

Shortlist announced for Sustainable Project of the Year

09/03/2023



Six projects have been shortlisted for the Museums + Heritage award, which recognises outstanding environmentally sustainable projects or exhibitions.

This year, the award received a record number of entries from a wide range of organisations and projects.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund is sponsoring the award for the fourth year running.

We know that museums and heritage organisations can make an important contribution to reducing carbon emissions, raising awareness of environmental issues and helping nature's recovery.

Alistair Brown, Head of Museums, Libraries and Archives Policy at the Heritage Fund

Museums + Heritage Sustainable Project of the Year Award shortlist

Food Museum – Hedgerow



Nettle recipe demonstrations at the Food Museum. Credit: Food Museum

[Hedgerow](#) is an exhibition, campaign and programme of activities celebrating one of our most recognisable habitats – the hedgerow – and crafts which relate to it.

The Food Museum worked with artists, advocacy organisations and community groups to deliver hedge laying training, share recipes using hedgerow ingredients and encourage MPs and the public to make a difference to biodiversity.

Leeds Museums and Galleries – The Life on Earth gallery at Leeds City Museum



Messaging to inspire positive change in the Life on Earth gallery. Credit: Leeds City Museum

How do you deliver a permanent gallery in the most environmentally sustainable way? While refitting the natural science gallery, [Leeds City Museum](#) considered this question taking learnings from work on temporary exhibitions.

Through a series of sustainable working practices, the museum reduced its carbon footprint for a refit by about 40%. The latest research on encouraging environmentally-conscious behaviour change was considered to craft narratives that would empower visitors.

Royal West of England Academy (RWA) – RWA Sustainability



RWA exterior following capital works. Credit: Evan Dawson

RWA's project '[Light and Inspiration](#)' transformed the environmental sustainability of the Grade II* listed building through a combination of replacing infrastructure, negotiating green energy and introducing wildlife-friendly planting.

The exhibitions and engagement programmes raised awareness of and fostered dialogue around climate change, hosting climate cafés and engaging new volunteers in wildlife surveys.

SS Great Britain Trust – Voyage to Carbon Neutral



Visitors in the dry dock can see the unique conservation system on display. Credit: SS Great Britain Trust

[SS Great Britain](#) is conserved in its original dry dock with two giant bespoke dehumidifiers preventing the fragile iron from corroding. The new Ship's Conservation Engineer designed upgrades with environmental sustainability in mind, leading to ground-breaking energy optimisation.

The system's very large carbon footprint was reduced by 25% – saving over 150 tonnes per year. The project is sharing this strategy widely to encourage and empower others to reduce their own emissions.

The Exchange – The Exchange Project



Volunteer working on textile crafts. Credit: The Exchange

Originally commissioned, designed and built by and for the local community, Erith's Old Library served residents for over 100 years before falling into disrepair and finally closing in 2009.

Thanks to [The Exchange Project](#), local residents took back the library and championed its founding principles of craft, empowerment and community. The Project helps residents to make better environmental choices, learn new skills and supports them to get involved in local green projects.

Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery – Once Upon A Planet



A young person creates a placard inspired by Angry Dan's mural. Credit: Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery

[Once Upon A Planet \(OUAP\)](#) uses Tullie's collections to provoke conversation, reflection and action on the climate crisis, focusing on younger generations' spirit of protest and positive change.

Working with Young Advisors, local community groups, and project partners, Sustainable Carlisle and Natural England, Tullie House explored how climate change is impacting Cumbria's natural habitats and ways we can all help. An exhibition featured a mural by street artist Angry Dan which inspired young people to write limericks and create protest signs and placards.

The awards

This year there will be up to two winners selected from the [shortlist](#):

- One which has used a simple and transferable approach, such as 2019's winner, [Museum of Oxford](#).
- One which has environmental sustainability embedded at its core like 2020 winner, [Jubilee Pool](#).

The winner(s) will be announced at the Museums + Heritage awards ceremony in London on Wednesday 10 May 2023.

Alistair Brown, Head of Museums, Libraries and Archives Policy at the Heritage Fund, said: "We know that museums and heritage organisations can make an important contribution to reducing carbon emissions, raising awareness of environmental issues and helping nature's recovery. This award is a fantastic way to celebrate the best sustainable practice and projects in the sector."

"Environmental sustainability is one of the core principles of our new 10-year strategy. We want to support museums to be more ambitious – and this year's shortlist provides plenty of inspiration."

Our commitment to environmental sustainability

Visit our [environmental sustainability page](#) to find out more about our commitment to protecting the environment and how your project can help tackle climate change.



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[Visitors take part in food recipe demonstrations, tasting ingredients found in hedgerows. Credit: The Food Museum](#)



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[Reimagining Reality's hovering ball exhibit is made from a cable drum and car vents. Visitors can change the direction of the air and hover more than one ball at a time. Credit: Discovering42](#)



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Penzance pool wins Sustainable Project of the Year at Museums + Heritage Awards