Digital Attitudes and Skills for Heritage: what we



Sign ups to our Digital Attitudes and Skills for Heritage (DASH) survey, launched on 27 April, are already helping us to understand the heritage sector's digital needs.

Through our Digital Attitudes and Skills for Heritage (DASH) survey, we are asking UK heritage organisations of all sizes to tell us:

- What key digital attitudes and skills their staff and volunteers already have.
- What new uses of digital technology they would like to explore.

On completing the survey, organisations receive a free report – including benchmark data – to help them understand how best to take their use of digital forward.

Understanding the heritage sector’s digital needs

We will use the findings to guide our Digital Skills for Heritage initiative, which aims to drive up digital capabilities across the heritage sector. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has made the need for organisations to make use of digital

more pressing than ever before.

> “This situation has forced us to use digital more, and we won’t be going back… We will be embedding digital into our processes in future so collecting data?now using this survey is really useful.”
>
> Amelia Morgan, CEO, Venture Trust

We want to collect as wide a range of responses as possible so our work can be driven by the needs of the sector. Please help us by completing the survey if you haven’t done so already.

Sector needs during lockdown

The survey sign up is already informing our understanding of the sector’s digital needs, both in response to the immediate and changing coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis and for building its future resilience.

During the sign up process we ask: “What one thing would your organisation like to do with digital in the next two months that it is currently struggling with, or has never done before?”

We had responses from 162 heritage organisations that signed up in the first three weeks of the survey (that number has now increased to over 200). Between them, these 162 organisations identified 388 ways of using digital technology that they would like to get started with or become better at.

The results show that organisations are wanting to use digital in a variety of ways. We've identified eight categories that encompass these 388 digital uses:

1. Marketing and communications – 27%

27% of the digital uses identified by organisations came under marketing and communications. Organisations want to use digital to:

- develop online fundraising skills
- better understand their audiences and make use of audience data
- learn how to design and carry out marketing campaigns
- develop communications strategies
- grow social media followings

- develop existing websites or create new websites, particularly using Wordpress

2. Creating content – 26%

Content creation skills came in close second. Of particular interest were:

- creating videos, podcasts and virtual tours
- creating content for specific social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and TikTok
- effective storytelling techniques – bringing a range of multimedia content together to tell compelling stories about communities, projects, objects, places and histories

3. Community – 18%

Making, building, and protecting new and existing communities was often cited as a priority, including:

- understanding best practice when working with children, young people and vulnerable groups online
- making sure online activities are accessible and inclusive
- supporting communities previously used to meeting in physical spaces
- growing communities online – reaching into new geographical locations and attracting members with different outlooks and ideas
- creating digital volunteering opportunities and making use of crowdsourcing
- digital activism – online advocacy and organising for communities, causes and the environment

4. Strategy – 11%

Organisations want to make sure their use of digital helps them to deliver their objectives. They would like to:

- review how they support their staff and volunteers' use of digital and how they invest in training and infrastructure
- learn about open licencing, with a view to opening up their collections and resources
- be more creative, purposeful and joined up in using digital
- evaluate the impact of their use of technology

5. Events and activities – 8%

Organisations want support with putting their activities and events online. They were keen to understand:

- what needs to be done differently in digital environments compared to physical spaces
- what opportunities online events offer
- how online events can be better for some activities or participants
- what skills are needed to host events online

6. eLearning – 7%

Organisations were keen to identify what eLearning approaches were best suited to their learners, including:

- schools, children and young people
- adult visitors
- staff and volunteers

7. Working online – 2%

A smaller number of organisations are looking at honing their own online working practices, including:

- running online meetings
- managing teams at distance
- overseeing workflows and projects

8. Data – 1%

Working with data appears throughout all the categories. However a few organisations are specifically interested in how they can better utilise their own data, including by:

- making their data more accessible to visitors
- presenting it in more engaging ways
- supporting people to make use of their data

Our next steps

We will continue to review the information from sign ups and use it to adapt the approach to our Digital Skills for Heritage initiative. Thank you to all the organisations that have already taken part. The full results will be available in October 2020.





[navirus (COVID-19) challenge](#)

[New initiative: Digital Skills for Heritage launches today](#)