle Gardens – to connect group members with one

another and with nature to enjoy the wellbeing benefits that offered. The creative outcomes of *Taking Root* were developed further in workshops with poet, Andrew McMillan as part of the Platforma 6 Festival and were incorporated into creative workshops producing lanterns and banners to welcome The Walk project's giant puppet, Little Amal, to Wentworth Castle Gardens at the end of October.

The group also used the visits to enrich creative writing sessions and

both the historic ceramics collection and the beautiful gardens for inspiration. The project will make use of the brand-new ceramics studio, funded by the UK Government's Community Renewal Fund, helping to inform its future use and programming.

"AIM's Hallmark Grant funding has helped us to alleviate the social isolation felt by many refugees and asylum seekers, particularly during Covid. We have been able to promote

**“ Feels Like Home welcomes all ages; families learn together in a safe and happy place bringing together different generations. ”**

commissioned artist Louise Lane to produce a series of botanical illustrations to accompany their poetry in an exhibition at Wentworth Castle Gardens.

In addition, the *Taking Root* project is informing the planning of a new area of Wentworth Castle Gardens, designed and planted by Feels Like Home members. In an extension of the project at Cannon Hall Museum and Park, the group will make flowers from clay, drawing on

the positive effect of being in nature which has encouraged participants to get involved with designing the new garden with us and for some to become regular volunteers.”

Janette Robinson  
Programme Development Manager,  
Wentworth Castle Gardens,  
Barnsley Museums.

[www.barnsley-museums.com](http://www.barnsley-museums.com)

Pictured: Wentworth Castle Banners for Little Amal visit.



**Haslemere Educational Museum recently hosted a British Museum Spotlight Loan for their touring exhibition *Troy: beauty and heroism*.**

# Borrowing beauty

The Spotlight Loan featured an Etruscan funerary urn, dating from around 125BC–100BC and a 2,500-year-old black-figure Athenian amphora, as well as *Cassandra* a drawing by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and an etching by Pietro Testa, entitled *The Birth and Infancy of Achilles*.

The museum team originally successfully applied for the loan in 2019, one of only three UK venues selected through a competitive application process. However Covid meant the exhibition was twice delayed to 2022.

“We’ve never done a partnership with a national like that before, so it was a very interesting learning process for us” explains Curator Julia Tanner.

But that learning process was fully supported.

“A group from the British Museum are assigned and support you through the process, which is helpful because we inevitably had a lot of questions; we’d never done that level of loan before.”

As well as the work that went into the application itself, the loan required some modifications to the proposed display area, and additional public programming related to the themes of the exhibition.

“It’s quite demanding and takes effort, time, and commitment from the staff, especially the curatorial staff. We had to have quite a lot of work done to the gallery space where the exhibition is being held.

However, once we were successful and we were aware that we were going to have to upgrade, the BM advised we could apply for a grant from the British Museum Trust. Now our whole gallery space is even more secure and that will serve the museum for many years to come’.

We tied (the exhibition’s) theme into our regular programming and did some extra public engagement, for example, a Girl Guiding badge related to the exhibition which the BM have never had before. And we’ve had some special talks, including by our Patron and eminent sculptor Phillip Jackson CVO DL, around the themes of the exhibition.”

Julia highlights that as well as the additional profile the exhibition provided, the prestigious nature of the partnership was a real boost to stakeholders.

“We are getting people visiting us who’ve not been in before, people asking specifically to see *Troy*, it’s certainly given us a puff locally and our volunteers, trustees and regular visitors are very excited about it.”

So what would Julia’s key piece of advice be for AIM members thinking of a similar loan?

“Make sure you have the capacity and are prepared for the workloads, do a lot of planning beforehand, and make sure you capitalize on the opportunity with programming and marketing. Three months goes quickly so you really want to make the most of it.

We’ve learned a lot. It’s been positive all around. We are a small independent museum, so if we can do it, you can do it!”

[www.haslemeremuseum.co.uk](http://www.haslemeremuseum.co.uk)



Left, A 2,500-year-old black-figure Athenian amphora, part of the Spotlight Loan; Right, Mary Beard visits Haslemere.



