Heritage organisations to share innovative



DigVentures will engage 4,000 participants to help map archaeological sites and ecological habits in the third phase of its Heritage Innovation Fund project.

The third phase of our Heritage Innovation Fund is supporting projects across the UK to roll out creative new ways of working.

The first two phases of the initiative helped organisations explore and test ideas for tackling common challenges faced by heritage workforces.

We've now awarded £2.9million to 13 of these organisations to progress their ideas to the third and final stage.

The successful organisations will work together in a cohort, continuing to learn about the innovation process, and take the lessons back to their organisations to embed in the delivery of their workforce challenge solution.

From improving wellbeing to addressing skills shortages, the projects will help grow a heritage sector that's more sustainable, inclusive and fit for the future.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "I'm delighted to see these 13 projects progress to the final 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."

Working in partnership

We are partnering with The Young Foundation to deliver the cohort sessions – a mixture of masterclasses and peer learning groups.

Helen Goulden OBE, Chief Executive at The Young Foundation, said: “Through this work, it's been a real joy to see the drive towards ambitious innovation across the heritage sector, with organisations the length and breadth of the UK working in participatory ways to drive meaningful, lasting and sustainable change to address workforce challenges.

“Huge ing and te



The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust is extending career opportunities for students with 42 new paid placements.

Taking ideas further

Organisations continuing to the final phase include:

Arts Marketing Association which will develop a new artificial intelligence platform offering tailored learning about uses of AI for the heritage sector.

Butterfly Conservation which is supporting its Youth Panel to create new content, opportunities and training to inspire young people to get involved in conservation.

The National Museum of Wales (Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Cymru) which will address eco-anxiety and enhance wellbeing in the workforce through participation in activities that reduce the impact of climate change.

The British Film Institute which will support current and future staff by expanding its traineeship model and increasing mid-career development opportunities.

Happy Days Enniskillen International Beckett Festival which will build skills and pride in place by bringing people of all ages together to share their ideas.

See the full list of Heritage Innovation Fund Grow Phase grantees.

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. Innovation is also an important element of achieving our investment principles including saving heritage and organisational sustainability.

Explore our Heritage 2033 strategy and have your say on the opportunities and challenges for the heritage sector by joining our UK Heritage Pulse research panel.



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