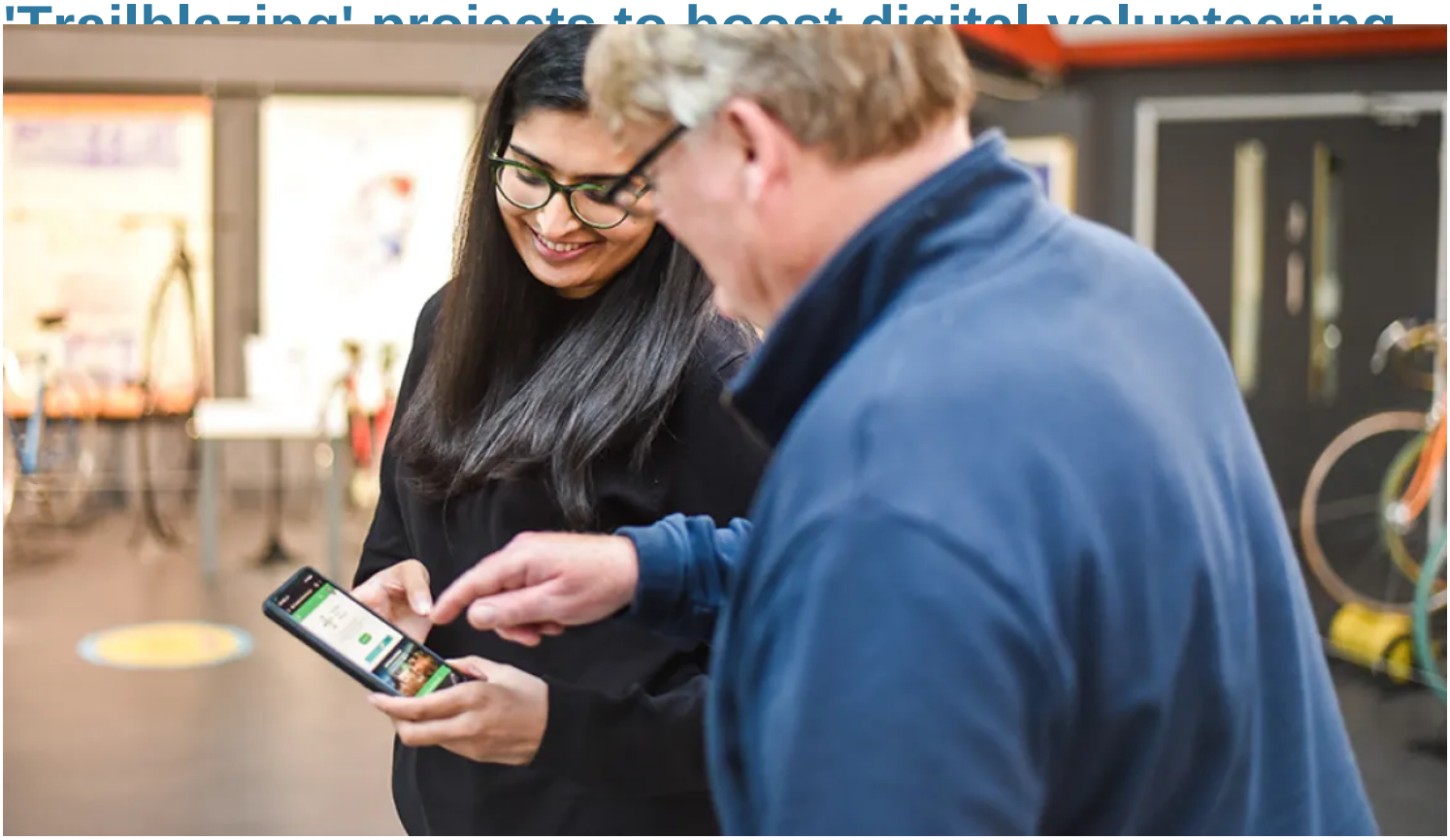
'Trailblazing' projects to boost digital volunteering



Heritage Trust Network trustee Minder Kaur Athwal. Credit: Sarah Hayes

National Lottery funding awarded to 17 volunteering projects as digital leadership programme returns.

The £1million investment, made as part of our Digital Skills for Heritage initiative, will help to create hundreds of digital volunteering roles across the UK. The announcement comes as the Leading the Sector programme is set to return in the new year.

Digital volunteering

From cathedrals to landscape projects, the opportunities will be both online and in person, supporting volunteers to contribute – and develop – their digital skills. The heritage organisations will also gain the perspectives and skills of people who may not have had the chance to volunteer before, pioneering new ways of working and championing accessibility and inclusion.

