Support for Museums at Night 2012 in Yorkshire and Norfolk

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The Arts Council will fund the core campaign and Connect10, a new initiative bringing contemporary artists into a range of venues across the UK. The HLF will fund new clusters of events in North Lincolnshire and North Norfolk.

Museums at Night is the annual after-hours celebration of arts and heritage which explodes into life over the weekend of Friday 18 to Sunday 20 May 2012.

Museums at Night events take place in hundreds of museums, galleries, libraries, archives and heritage sites, which throw their doors open after hours, giving visitors the chance to discover their collections in a new light. Culture24 has coordinated the rapidly-growing campaign since 2009.

The popular festival aims to attract people who might not normally visit museums or galleries to discover the fantastic arts and heritage offer on their doorstep. In 2011, 352 venues staged 467 events in 169 different towns and cities across the UK. Over 100,000 visitors attended an event, while the campaign attracted media coverage worth over £1.1million.

HLF funding for new event clusters in North Norfolk and North Lincolnshire
Every year clusters of venues in the same geographical areas work together to offer combined programmes of events. For Museums at Night 2012 the HLF is funding events in two areas of the country which will also help forge long-term partnerships between venues.

One project will support a cluster of nine venues in three towns in North Norfolk: Cromer, Sheringham and Wells-next-the-Sea. They will stage eight events inspired by Victorian history, including the restoration of a historic lifeboat. This cluster is also supported by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service.

The HLF will also be funding a group of 31 venues in North Lincolnshire, led by North Lincolnshire Council and centred on the city of Scunthorpe. This will support a cluster of heritage venues in towns and villages as they stage at least 27 events, ranging from blacksmithing by twilight to night-time tours of historic railways and airfields.

Both cluster projects include associated initiatives such as the creation of new historical guides and marketing materials, and the development and training of a large number of new volunteers, which will leave a long-term legacy of skills and resources in the local area.

Fiona Talbott, HLF's Head of Museums, Libraries and Archives, said: "People are at the very heart of everything we do and these two projects will attract new audiences to visit and explore a whole range of heritage sites across the regions. By working together to host an amazing number of exciting events, these varied locations will pool their resources to give many more people the chance to explore their past and learn more about the history and stories of the places they call home. What is equally valuable is that the benefits of our funding will have a lasting legacy way beyond the celebratory period as volunteers learn new skills they can use well into the future."

Hedley Swain, Arts Council England's Director of Museums, said: "The immense variety of venues involved in Museums

at Night shows that there is a great willingness amongst cultural organisations to work together, and also the incredible culture we have access to in this country. This initiative extends this access and offers a unique opportunity for people to explore institutions in a new way - and we are thrilled to support it."

Arts Council England to fund Connect10

Connect10 pitches ten of Britain's most exciting contemporary artists into a competition to see which venue can get enough votes to win them for a night!

Culture24, together with Love Art London, will source 10 contemporary artists to lead an exclusive event in any UK arts or heritage venue.

The full list of artists will be announced early in the New Year. The competition will be open to any publicly-funded UK cultural venue.

Venues will seek out connections with the work of the 10 artists, and pitch related event ideas to Culture24. When the competition goes live, venues will reach out to their local supporters asking them to vote to bring the artist to their town. For example, 'will A.N. Artist go to Warwick, Worcester or Worthing?' This powerful advocacy and audience development opportunity will be fully supported by Culture24's PR agency.

Each venue that wins an artist will receive £500 to support their event, while each runner-up venue will still receive £100 and event-planning support from Culture24 to enable them to run an alternative Museums at Night event. Everyone wins!

Jane Finnis, Culture24 CEO, said: "Culture24 is thrilled to be working with the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England again in delivering this flagship audience development campaign for arts and heritage. In 2012 Museums at Night will connect some of the country's most exciting contemporary artists with museums, galleries and heritage sites in a way that's never been tried before. We think the competitive element of Connect10 will give venues a playful way to reach out to their local communities, asking them to vote for and secure a visit from a top artist who has a connection to their specific collection or building."

Culture 24 Museums at Night website