Six organisations shortlisted for Sustainable



The Museums + Heritage Awards have announced the shortlist for the sustainability category. Discover how these projects are demonstrating best practice.

This award, sponsored by the Heritage Fund, celebrates projects that have environmental sustainability at their core, or use transferrable and easy to replicate ways to protect and build connections with our natural environment.

Tackling the climate and ecological crisis together

Catalysts for change, the shortlisted projects are making a positive impact on the environment and can empower others to do same through their learnings.

The shortlist

Brilli-ANT: How someone small changed a big story, The Story Museum



A child engages with the cardboard dung beetle whose story promotes recycling.

This exhibition focused on stories from the natural world that demonstrate adaptability and flexibility as a way to combat the sense of overwhelm which is recognised as a growing negative on children's wellbeing and mental health.

The takeaway message is that even small changes can make big differences and that even though the topic is so vast and complex, there is action that we can all take at an individual level.

Nature Matters, Yorkshire and North East Film Archives



A still from archive film of a clean air protest in Middlesborough in 1968.

This ambitious project explored environmental stories in the archives, cataloguing and digitising over 500 previously inaccessible eco-centred films.

Using the past to reflect on the present and future, the project produced a thought-provoking film that illustrates our human connection with nature. The project has reached over 82,000 people in person and online through collaborations and has provoked debate and inspired action across generations.

1,000 Fingerprints 1,000 Voices, The Scottish Crannog Centre



Building a crannog with locally sourced materials.

Following a devastating fire in 2021, The Scottish Crannog Centre has built a new museum using locally sourced materials, skills and sustainable resources.

Built by and for its community, the museum is guided by four pillars of sustainability. Using materials from within travelling distance of an Iron Age person – timber from Drummond Hill, heather from Glen Lyon and Dun Coillich and stone from a local castle – the site is deeply connected to the landscape and promotes ways of living sustainably that we can learn from today.

Cairngorms Capercaillie Project – Capercaillie lek experience, Cairngorms National Park



The capercaillie exhibition at Balmoral Estate used locally sourced timber for seating.

There are now only 532 capercaillie left in the UK. Over 85% of them live in the Cairngorms National Park. Action is critical to prevent extinction in the UK and build a long-term future for the species.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority is helping communities to research and monitor the species and improve habitats. The project produced an exhibition, designed sustainably by Lateral North, to tell the story of capercaillie in Scotland and the action being taken to protect this iconic species.

Roots & Branches, Manchester Museum and Museum Development North West (MDNW)



Manchester Museum staff on their pop-up stand at Ardwick Climate Action Day.

Roots & Branches creates opportunities for museums to gain and exchange skills and knowledge, and test initiatives which advance and embed sustainable thinking.

Roots is hosted from Manchester Museum's experimental Top Floor, a testbed for how museums can harness their civic responsibilities to support collective climate action. Branches, managed by MDNW, developed the first Carbon Literacy for Museums Toolkit which has helped over 1,000 learners across the UK take positive, informed sustainability action.

The Wild Escape, Art Fund



Drawings on display at Sunderland Museum Winter Gardens on Earth Day 2023.

The Wild Escape was a project for young people on UK biodiversity loss. It was the largest ever collaboration between UK museums, with 530 coming together to enable 103,000 young people to participate.

The project re-established that museums are hubs for people to engage with difficult topics like biodiversity loss. Participants learned about endangered and extinct species, and expressed a collective responsibility for nature.

Announcing the winners

There will be up to two winners, which will be announced at a live awards ceremony in London on 15 May.

Ways to protect our natural world in your project

Find out how to embed environmental sustainability in your heritage project.



Brunel's SS Great Britain in the dry dock. Photo: Adam Gasson / SS Great Britain Trust.



rbon Neutral

Visitors take part in food recipe demonstrations, tasting ingredients found in hedgerows. Credit: The Food Museum



Credit: The Brampton Museum

Brampton is Growing: environmentally sustainable museum redevelopment