> Volunteers play a crucial role in supporting and sharing the UK's heritage. Thanks to National Lottery players we are delighted to support these trailblazing projects as they create exciting new digital volunteering opportunities.

Ros Kerslake, CEO at The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Ros Kerslake, The National Lottery Heritage Fund CEO, said, “Volunteers play a crucial role in supporting and sharing the UK’s heritage. Thanks to National Lottery players we are delighted to support these trailblazing projects as they create exciting new digital volunteering opportunities, helping to break down barriers and inspire the sector to get even more people involved in the heritage they love.”

The projects

Some of the projects awarded a share of the funding include:

Museum and Heritage Access 2022, led by Vocal Eyes

This project will train 30 to 50 volunteers from deaf, disabled and neurodivergent communities to ensure that heritage websites are digitally accessible. This will involve:

- working with the project team to create benchmarks of digital accessibility
- recording disability access information
- performing basic web accessibility tests on heritage websites
- delivering workshops for heritage staff to improve online access information

CollabArchive, led by Nerve Centre, in collaboration with the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland



Enjoying a film created by a Public Records Office of Northern Ireland project

The Public Records Office of Northern Ireland will work with various communities including LGBTQ+ and disability groups, young people and volunteers from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The volunteers will be trained in the digital processing of archives, such as transcribing documents, adding metadata, indexing and cataloguing.

Volunteers will be able to learn new digital skills while exploring archival material around topics that interest them, such as:

- LGBTQ+ history
- disability heritage
- citizenship and social rights
- migration

Ripon 1350, led by Ripon Cathedral Development Campaign Trust



Ripon Cathedral from above. Credit: Joe Priestly

Celebrating its 1,350th anniversary in 2022, Ripon Cathedral will offer digital and remote volunteering opportunities for the first time. The flexible home-based digital volunteering opportunities will enable the cathedral team to expand and diversify their current volunteering programme and, in turn, inspire future generations with roles in social media, visitor experience and heritage collections.

The full list of successful projects:

- **Capture and storage of Second World War British Resistance Operational Bases, Observation Posts and Training sites** led by The Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team
- **CollabArchive** led by Nerve Centre
- **Crowd Cymru: A Crowdsourcing Platform for Archives in Wales** led by Torfaen County Borough Council
- **Digital Heritage Skills: Telling Inverclyde's Story on Wikipedia** led by Inverclyde Community Development Trust
- **Digital Heroes** led by Heritage Trust Network
- **Digitising multilingual heritage** led by Manchester Museum

- **Diving into the digital archives of the Earl of Abergavenny** led by Portland Museum Trust ???
- **Museum and Heritage Access 2022** led by Vocal Eyes
- **Remote and Digital Heritage Volunteering** led by Glasgow Women's Library
- **Remotely Digital** led by Barnsley Council
- **Ripon 1350** led by Ripon Cathedral
- **Saving and sharing our digital plant heritage** led by Plant Heritage
- **Telling tales and talking trails: empowering our volunteers** led by Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust
- **The Digital Dig: Uncovering Britain's Lost Plant Nurseries** led by Royal Horticultural Society
- **Torre Abbey Digital Volunteers** led by Torbay Council
- **Unlocking Landscapes** led by University of Exeter
- **Vibrant Volunteering Virtually Everywhere** led by Plantlife

Inspiring new digital leaders

In other Digital Skills for Heritage news, Culture24 is to deliver a?second round of professional development programme, Leading the Sector.?

Leading the Sector focuses on digital leadership among the senior leaders of heritage organisations. The first strand in 2020, also run by Culture24, helped 16 senior leaders to expand their organisations' digital capabilities. Find out more in our interviews with previous participants and blog about some of the challenges overcome.

The next round will be aimed at trustees and executive leadership members from across the heritage sector. It will offer six themed online discussion events and six in-person networking events that will take place at heritage venues across the UK. Events will start in January 2022.

Find out more

Digital Skills for Heritage is designed to raise digital skills and confidence across the whole UK heritage sector.

To stay up-to-date about these and other projects and opportunities:

- sign up to our newsletter?and select the 'digital' preference
- visit our Digital Skills for Heritage page



Wentworth Woodhouse volunteers



Minder Kaur Athwal, a trustee at the Digital Skills for Heritage-supported Heritage Trust Network. Credit: Sarah Hayes.



Butterfly Conservation. Credit: Ben Hanson

Digital skills projects will support resilience and creativity in heritage sector