**More and more arts organisations are turning towards a newer form of repayable finance – social investment – to support their projects. Seva Phillips, Head of Arts and Culture Finance at Nesta explains more.**

Images © A Wainstay for The Story Museum.

# Understanding social investment

It can be challenging to raise finance for cultural projects. Applying for grant funding is a long, uncertain and increasingly competitive process. And raising repayable finance from high street banks – typically in the form of loans – can be equally tricky: commercial lenders don't always understand the business models involved in the arts and may charge prohibitively high rates of interest with inflexible terms.

More and more however, arts organisations including museums, are turning towards a newer form of repayable finance – social investment – to support their projects. What makes social investors different to traditional lenders is that they're interested in both financial and social returns on their money. They want to see how people – especially those that come from underserved communities – can benefit from funded projects, in addition to getting their loans back.

This might sound like a lot, but it often aligns with borrowers' aims and visions, particularly in the arts and cultural sector where so many organisations already do invaluable work in their communities.

At Nesta – the UK's innovation agency for social good – we want to make social

investment accessible to the arts and cultural sector. Since 2015, our Arts and Culture Finance team has supported over 40 organisations across the UK with repayable finance drawn from public, private and philanthropic sources. The projects we've backed are diverse – not only in terms of creative practice but in how they've used the money too. We've provided cashflow support for day-to-day activities, helped organisations expand their offer, and financed property purchases and refurbishments that renew cultural spaces for generations to come.

Several museums have benefited from our social investment. The Story Museum (pictured), which celebrates great stories and engages young people in literature, took on a £400,000 loan from Arts and Culture Finance to enable it to complete extensive renovations on its premises in central Oxford, to be repaid from capital fundraising. The project has enabled The Story Museum to add

new learning spaces and galleries to the site and upgrade its existing facilities.

The Migration Museum, based in south-east London, used a £42,000 loan to grow its income generating capabilities. Having successfully run a gift shop at its Lewisham site, the team wanted to launch its online counterpart, as well as engaging the services of a reputable e-commerce social media agency to raise its profile. This new income will be used to repay the loan and subsidise the museum's charitable work.

The first step in accessing social investment from our funds is to speak to us! We'd be happy to have a brief initial call to learn a little bit about your work and answer any questions you might have. We'd also love to meet you in-person at our stand at this year's AIM Conference in Port Sunlight in June.

For more information visit [www.artsculturefinance.org](http://www.artsculturefinance.org) or email [info@artsculturefinance.org](mailto:info@artsculturefinance.org)





AIM administers grants including AIM Hallmarks Awards, supported by Arts Council England and the Welsh government; and AIM's Conservation and Collections Care and Collection Audit Schemes, supported by the Pilgrim Trust.

# AIM grants case studies

## AIM Conservation and Collections Care

Urras Achadh  
an Droighinn/  
The Auchindrain  
Trust

£7,059

*Conservation of a  
newly discovered  
bodice*

In October 2020, staff at Auchindrain Historic Township in Argyll found a bodice within the attic of one of their longhouses, which appeared to have been deliberately deposited over a century ago. Found within the MacCallum's house which was occupied by the same family between 1829 until 1954, it is the only garment provenanced to the occupants of the township. Soiled, and with large holes from insect and rodent damage, stabilisation was essential for the bodice to become part of the Museum's Recognised Collection, certified to be of national importance by the Scottish Government.

This remedial grant from AIM and the Pilgrim Trust enabled Tuula Pardoe ACR, of the Scottish Conservation Studio, to clean and



Bodice before and after conservation.

stabilise the bodice for long term storage. Areas of damage within the velvet were supported with patches of dyed silk, and within the lining, conservation grade nylon net was sewn into the most fragile areas. The bodice has been packed within a new acid-free box, with a support board made to lift the

garment in and out. Now stable enough for detailed examination and photographs, the finding of the bodice can be publicised virtually, whilst the garment remains safely in storage.

