£500,000 to showcase Northern Ireland's cultural



Lighthouse heritage to benefit from EYCH18 funding

The funding is the result of a partnership between the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Tourism NI and the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division to mark the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 (EYCH).

Announcing the awards, Paul Mullan, Head of HLF Northern Ireland, said: "The EYCH is more than an opportunity to showcase our cultural heritage; it presents a challenge to the sector to creatively explore ways to fully realise the potential of our cultural heritage as a lever to attract additional investment, boost tourism and aid regeneration.

"These projects show how we can make more of our individual sites, things, places and stories to create more joined up narratives and experiences for visitors from Northern Ireland and further afield. Thanks to the money raised by National Lottery players we are delighted to be able to work in partnership to deliver this new investment in our heritage which will help to create a better future for everyone in Northern Ireland."

The nine funded projects highlight the diversity of cultural heritage that can be found in Northern Ireland, and includes a project to unlock the heritage of lighthouses.

The Irish Landmark Trust received £56,000 to tap into the Irish Lights archive and use this, together with stories linked to each coastal community, to share the maritime and industrial heritage associated with the Great Lighthouses of

Ireland stations at Blackhead, Rathlin Westlight, St. John's Point and at the Great Light at Titantic Quarter. Archived material, stories and images will be used to create podcasts, films and infographics, bringing this previously hidden heritage to life and helping to attract new visitors to each site and destination in Northern Ireland.

Rosemarie McHugh, Director of Product Development at Tourism NI, said: “Many of these projects are piloting ideas that will provide new insights and have implications for the cultural heritage sector far beyond the EYCH itself. We see this as the beginning of a longer term journey to maximise our tourism offering by promoting a cross-sector, partnership approach.”

Director of the Historic Environment Division, Iain Greenway, added: “This work is one part of a wider engagement across the heritage sector to demonstrate that the historic environment has an important contribution to make to very many aspects of our society and community. Such projects help to show what is possible and we hope that they will prove to be inspirational.”

The other projects to have secured support are:

Walls Alive 400 – Bringing the Walls to life through Augmented Reality - £50,000, Derry and Strabane District Council

Digital technology will link visitors to the Walls to the amazing history of the city and connect with the wealth of heritage attractions within the area. Cutting edge augmented reality will provide access to sets of short vignettes using a mix of images, audio and videos allowing users to bring to life the heritage of the site using their tablet or smartphone.

Linenopolis - £50,000, Linen Hall Library

Heritage sites in the city, including old linen warehouses and merchant premises, and historical material held by the Linen Hall Library and PRONI will be brought together to create guided tours, a travelling exhibition and a self-guided walking map to share Belfast’s world-leading connections to the Linen industry with visitors to the city.

Sea Gods Shipwrecks & Sidhe Folk – a treasure trail revealing the rich Causeway heritage - £56,500, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

The project will inspire visitors to uncover the connections between the landscape, local folklore and iconic treasures that are held in our museums. Through public engagement, eight sites that represent the hidden gems of the Causeway heritage, along with their associated myths and legends, will be selected and used to draw visitors into lesser-known areas of the Causeway Coast and Glens.

Shaped by Industry – Shared with Pride - £50,000, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

The project will connect and promote the industrial heritage of four key sites along the Causeway Coastal Route – Whitehead Railway Museum, The Heritage Hub at Carnlough Town Hall, Flame! Gasworks Museum in Carrickfergus and Whiting Mill, Glenarm and the Antrim Coast Road. Live theatre performances will enable visitors to experience life as potential new recruits for the Victorian gas works in Carrickfergus, as a railway porter at Whitehead, as a limestone worker in Glenarm or harbour mistress at Carnlough.

One For The Heart Pilot - £65,000, Lagan Navigation Trust

Digital storytelling will be used to share the significant cultural heritage of the 300 year old Lagan Navigation route. The project will link selected waterways sites to their local place, stories and people, coming together into an authentic and distinctive story that can be accessed by visitors through their smartphone.

Journeying Beyond Westeros: Warlords and Gallowglass – Adventures in Medieval Ulster - £42,000, Queen's University Belfast & Strangford and Lecale Partnership

Iconic Medieval monuments in Northern Ireland have featured prominently in HBO's Game of Thrones television series, but what do we really know about their history? The sites, their historic texts and the results of archaeological investigations will be used to tell the story of our own remarkable, yet largely hidden, Medieval past.

Museum Lates - £80,000, Northern Ireland Museums Council

Interactive experiences and creative engagement strategies will refocus and reimagine the museum experience for people aged 18-30. Up to eight museums across Northern Ireland will be involved in creating dynamic cultural heritage experiences which will change the perceptions of what to expect from a museum in 2018.

Relating Histories - £50,000, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council

Combining tourism, heritage and genealogy, the project will explore four historic graveyards at Aghalurcher; Old Cappagh, Drumragh and Cleenish Island, engaging people with the hidden heritage of both the sites and the wider area through guided tours, blogs and onsite events.

Notes to Editors

About the European Year of Cultural Heritage

The European Commission has designated 2018 as a Year of Cultural Heritage. It aims to encourage people to explore the rich and diverse cultural heritage across Europe, by celebrating, understanding and protecting its unique value and reflect on the place that cultural heritage occupies in all our lives. The slogan for the year is Our Heritage: Where the past meets the future.

A programme of events has been developed to respond to the challenges that the EYCH poses and includes capacity building workshops, utilising existing events such as the European Heritage Open Days and a celebration event to showcase successes and highlight future opportunities.

Further information please contact Julie Halliday at HLF Northern Ireland, tel: 07733 100674, email: julieh@hlf.org.uk.