

Archives+ area at the newly reopened Manchester Central Library

An additional £1.55m came from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Archives+ project. This has transformed public access to archive and family history collections held by the council and complementary partners.

Sara Hilton, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North West, said: "Archives hold a wealth of fantastic stories – but are often hard for the public to engage with. Our support for the Archives+ project will help bring Manchester’s wonderfully diverse history to life through interactive displays and exhibitions and new community spaces. Every aspect of Manchester's development as the world's first industrial city is captured here in and will now be fully accessible to everyone for the first time.”

The Manchester Central Library Development Trust, an independent charity, was established to allow the library to access sources of funding which a council cannot tap into - both from other trusts and foundations and from private philanthropists - and to encourage private giving to add value to the council's core commitment to libraries. £773,000 has been raised to date with new pledges and in-kind contributions currently being made. Major grants have been awarded from The Wolfson Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Granada Foundation and the Oglesby Charitable Trust to support a range of activity, including support for refurbishing the Reading Room, the children's library fit-out and support for educational and cultural programming. A Friends scheme will be launched very soon.

An Arts Council England grant award of £100,000 will go towards a year long culture programme. The grant award, bolstered by additional funds from the Manchester Central Library Development Trust, will be used to fund a programme

of events to open up the library to a host of new audiences.

Alison Clark-Jenkins, Director North, Arts Council England, said, “Central Library is an iconic and indelible part of Manchester’s history and place in the world. Through our National Lottery-funded grants for the arts programme, we were delighted to be able to use our library fund to help the city and its communities celebrate the rebirth and future role of the building.”

Stephen Sorrell, Chair of the Library Development Trust, said: “We are delighted to be supporting this exciting new cultural programme that will maximise the potential of the city's newest cultural destination. We are very grateful to the support of The Zochonis Charitable Trust in enabling us to make this contribution.”

£473,000 funding from the Wolfson Foundation to the Central Library Development Trust has been used be used to improve facilities and support the refurbishment of the Reading Room and the Media Lounge.

Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation said: "Public libraries continue to play a crucial role in British society. In backing this excellent project, we hope that other funders might join us in supporting high quality initiatives at public libraries at a time of acute funding pressure for these great institutions. This project help to show the future shape of public libraries at a time of debate about their future role."

Further information

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