Our new report uncovers impact of COVID-19 crisis



Boundary Way allotments, Wolverhampton

The report provides valuable insight into how heritage was affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis over the past year and the challenges the sector still faces.

We commissioned Renaisi to find out how heritage organisations across the UK used our emergency funding, which was delivered at speed from April last year.

The report reveals the positive impact the Heritage Emergency Fund had on the sector, as
we distributed £49,829,600 to 961 heritage organisations to help them to survive, recover, innovate and reopen.?



Estimated impact of Heritage Emergency Fund grant: Over 2,400 full time equivalent roles directly supported. Over 1,400 staff brought back from furlough. Over 14,700 volunteer roles directly supported.

What we learned

Our own rapid response survey found that 98% of heritage organisations were impacted within the first three weeks of the pandemic. We developed the Heritage Emergency Fund to help the sector adapt to those unexpected pressures.

This latest report shows that **the biggest impact of our grants was economic**, with most using at least some of their emergency funding for **staff costs and overheads** such as building maintenance and utility bills.

As a result of the pandemic, landscape and nature sites experienced high visitor numbers and needed more staff to maintain them. Mourne Heritage Trust in County Down was struggling when visitor numbers skyrocketed, leading to problems such as littering, wildfires and footpath damage. Their Heritage Emergency Fund grant supported staff costs and the purchase of materials, tools and equipment to safely bring back volunteers.



Mourne heritage volunteers

Over two-thirds of respondents said they spent at least some of their grant on **social distancing measures**. This helped many heritage organisations to safely reopen, and volunteers to return to their roles.

As the year progressed and successive lockdowns were introduced, more organisations worked with us to use their grant to **innovate their business model**, primarily by increasing their **digital capability**.

Boundary Way, an allotment organisation in Wolverhampton, created online workshops and videos that helped their project reach audiences far beyond the local community.

St-Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, London, used their grant to deliver concerts online, keeping their singers employed and improving the organisation’s digital skills. The concerts provided entertainment for existing audience members who were shielding, and attracted a whole new digital audience as people tuned in to watch from around the world.



A concert at St-Martin-in-the-Fields, London

> “This report provides key insight into how heritage was affected as well as how we as a funding body can continue to help them innovate and adapt going forward.”
>
> *Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund*

Building back better

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “In March 2020, the UK’s heritage faced its gravest threat since the Second World War. I am proud of how quickly our staff galvanised to get money out of the door quickly, and I am confident that our quick action not only helped heritage survive the year but has also helped to make organisations more resilient for the future.

"This report provides key insight into how heritage was affected as well as how we as a funding body can continue to help them innovate and adapt going forward.”

The report shows that as of January 2021, organisations still faced challenges, but it also identifies opportunities for organisations to build back better. This includes considering how they can **become more inclusive** and keep pace with wider societal changes, such as **digital opportunities** and the recognition of **the importance of green spaces to health and wellbeing**.

Read more

As well as examining the financial support provided through our Heritage Emergency Fund grants, the report also considers our:

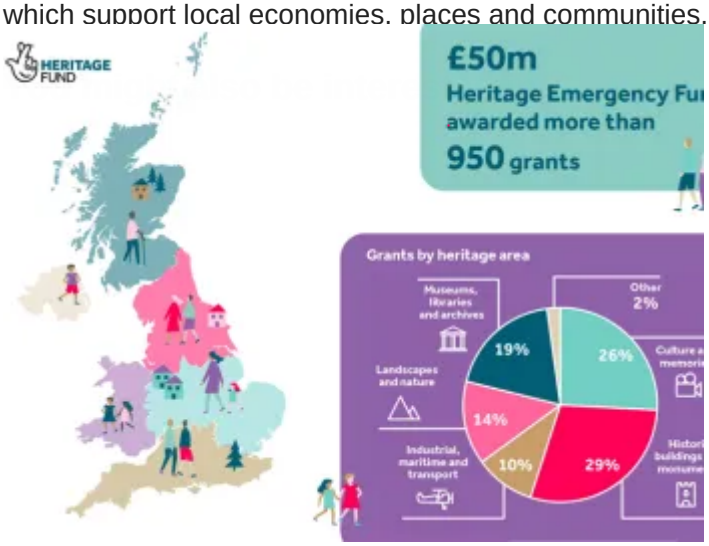
- flexible approach to projects in delivery
- grant increases
- Register of Support Services (ROSS) consultant support

Read the full report to discover more details of the challenges and opportunities presented by the pandemic, the sector's demand for financial and non-financial support, and how lessons learned from working at pace can be taken forward.

Our support for the sector

Alongside the Heritage Emergency Fund ? which was made possible thanks to money raised by National Lottery players ? we also distributed emergency and recovery funding on behalf of government, through the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage (from July 2020) and the Green Recovery Challenge Fund (from September 2020).

Our National Lottery Grants for Heritage resumed in full in February 2021. As the pandemic continues to impact so many aspects of our lives, we are prioritising projects that demonstrate the value of heritage to our national life and which support local economies, places and communities.





s of organisations across the UK

More than £9million Culture Recovery Fund grants awarded in second round of emergency



Cody Dock

Nearly £40million awarded to green regeneration projects in England