Seventeen organisations to test innovative ways of



Hampshire Cultural Trust staff member and volunteer at the Allen Gallery.

In the second phase of our three-stage Heritage Innovation Fund pilot programme, grant recipients will develop solutions to common problems facing the heritage sector.

We've awarded £1.17million to a selection of our original innovation cohort to take their ideas to the next level.

We want to help make the heritage sector more sustainable, inclusive and fit for the future. These 17 organisations are testing ways to do that: from recruitment and retention of volunteers and heritage skills shortages, to attracting young people to the sector and improving digital products and capacity.

> I'm delighted to see these 17 projects progress to the next stage and I'm excited for what they come up with next.
>
> *Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund*

How we're supporting innovation

Each organisation is receiving between £50,000 and £75,000 to support a member of staff to dedicate 9–12 months to the testing process. They will work together in a cohort for support on their innovation journey. At the same time, individuals will begin to put their workforce solutions into practice in their organisation.

We are partnering with The Young Foundation to deliver the cohort experience. They will provide structured learning to test prototype solutions to the various workforce challenges, alongside masterclasses and peer learning groups.

There will also be opportunities for the wider heritage sector to learn from and test the outputs from the cohort.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "I'm delighted to see these 17 projects progress to the next stage. The cohort approach has already led to some impressive development of skills, confidence and capabilities – I'm excited for what they come up with next.

"Investing in innovation supports organisational sustainability, one of our four investment principles, and will ensure that heritage is valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future."

> Paper and post-it notes stuck on a wall, covered in writing from a brainstorming session
>
> The Arts Marketing Association's ideas and plans to tackle their workforce challenge.

What will be tested in phase two

The organisations and workforce challenges progressing to the test phase of the Heritage Innovation Fund include:

- **National Library Scotland** is looking to diversify its workforce by improving the inclusivity of its recruitment and retention policy and culture.
- **Welsh Wildlife Trusts** (led by North Wales Trust) wants to embrace digital technology to enhance nature conservation work across Wales.
- **British Film Institute** will test new entry routes to film conservation and the role of formal accreditation in professionalising the practice.
- **Hampshire Cultural Trust** is looking at different approaches for creating paid career pathways for volunteers across heritage organisations.
- **Arts Marketing Association** will test a new model for heritage skills development using co-production and an artificial intelligence training coach.
- Digital archaeology platform **DigVentures** and **Happy Days Enniskillen International Beckett Festival**, who blogged for us about their experiences in the first explore phase, are also through to the test phase.

Responding to the heritage sector’s needs

We developed the Heritage Innovation Fund in response to our 2022 UK Heritage Pulse survey which found that 54% of respondents wanted greater support to help them innovate and test new approaches.

Thirty-four organisations completed the first phase, explore. Seventeen of those are now progressing to the second phase, test. The third phase, grow, is planned for late 2024. Read a blog from The Young Foundation about working with the Heritage Innovation Fund cohort in phase one.

You might also be interested in...



Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust is exploring challenges around recruitment, retention and diversity of the conservation sector workforce.



irst cohort of Heritage Innovation Fund explorers

A dig on Holy Island



environmental challenges

The Flight of the Little Golden Swallow, inspired by Oscar Wilde's The Happy Prince, is an installation of 150 gold leaf swallows on retail stores, community buildings and schools in and around Enniskillen centre. The swallows were created by Fermanagh artists Simon Carman and Helen Sharp. Credit: Brian Morrison.

Inspiring pride in place through a volunteer-supported festival