**Racheal Thomas**  
Assistant Curator  
The Auchindrain Trust



Image by Pauline Lory on Unplash

# Not just survival, but recovery

**Hilary McGowan, Associate Supplier, supports and advises independent museums on governance and organisational renewal. Here she draws on top tips from her recently published book (with Piotr Bienkowski) *Managing Change in Museums & Galleries: a practical guide*.**

“Our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change.” – Martin Luther King Jr.

As AIM’s recent survey highlighted, independent museums still face challenges despite optimism that we have turned the corner on the

## A new local history museum in Redditch town centre

**Redditch suffers from the tag of “New Town” despite a history that stretches back nearly one thousand years.**

It’s 20 years since the topic of a creating a town centre museum to represent the diverse scope of our history was first raised – the Redditch Local History Society, founded in 2009, became the latest organisation to pursue this ambition.

As the archivist for the society, I looked at location, cost and access to store the society’s collection and concluded

that we had to take matters into our own hands and create the long-proposed town centre museum. After much debate it was agreed that a separate organisation should take on the project to protect the society from the risks involved. In November 2019 the Redditch Local History Museum was established as a registered charity, a decision vindicated as we were quickly plunged into the implications of the Covid pandemic and the activities of the society ground to a halt.

We were fortunate to identify an empty shop as a good fit to our requirements as in addition to the ground floor exhibition area, it had a basement in which to create an archiving facility and a first-floor meeting and exhibition room. The owners of the property also own the shopping



pandemic. Fewer visitors, less income and less money from other sources bring greater pressures. It's not just about survival and sustainability but recovery too.

Is your organisation fit for purpose? Is the way that it operates capable of withstanding the pressures, especially if you've lost volunteers? Are these pressures making your organisation's weaknesses more obvious?

You need clarity of purpose; it's AIM's first Hallmark of a Prospering Museum! Your staff and volunteers need to know and trust that the Trustees and management have this clear vision for your organisation, and the ability, energy and drive to get it there. In return you need to look after them so they can play their roles in your recovery. There can be no passengers, especially on the Board. Everyone must pull their weight and make a positive contribution.

These may seem obvious, but do you have a Recovery Plan in place? Do you have a team that knows where the organisation is going and what is expected of them as individuals? Are they all pulling in the same direction, or in several directions at once?

### Top tips for recovery

Change in various forms may need to happen but change doesn't always have to be large and sweeping; small changes add up, so find a 'Quick Win.'

**Pilot projects:** test things before you make permanent changes. If you try things out on a smaller scale, you could be saved from disaster later and you can tweak your plans accordingly.

leader – whether you are a Chair, a member of staff or a volunteer.

**Communicate** with everyone and ensure no one gets left out or feels ignored.

**Ask for help:** there is a lot of useful information even from the early days of the pandemic, so use it and ask your friendly partner museums for support – they are all in the same recovery boat!

**“ Independent museums still face challenges despite optimism that we have turned the corner on the pandemic. Fewer visitors, less income and less money from other sources bring greater pressures. ”**

**Be focused:** there is nothing more important than ensuring your museum is safe and successful. Do not be tempted to pursue new initiatives or pet projects until you have a sound foundation from which to work.

**Make time for people,** their worries and their questions. Listening, understanding and supporting are key tasks for a

### Free support

AIM members can benefit from a **free 30 minute** telephone consultation on the problems you're facing and benefit from her experience and knowledge. Hilary will also be at AIM Conference and will be pleased to meet you there!

Contact Hilary 01934 811955

[hilary.a.mcgowan@gmail.com](mailto:hilary.a.mcgowan@gmail.com)

[www.hilarymcgowan.co.uk](http://www.hilarymcgowan.co.uk)

centre in Redditch and have been very supportive. Commercial lease negotiations were a bit of an eyeopener for the trustees, but the shopping centre management were very helpful. We were also successful in obtaining a grant of £17,500 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund specifically to support the building of the archiving facility.

We took possession in late September 2021 and set about recruiting volunteers to help build and run the proposed museum. Since then, we have worked tirelessly to create exhibits and fit out the property. We opened to the public on 3 November 2021 and are currently open three days a week on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10am-4pm. Feedback from visitors has been very positive.

