

Wentworth Woodhouse volunteers

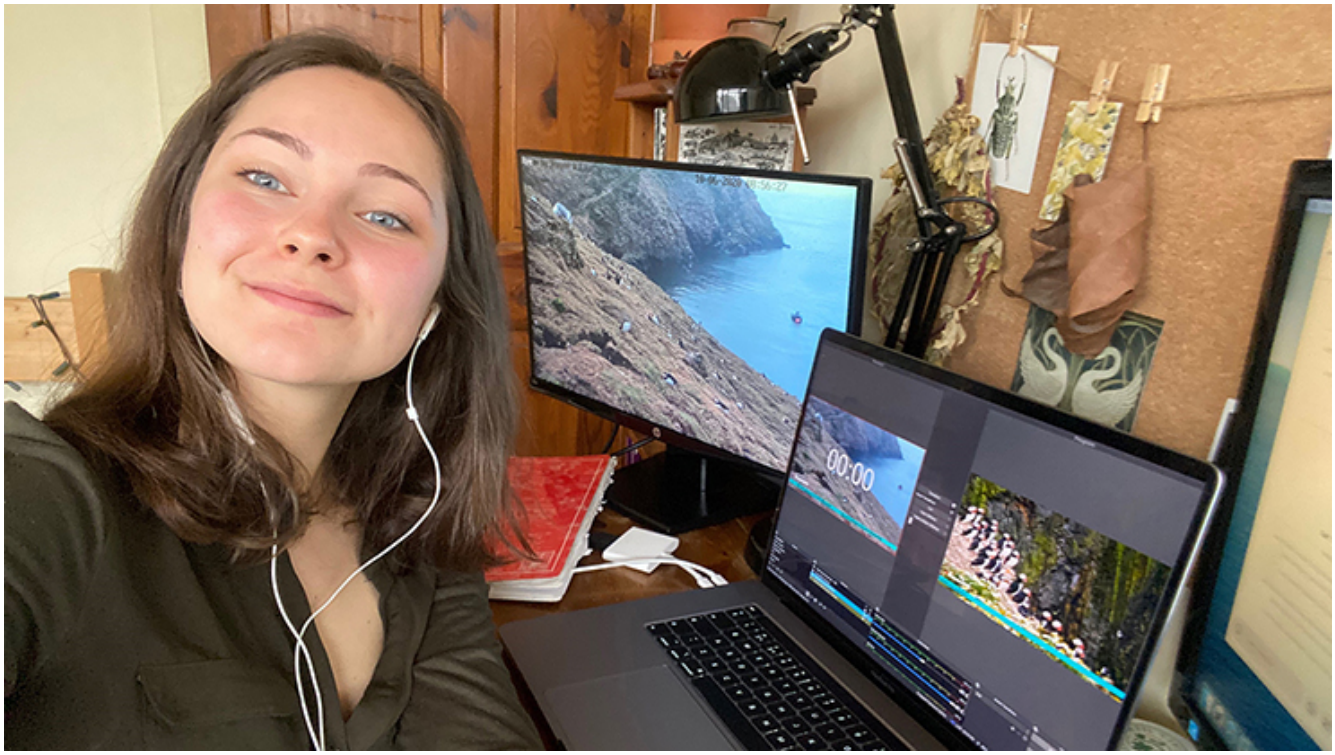
New National Lottery funding will boost digital skills in the heritage sector by helping organisations develop digital volunteering opportunities.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund's 2020 Digital Attitudes and Skills for Heritage (DASH) survey and report identified an appetite to develop digital skills across the sector, as well as the opportunity for organisations to benefit from 'at distance' volunteers.

It found that the sector is calling out for digital innovation to help it move into a more resilient, creative future, and identified an opportunity to create new forms of volunteering to support this.

> Digital volunteering can help open doors for all involved, keeping more of us connected to heritage.
>
> *Ros Kerslake, CEO of The Heritage Fund*

The £1m National Lottery funding announced today through our Digital Skills for Heritage initiative is in response to this. Heritage organisations and partnerships of all sizes across the UK can apply.



Skomer Island volunteer editing puffin videos

What is digital volunteering?

The funding will aid organisations in developing their own understanding and use of digital volunteers – building vital skills and capacity.

Digital volunteering opportunities might include activities that require technical skills, for example:

- collecting, uploading, or organising data
- website design and maintenance
- translating
- running online events
- providing training
- improving online accessibility

We are also interested in organisations offering at distance volunteering opportunities. These can provide volunteers with flexibility to support heritage from any location and at times that may better suit them. This approach opens up opportunities to those who may not have had the capacity to volunteer previously due to location, personal commitments, time limitations or travel restrictions.



Benefits for everyone

Volunteering is widely known to provide a huge range of benefits for the health and wellbeing of participants, as well as increasing organisational capacity and resilience. Digital volunteering may also offer additional skills and development opportunities to both organisations and volunteers.

> Organisations will benefit from the time and support of volunteers, and volunteers will be able to share and develop their skills while supporting the heritage they love.
>
> *Ros Kerslake, CEO of The Heritage Fund*

CEO of The Heritage Fund, Ros Kerslake said: “Digital volunteering can help open doors for all involved, keeping more of us connected to heritage. Organisations will benefit from the time and support of volunteers, and volunteers will be able to share and develop their skills while supporting the heritage they love. It’s a win-win situation for everyone and we are delighted to launch this fund, thanks to National Lottery players.”

Creating these new opportunities will allow organisations to embed digital volunteering models which they can replicate and reuse in future. It will also provide methods and digital volunteering practices which can be shared with organisations across the sector looking to follow the same approach.



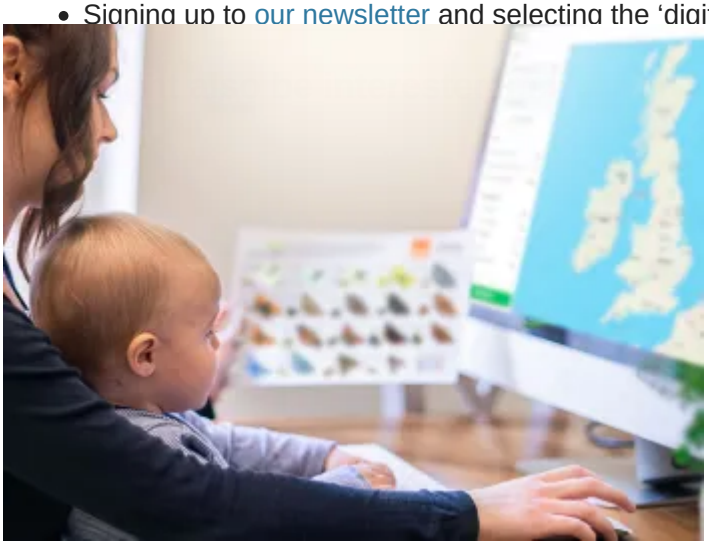
Thames Discovery Programme. Credit: MoLA

Find out more

Full information of the digital volunteering funding is now available, including details on eligibility and how to apply. Project Enquiry Forms must be submitted by **12 noon on 16 August** and full applications by **27 September**.

Our Digital Skills for Heritage is designed to raise digital skills and confidence across the whole UK heritage sector. You can keep up to date with all our digital opportunities and guidance by:

- visiting the Digital Skills for Heritage webpage
- Signing up to our newsletter and selecting the 'digital' preference



Butterfly Conservation. Credit: Ben Hanson



and creativity in heritage sector

Alistair McNaught



Developing digital leadership in heritage