

Application solicited from The National Churches Trust

Statement about The National Lottery Heritage Fund's solicitation process to support places of worship.

We solicited a partnership project to support the heritage condition and management capacity of places of worship in Scotland, Wales and the north west of England. The project aims to widen engagement with places of worship's built heritage in the long term, building strong relationships with local communities and increasing their sustainability.

We use our solicitation power only where it is clearly the most effective way of achieving one of our strategic objectives.

In this case, soliciting applications was identified as the most effective way of achieving the following three strategic objectives:

- to bring heritage into better condition
- to inspire people to value heritage more
- to support organisations to be more robust, enterprising and forward looking

The solicitation process included issuing a brief giving overall aims for the project.

Over three years, the project would:

- increase the capacity of places of worship to care for their built heritage
- increase places of worship's ability to access large project funding, specifically by reaching wider communities and better managing capital project risk
- further strengthen sector organisations' ability to deliver UK-wide capacity building projects
- share lessons learned on sector capacity building across borders

The project focused on particular needs within three UK nations/areas: Scotland, Wales and the north west of England:

- In Scotland, the project would support communities looking to take over management or ownership of places of worship in transition, for example through options appraisal support.
- In Wales, it would support managers of places of worship to increase their tourist visitor numbers, potentially through partnership building or new interpretation.
- In the north west of England, it would support managers of places of worship to increase their asset management capacity through widened engagement with local communities.

An application was solicited from the National Churches Trust and was awarded by our Board of Trustees.

The applications were made under the [National Lottery Grants for Heritage programme](#) and assessed against the solicitation brief.

As a result of this solicitation, the following grant was awarded, totalling **£1,909,490**:

National Churches Trust

Brief project description: The three year Cherish programme will provide valued churches and chapels with practical solutions to improve how their buildings are cared for and secured for the future. Financial support will be provided together with initiatives to strengthen heritage management skills and training for people who look after places of worship, investing overall in local areas' heritage, capability and resources.

Grant awarded: £1,909,490