Animals Galore: University Museum of Zoology wins support

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The project aims to completely refurbish the display spaces of the museum, to create a Learning Space and School Room and to build new stores with more space, state-of-the-art preservation conditions and guided public access.

Development funding of £180,800 has been awarded to help the University Museum of Zoology to progress their plans to apply for a full grant of nearly £1.6million at a later date.

The project aims to display and illuminate the history of animal life. It will also tell some of the stories about famous scientists associated with the collections including Charles Darwin, Alfred Russel Wallace, Hugh Edwin Strickland and Hugh Cott. Particularly important and well-loved specimens such as the skeleton of the finback whale, will be re-displayed and others will be displayed for the first time. New interpretation will provide enhanced access to the museum's collections. It will also explore the science behind the understanding of animal diversity and the threats to it, and explain how the community of conservation scientists in Cambridge are seeking to preserve biodiversity.

A three year educational and events programme is also planned following the redevelopment in 2016. This will reach out to new audiences including the local community and schools as well as develop partnership programmes with a wide range of organisations.

Paul Brakefield, Director of the Museum, said: "We are all delighted to receive the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. This award will help us towards achieving our aims of both preserving our wonderfully rich collections and opening up this heritage to as wide an audience as possible in a future 'Conservation Campus' in central Cambridge."

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for the East of England, said: "We're extremely pleased to give initial support to this project, which aims to help even more people enjoy and engage with this treasured Museum. Through exciting new displays, new spaces for learning and improved storage conditions, there will be more opportunity to access these remarkable and internationally important collections. We look forward to seeing the plans develop."

Note to editors

A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

The University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge (UMZC), is a non-profit distributing institution owned and governed by the University of Cambridge. The museum is embedded within and constitutes part of the Department of Zoology of the University.

Further information

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