We are now planning outreach activities for 2022 and have the support of Art Fund, who have awarded us a grant of £22,500 to support our proposed programme.

**Derek Coombes**  
Trustee, Redditch Local History Museum  
5 Market Place, Redditch B98 8AA [rlhm.online](http://rlhm.online)



Redditch Local History Museum town centre location.

## Consultancy

### Is your board truly effective?

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Susanna Denniston, Chairman, Salisbury Museum

*"Hilary was great to work with as her focus was on pragmatic structured solutions"*



Ian Walker, then Chairman  
 Historic Croydon Airport Trust

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*noun*

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## AIM Resources

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**Visual Content Consultant, Andrea Stern explores how museums might better understand, evaluate and protect their collection images.**

# What is the value of an image?

Our cultural institutions house and care for remarkable collections and are the potential owners of some of the finest and most unique images. Digital collections have a value of their own which needs to be recognised by the sector for the potential market reach and income they can provide, if they are understood and managed appropriately.

In the commercial image world their value is already appreciated. Specialist and general picture libraries are seeking to represent this content because of its originality. Over the past 20 years commercial image agencies have sought out heritage content and incorporated it into a Getty or Bridgeman Images, for example. They often help to digitise content and make it more accessible. But what makes these images truly of value is the knowledge and expertise of the curators which provides the searchable metadata. However, financial returns are being reduced and are now generally split 30/70, in an agency's favour.

Five years ago, I set out to try and gather smaller museums together in the *Gateway2Heritage*, to minimise resources and costs required to digitise and market museum images commercially. The six core collections I worked with, Historic England, Beaford, MERL, RAF Hendon, Horniman and Black Cultural Archive had one thing in common, they wanted to realise the benefits of their collections both to attract attention to their institution and for financial sustainability. We wanted to create working hubs so



Boys on a building site in spring, 1952. National Archives of The Netherlands/piemags.

that costs and skills could be shared; workflow simplified; have greater consistency; and collections be better understood by more people.

Funding to support the concept of commercial licensing however does not appear to exist. So we have unfortunately closed the Gateway, but the hope is still there.

'Piemags' founder Paul Fearn shares the idea that the world's heritage sector does "outstanding work," and aims to provide the sector with the best royalty split in the industry." Starting with a 70/30 royalty split the platform seeks to offer a fairer share of the financial benefits.

But the sector must prioritise digitising the collections of all museums, and raise the priority of commercial content. To do this effectively and efficiently they need to form hubs and work together; funding should not be conditional on non-commercial usages; and images need to be recognised as valuable for their own sake, as are the objects they represent.

[www.piemags.com](http://www.piemags.com)

*Andrea has worked in the image industry for over 25 years, as a picture agency owner, ASAP Images; in the heritage sector as Head of V&A's Images and Rights, and as an independent Visual Content Consultant.*

**Not for profit organisation trustees can protect themselves and their assets through carefully assessing risks and potential solutions explain Hayes Parsons Insurance Brokers.**

# Protecting your Trustees

Whilst Public and Products Liability insurance, and Employers' Liability insurance are reasonably well known, there is still much confusion around other insurances that help protect trustees. Here we uncover just a few other options that are available.

## Trustee Indemnity

The Trustees are the ultimate body of people that carry the responsibilities of the charity and its activities. When accidental errors are made by them, or those they delegate to, they can become personally liable for those mistakes. Anything that has caused harm, distress, or financial damage to a 3rd party could lead to a claim being brought against an individual trustee.

If a claim was made against a trustee, they might face legal costs plus the cost of potential damages awarded. Trustee Indemnity insurance will help protect a trustee in many of these situations, bringing a greater degree of peace

of mind for those serving as trustees. Sometimes you will hear this type of insurance called Trustee Liability Insurance, or Management Liability.

## Entity Defence

Entity defence insurance specifically covers the charity as a whole and is normally purchased when buying Trustee Indemnity insurance. It comes into play with an action brought against the charity as a whole, not an individual.

