

Today is the first #GivingTuesdayUK.

Launched by the Charities Aid Foundation with support from Blackbaud, it builds on the huge success of #GivingTuesday, a global initiative designed to encourage people right across the world to get giving, in all its various forms.

#GivingTuesdayUK is a great opportunity to highlight the difference heritage makes to people's lives and we're encouraging people to think about how they can support their heritage today.

The challenging economic climate and reduction in public spending has meant that organisations are under increasing pressure to develop their approach to fundraising and secure alternative sources of funding.

At HLF we've run two special initiatives committed to supporting this. In 2012, as part of the broader Catalyst partnership with the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and Arts Council England, we launched the Catalyst Umbrella and Small grants programmes. We've invested £4.6million to help heritage organisations build fundraising capacity and improve financial resilience.

Catalyst: Small grants awarded between £3,000 and £10,000 to individual organisations to undertake a wide range of activities including developing a fundraising strategy, training staff and volunteers and building relationships.

Avoncroft Museum in Bromsgrove received £9,996 for their project, Ensuring Avoncroft's fundraising resilience. The museum used some of this support to engage a part-time Development Manager who conducted research into appropriate trusts and submitted project funding bids. Over the course of Catalyst, Avoncroft was able to secure over £164k from other funding bodies, continuing the benefits of the grant beyond the end of the programme.

Avoncroft has also launched various fundraising initiatives, including a Friends group, and has begun to build relationships with local businesses. Simon Carter, Avoncroft Museum's Director, said: "The Catalyst project has given an excellent start to building our fundraising resilience. Over the project we have raised a significant amount of funding support and have gained a level of expertise that will stand us in good stead in the future."

Norwich Cathedral also received funding for their project Legacy 10NR1. Speaking about the project the Dean of Norwich, The Very Reverend Jane Hedges, said: “We received a HLF grant of £9,736 in October 2013 to initiate a legacy campaign. Following the campaign’s culmination in September 2014 the benefits can be clearly seen, with 19 generous individuals indicating that they have named the Cathedral in their will and a potential legacy income of over £2million.

“Our aim is to become even more sustainable, without a dependence on grant income, and this outcome alone indicates the potential of legacy giving in supporting the Cathedral’s future. An additional benefit has been the generation of intelligence about legacy giving, which we have shared with over 30 charitable organisations in Norfolk to inform their own legacy campaigns.

“With all this in mind, we hope that legacy giving will continue to play a role for us in helping to fund our major development projects, such as the restoration of the Cathedral’s organ, which is so vital to worship and musical life at the cathedral.”

Opportunities to build fundraising capacity

Nine umbrella bodies are currently working with experienced trainers to deliver over 15,000 learning opportunities through a range of capacity building services, training and networking opportunities to enable heritage organisations to increase the funding they receive from private sources. Training places are low-cost or free to those taking part. Funded through the Catalyst: Umbrella scheme, projects include the Prince’s Regeneration Trust’s BRICK programme, Heritage Alliance’s Giving to Heritage and Arts & Business Scotland’s Resourcing Scotland’s Heritage.

To find out more information about the Catalyst programme and the opportunities offered by the nine umbrella organisations take a look at the new Catalyst online community.