Eilish McGuinness announced as our new Chief



She brings a career's worth of experience – across the breadth of the UK's heritage – to the role.

Eilish will take over from Ros Kerslake CBE, who announced in July she was stepping down as CEO of the Heritage Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund after five and a half years.

> It is an enormous privilege to have this opportunity to lead the Heritage Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund and support organisations and communities who look after our rich and varied heritage right across the UK.
>
> *Eilish McGuinness*

Eilish said: “It is an enormous privilege to have this opportunity to lead the Heritage Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund and support organisations and communities who look after our rich and varied heritage right across the UK.”

Dr Simon Thurley CBE, Chair of The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund, said: “I am delighted that the Trustees have chosen Eilish McGuinness as Chief Executive to succeed Ros Kerslake.

"The Trustees were presented with an extremely strong field for one of the best jobs in heritage and we are delighted to appoint someone with wide experience, outstanding management and leadership ability and a strong strategic sense. I personally, and the Board of Trustees, look forward to working with Eilish over the coming years."

Extensive experience

Eilish has worked in heritage all her professional life and has extensive experience across the sector and the breadth of the UK's heritage. She joined the Heritage Fund in 1996 and has held a variety of roles, both operational and strategic. She is currently Executive Director of Business Delivery.

Over the past 20 months, Eilish's department has been among many staff at the Heritage Fund working at the frontline with heritage organisations to support them through the pandemic.

In the 2020-2021 financial year they helped us invest more than £400million cash into the heritage sector (a 50% increase on our usual amount), providing vital support to more than 1,500 heritage organisations. And they have been praised for their flexibility – relaxing reporting requirements where possible, bringing forward payments if necessary, and discussing changes of scope or cost due to COVID-19 impact.

> "I look forward to ensuring we continue to be responsive to the needs of the heritage as we recover from the pandemic."
>
> *Eilish McGuinness*

Eilish said: "The Heritage Fund has played a vital role in helping organisations impacted by the pandemic, and I want to pay tribute to Ros Kerslake, our trustees, our committees and our brilliant staff for all their work in delivering not only National Lottery funding but also emergency funding on behalf of government departments in three countries. I look forward to ensuring we continue to be responsive to the needs of the heritage as we recover from the pandemic."

Prior to joining the Heritage Fund, Eilish worked with Historic Scotland, Historic Monuments & Buildings Branch, Northern Ireland and in the heritage sector in Dublin.

She has a degree in History of Art and Archaeology from University College Dublin, and an MA from Queen's University Belfast, where she was a junior research fellow in the Institute of Irish Studies at Queen's University Belfast.

Eilish will officially take up the role of Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Heritage Memorial Fund in the new year.





The Heritage Fund at end of 2021

Credit: Chris Ridley

Dr Simon Thurley CBE appointed as new Chair