An example of the benefit of such insurance might be if someone died due to a workplace accident, and the Crown Prosecution Service might then charge the charity with corporate manslaughter. The insurance would kick in to help defend the charity in court. Other examples include breach of contract investigation, where a trustee is alleged to have breached a contract for goods or services offered.

## Employment Practices Liability (EPL)

Employment Practices Liability insurance

helps deal with potential "wrongful employment practices" and claims that arise. Organisations purchase such cover to defend actions brought by employees, ex-employees, office holders and regulatory bodies who claim that there has been a breach of employment law, with subsequent loss of earnings and distress.

## Pensions Trustee Liability Insurance

Although often unpaid, trustees are expected to understand and keep up to date with the laws and investment principles of their pension schemes. Failure can result in fines or other penalties against them and the charity. Pension Trustee Liability covers defence costs, awards and damages, and therefore protection of trustees and individuals that administer a pension scheme or any employee benefit or welfare plan.

## Fidelity Guarantee

Fidelity Guarantee insurance helps to protect the charity against its own key officers stealing money by dishonesty or fraud. It is often a difficult insurance to sell, as few clients think this problem could ever affect them. The reality is sadly otherwise.

## Hayes Parsons Insurance Brokers

Hayes Parsons has been working with museums and heritage organisation since 1964 and can advise on your insurance arrangements as well as offer risk management advice.

*If you would like to know more about protecting Trustees at museums and heritage buildings, please contact*

Martin Howard Cert CII, Account Executive, 0117 930 1668/07719023194  
m.howard@hayeparsons.co.uk



Image by Klaudia Poskowska on Unsplash





Tracy Emin Baby Things (Mitten) © Tracy Emin studio.

# Foundling Museum

The Foundling Museum's mission is to transform lives through creative action. We tell the story of the Foundling Hospital, which was established in 1739 by the philanthropist Thomas Coram, to care for babies at risk of abandonment.

The Hospital was the UK's first children's charity and became its first public art gallery. It was transformed into one of London's most fashionable venues by the artist William Hogarth, who encouraged leading artists to donate their work and by the composer George Frideric Handel, who held annual benefit concerts of Messiah in its chapel.

Today, we animate the two halves of our story – the power of the arts to improve young lives and the power of artists to inspire social change – through exhibitions, displays, learning programmes and projects by our Foundling Fellows, who include Quentin Blake, Jackie Kay, Cornelia Parker, Grayson Perry, Sports Banger, Chris Watson and Jacqueline Wilson.

The Museum is situated on the site of the former Hospital in Bloomsbury and incorporates many architectural features salvaged from the original eighteenth-century building. Our child-focussed story gives us a special opportunity to engage younger audiences, particularly those with care-experience, for whom the museum is a place free of stigma that celebrates their lives, gives them a voice and puts them at the heart of British history and culture.

In 2017, we established 'Tracing Our Tales', the first museum training programme for young adults who grew up in care, which provides trainees with the skills, discipline and self-confidence to help devise and deliver our family workshops. Being part of a community with shared experience, enables trainees to build their self-esteem and many go on to apprenticeships, higher education and employment, including at other arts organisations. A graduate of the programme also sits on our Board of trustees.

For most of our visitors, the most moving objects in the Collections are the identifying tokens left by mothers with their babies between 1740s and 1760s. These tiny objects

range from everyday items like thimbles, to small pieces of jewellery, carefully customised coins and hand-made textiles. Alongside these and other poignant items from the Hospital archive, hang works donated by Hogarth and his contemporaries, including Reynolds, Gainsborough, Ramsay, Hudson, Zoffany, Rysbrack, and Roubiliac. Our Collection also contains work by some of today's outstanding artists, such as Michael Craig-Martin, Yinka Shonibare CBE and Tracey Emin. Most recently, we commissioned five portraits of surviving former pupils of the Hospital by artists including Ingrid Pollard and Wolfgang Tillmans, which line the

eighteenth-century oak staircase taken from the Hospital's Boys' Wing. Finally, the Gerald Coke Handel Collection, housed on the top floor of the Museum, is a major research resource for study of Handel and his contemporaries, containing over 14,000 items including manuscripts, scores, art, recordings and ephemera.

