Royal Air Force Museum’s redevelopment of First Air War gallery receives support

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The initial support of £74,500 will enable the museum to progress their plans to obtain a full HLF grant of £706,300. The new exhibition will use the world-class collection of planes, letters, film and photographs to help people understand what it was like to be involved in the earliest days of the Royal Flying Corps and how our world was changed by the technology and innovation during the war.

The content of the renewed exhibition area will be shaped by public participation through the selection of its exhibits through the '100 First Air War Objects' online survey and other initiatives. The project will help local people to understand how much their neighbourhood changed as a result of the development of the aerodrome and aircraft industry in Colindale during the First World War.

The First World War was the first conflict fought in the air. The RAF Museum's varied and comprehensive, world-class collections will be used to highlight the lives of ordinary men and women who came together to create the world's first independent air force. Important historic documents such as casualty records and personnel lists will be made digitally available to the public, which will help family historians to discover the fate of their ancestors.

Peter Dye, Director of the Royal Air Force Museum, explained the importance of the project: "We're delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this support. The aircraft shown in the Grahame-White Factory wing represent a very small part of our vast First World War collections, which includes equipment, art, film and sound recordings, photographs, and a unique archive of documents. The grant will enable us to showcase a larger and more diverse range of collections and our new interpretation strategy will help people to learn about the importance of the first war in the air and to understand the lives of all those who participated."

Sue Bowers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, said: "We're extremely pleased to give initial support to this project. With the approaching First World War centenaries, this five year project aims to bring to life the vast collections held by the RAF Museum and convey the significance of the first war in the air. We shall watch the developing plans with interest."

Notes to editors

A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award. On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

For more information about the Royal Air Force Museum, visit the Royal Air Force Museum website.

Further information

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