Seven projects to connect communities to local



Participants of City Stories photography project. Photo: Lens Lab Project

Discover how stories of Leeds' diverse communities are showcased in a new series of projects commissioned as part of our £2.4million support for the city's year of culture.

Local people across the city of Leeds have been involved in uncovering hidden stories and have been able to explore the heritage that matters the most to them as part of LEEDS 2023. These stories will go on display at events from September 2023.

From photography exhibitions and live theatre to youth clubs and edible archives, these projects have been co-produced with some of the city's leading heritage organisations.

> The support of LEEDS 2023 and The National Lottery Heritage Fund has given the opportunity not only to better understand who we're working with, but also how to collaborate in a meaningful way.
>
> *Benedict Philips, Creative Director of Lens Lab Project*

The seven community heritage projects

Any Work That Wanted Doing

This exhibition at Leeds Industrial Museum brings together disabled people's voices from the past and present, highlighting their contributions to culture. It features artworks by disabled artists that have been created in response to the hidden histories of disabled mill workers. These are displayed amongst the museum's collection of textile machinery.

Culture Club

Led by young people and in partnership with Sable Radio, this is a new youth club at Thackray Museum of Medicine for people aged 16–21. Culture Club members can meet to explore healthcare and medical histories through creative activities like photography, music and video.

Forgotten Battles: Gender at the Armouries

An exhibition and self-guided trail at the Royal Armouries, designed by researchers and volunteers from the local LGBTQ+ community. It uncovers the gendered and queer histories within the museum's collection and aims to offer new perspectives on historical artefacts.

Meet Me at Cantors

This theatre production at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance tells the story of working-class teenagers who grew up in Leeds' Jewish community in the 1950s. An accompanying exhibition of portraits taken by award-winning photographer Jonathan Straight will also be on display.

Eating the Corn Exchange

Led by Edible Archives, this is a multi-sensory storytelling event. The history of Leeds' Corn Exchange as a gathering place for youth subcultures is explored through food and sound.

City Stories: Common Ground

This exhibition at Mill Hill Chapel showcases stories and portraits from the six most represented faiths in Leeds, captured by Lens Lab Project.

Benedict Philips, Creative Director of Lens Lab Project, said: "It's rare to get more than 12 months to develop relationships with people and places. City Stories: Common ground has given the time and space to do exactly that.

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Hidden Stories Hub

This central hub at Leeds Corn Exchange in partnership with Leeds Civic Trust will host talks, exhibitions and events throughout Heritage Open Days.

> It will be incredibly exciting to see this programme, that truly puts people at its heart, unfold in the final season of this landmark year for LEEDS 2023.
>
> *Helen Featherstone, Director, England, North at The National Lottery Heritage Fund*

Helen Featherstone, Director, England, North at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “We are delighted to support these projects that demonstrate the enormous pride communities have for their individual and collective heritage in Leeds.

“It will be incredibly exciting to see this programme, that truly puts people at its heart, unfold in the final season of this landmark year for LEEDS 2023.”

Got a project idea that connects communities to heritage?

If there’s heritage in your local area that you’d like to share, we can help. Explore our funding programmes to find out how we can support your project.