

The Bristol Old Vic Fred Little

Bristol Old Vic has announced the next step for a landmark project to mark its 250th anniversary and transform it into an internationally-significant heritage destination.

This visionary project will bring to life 250 years of theatrical heritage, represented by Bristol Old Vic's historic architecture and archives. The superb 18th century building (and will be protected and the records of a rich history of civic pride and dramatic art will be restored and preserved before being brought to new audiences. Already recognised as a centre of artistic excellence, the UK's oldest theatre will also become an important heritage attraction.

Key elements of the project include the:

- refurbishment of Coopers' Hall
- conservation of the original 18th-century theatre façade
- protection of paper records
- creation of new public spaces and programmes, both on site and online

A HLF grant of £220,500 means that a nine-month period of development work can now get going. Once this initial stage is complete, a further application will be submitted to HLF for a grant of £2.26million.

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Emma Stenning, chief executive at Bristol Old Vic, said: “We’re thrilled that HLF has given us this support as it will enable us to push forward with our exciting plans to transform the theatre into an internationally-significant hub of cultural and historical interest.”

Nerys Watts, Head of HLF South West, added: “We’re hugely supportive of these plans to protect an 18th-century Bristol landmark and to open it up for many more people’s enjoyment. We never forget that we can only do our work thanks to National Lottery players and are particularly keen to see the wider area around the King Street site benefit from our investment too.”