Four museums to be transformed

26/07/2012

Alongside the £1.42billion which has been allocated to transforming the UK's museums and galleries since the launch of the National Lottery, HLF's latest awards will ensure that our collections continue to respond to the needs of audiences from home and abroad, through the provision of high quality displays and enhanced visitor facilities.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund, said: "This is a momentous year: huge numbers of tourists will be coming to these shores and our world-class museums continue to be a particularly popular draw. As the largest source of funding for capital investment in museums and galleries, HLF is ensuring that museums large and small from across the UK continue to attract record numbers by providing people with inspiring and high quality experiences about the key events and developments in our history. The projects announced today will explore everything from First World War memories to the history of modern design, giving new insights and inspiration to the millions of people who visit every year."

Culture Minister, Ed Vaizey, said: "I'm delighted that HLF's investment of nearly £16million will benefit such a wide variety of institutions, from the Tank Museum in Dorset to the Design Museum at its new Kensington home. Our museums are amongst the finest in the world and the HLF's support of our dynamic cultural sector plays an important role in helping our arts bodies thrive, flourish and maintain their first-class reputations."

First World War Centenary Project, IWM London – confirmed grant of £4.5m
HLF has confirmed a grant of £4.5m that will transform IWM London (part of Imperial War Museums) by creating new ground-breaking First World War Galleries. The Galleries will form a crucial part of IWM London's plans to mark the First World War Centenary during 2014-18, unveiling more of the museum's world-renowned collections which include art, film, sound recordings and photographs. Original artefacts from soldiers' personal items, letters and diaries through to weapons, tanks and artworks will be exhibited in state-of-the-art, interactive displays, exploring the stories of those who lived, fought and died in the Great War.

The First World War Centenary also marks the opening chapter of the museum's history, as it was originally established in 1917 to collect and record everybody's experiences of the Great War. IWM is leading the First World War Centenary Partnership, a network of over 450 national and international members. Together, they will present a vibrant four-year programme of events, activities and digital platforms which will enable millions of people across the world to discover more about life in the First World War.

Alongside the development of the Galleries, IWM have launched a series of education initiatives such as a Youth Panel and Young Reporters in order to reach out to young people across the city inviting them to engage with this landmark anniversary and get involved with IWM's work.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said: "These inspiring plans are entirely fitting to mark the planned First World War commemorations and we are proud to be playing a role as a funder. The 'Great War' was an extraordinary turning point in our history and these galleries will help remind us all – young and old - of the sacrifices that were made and the importance of continuing to learn from its lessons."

Tank Museum – Access all Areas, Dorset – confirmed grant of £2.5m
Holding the world's finest tank and armoured vehicle collection, The Tank Museum is a popular visitor attraction in the heart of Dorset. HLF's grant will be used to house 130 'at risk' vehicles, putting the entire collection indoors for the first time. A new Vehicle Conservation Centre will be created providing a suitable space to conserve and display these historic machines, a British invention from the First World War. The Centre will provide a high-quality space in which people will learn about armoured vehicles and witness the conservation process.

An award-winning training programme for young offenders will be re-launched offering young people the chance to learn engineering and conservation skills. Two new exhibitions will also form part of the project. 'Warhorse to Horsepower' will mark the centenary of the First World War, displaying the Museum's newly-acquired tank from the blockbuster movie War Horse.'Making Tanks'will launch in 2015 and will tell the stories of the people who designed and built tanks.

Europe 1600 - 1800 at the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A), London – confirmed grant of £4.3m
HLF's grant will enable the V&A to progress its plans to redevelop its internationally important Europe 1600-1800 collections of ceramics, furniture and woodwork, sculpture, textiles and fashion, dramatically improving the exhibition space for a number of objects which will be on permanent display for the first time.

By restoring the 1970s' style galleries back to their original Victorian Aston Webb design, the galleries will now have step-free access and over 50% more floor space. A new environmental control system using low-carbon technology will feature alongside state-of-the-art display cases to provide a safe and stable environment to properly show the collection.

During the two-year project, the museum will implement a range of programmes and activities such as interactive exhibits based around key objects and innovative digital technologies to bring the artefacts to life. A large number of volunteers will be involved and get hands-on experience with conservation work, curating exhibitions and leading guided tours.

The new Design Museum, London – confirmed grant of £4.65m
HLF's grant will enable the Design Museum to move into its new home at the landmark Commonwealth Institute in Kensington. The new space is triple the size of the museum's current home in Shad Thames and will house permanent and temporary exhibition areas that can show large scale exhibitions, a digital studio, new learning rooms and an auditorium. The move will bring the museum into Kensington's cultural quarter where it will join the V&A, Science Museum, Natural History Museum, Royal College of Art and Serpentine Gallery.

The two-year project will provide the Grade II*-listed Commonwealth Institute, built in the early 60s and once called by English Heritage 'the most important public building of its time', with a new and long-term use for the first time since 2004. The project will not only conserve this architecturally distinct and 'at risk' building, it will also enable vastly improved access, allow the museum to increase its current visitor numbers and open the museum's permanent collection to visitors for free for the first time.

Containing over 3,000 objects, the museum's collection tells the story of design in mass production and provides a unique view on Britain's considerable design achievements. 'Defining Design' will be a key theme of the permanent display and will explore different areas of design and architecture looking at how they have shaped our modern world. Workshops, talks and school holiday courses will ensure that everyone, especially young people, can learn more about the UK's key role in design history.

Also announced by HLF today

Castle Drogo, Exeter, Devon – confirmed grant of £2.5m
This grant will enable vital repairs to be made and help bring the castle back into use as a flexible and much-needed community space.

Initial support[2] has also been awarded to the following projects:

- Norton Priory, Runcorn, Cheshire – initial support for a £3.9m HLF bid, including £309,200 development funding
- Command of the Oceans, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent – initial support for a £4.5m HLF bid, including £116,300 development funding
- Gunnersbury Park Museum, Ealing, London – initial support for a £3.8m HLF bid, including £386,400 development funding
- Connections: Science and Art, National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh – initial support for a £4.8m HLF bid, including £207,000 development funding

Further information

Please contact Laura Bates or Katie Owen, HLF Press Office, on 020 7591 6027 / 6036. Out of hours mobile: 07973 613 820.