Our current exhibition, 'Superheroes, Orphans & Origins: 125 years in comics', encapsulates the way we make our remarkable history relevant for today's audiences. Inspired by a text-based mural made for us by poet Lemn Sissay in

2014, the show draws attention to the impact that growing up in care has on people's lives, through an unexpected take on a familiar subject, (orphaned, adopted and fostered characters in comics), that combines historic and contemporary work, new commissions, and the voices of artists with lived experience. Running until the end of August, we hope this exhibition will see a return to pre-Covid visitor numbers, which were around 40,000 a year. As an independent museum, we generate income through a combination of admissions, shop sales, venue hire, donations and grants. We used lockdown to expand our retail space, so we can now display our unique artists' limited edition prints and bespoke products better, including those made for our new exhibition by Woodrow Phoenix and Bex Glendining. Now as in the past, our work to transform the lives of disadvantaged young people is immeasurably boosted by the generous actions of creative people.

**Caro Howell, Director**



Would you like to tap into knowledge outside your current networks?  
Are you looking to grow as a leader?  
Would you like to be an even better listener?

# Join CFG's mentoring scheme

Developed with Nicki Deeson, Leadership Coach and Business Mentor, CFG's scheme works with over 100 charity professionals to develop and empower, promote a dynamic and flexible sector, diversify leadership and maximise impact at all levels of an organisation.

Participants join the CFG network of mentors and access regular *Mentoring Motivation* sessions throughout the year exploring topics such as understanding different learning styles, mental health awareness, and managing challenging relationships. One of the most valuable parts of the network is having a space to talk about anything – from troubleshooting a tax relief application, introducing new finance software, or supporting our own and our teams wellbeing and mental health – with a group of mentors who understand the value of truly listening. The sessions always involve an opportunity to refine our skills and sharpen up our mentoring tool box!

*"This gives me an opportunity to step back, look outside of all the work I am delivering to focus on what issues I have going on, what my blockers are and think about how and where I can improve."* **Cassandra Woolford, Open Foundation**

*"I was only interested in being mentored and did not feel I had the ability to mentor ... [b]y the end of the first session I had completely changed my view."* **Lisa Dolor, SignPosts**

Nicki Deeson, Training Facilitator, shares her thoughts:

**Why do I love mentoring skills?** People come to me with issues and in the past I used to try to solve their problems for them, over-empathise, want to rescue them – and now I realise that to be a leader the mentoring approach is far more motivating and effective. Every time I use mentoring skills in a conversation with a work colleague, a friend or family member, they come away feeling empowered and able to solve their own problems in the best way for them, I have helped

them to manage their lives better, and I am freed up to do my own job better.

## How will mentoring skills help you?

Perhaps you want to develop your leadership in museums, deal with volunteers, connect with audiences, or link effectively with others in the AIM network. Or simply be a better friend, colleague or parent – mentoring skills will enable you to do all these things better, and feel more motivated in life and at work!

The scheme is free for AIM members and includes three training webinars where you will learn mentoring skills and build authentic connections with peers. Step out of your comfort zone and join our inspiring network of mentors.

If you would like to be added to the list for the September cohort of the programme contact [zoe.bennett@cfg.org.uk](mailto:zoe.bennett@cfg.org.uk) A taster mentoring workshop is also running on 1 June. Book your place at [aim-museums.co.uk/dates-for-your-diary](http://aim-museums.co.uk/dates-for-your-diary)

## AIM Bulletin

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Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

Registered in England No. 1350939

Charity No: 1082215

VAT Registration No: 355372196

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Page layout by Dorchester Typesetting Group Ltd, Dorchester, Dorset

Printed by Pensord: [www.pensord.co.uk](http://www.pensord.co.uk)

AIM Bulletin is printed on Edixion offset, uncoated paper with ISO 14001 environmental certification and covered by the European EMAS standard, produced from sustainable forests.

