

Our impact 2015–2018

A photograph of three children, two boys and one girl, looking intently at a document held by the boy on the left. They are in a museum setting, with a red patterned chair and a wooden display case with the number '45354' visible in the background.

Museum Development Network is a voluntary body that exists to support the development of a stronger and more resilient museum sector across the UK.

We believe in creating a thriving museum sector – raising standards, driving excellence, enabling and supporting people working in museums.

MDN

Museum Development Network



© Hamilton Kerr Institute

We are Museum Development Network

As a voluntary body, we represent Museum Development providers and practitioners in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who provide support to the museum sector – working with individual museums regardless of their size or scope.

We champion and demonstrate the unique value of museums of all shapes and sizes, and of their contribution to their communities, their audiences and the wider public.

We help museums to become resilient in challenging times.

Through our network, we facilitate collaborative working and shared best practice.

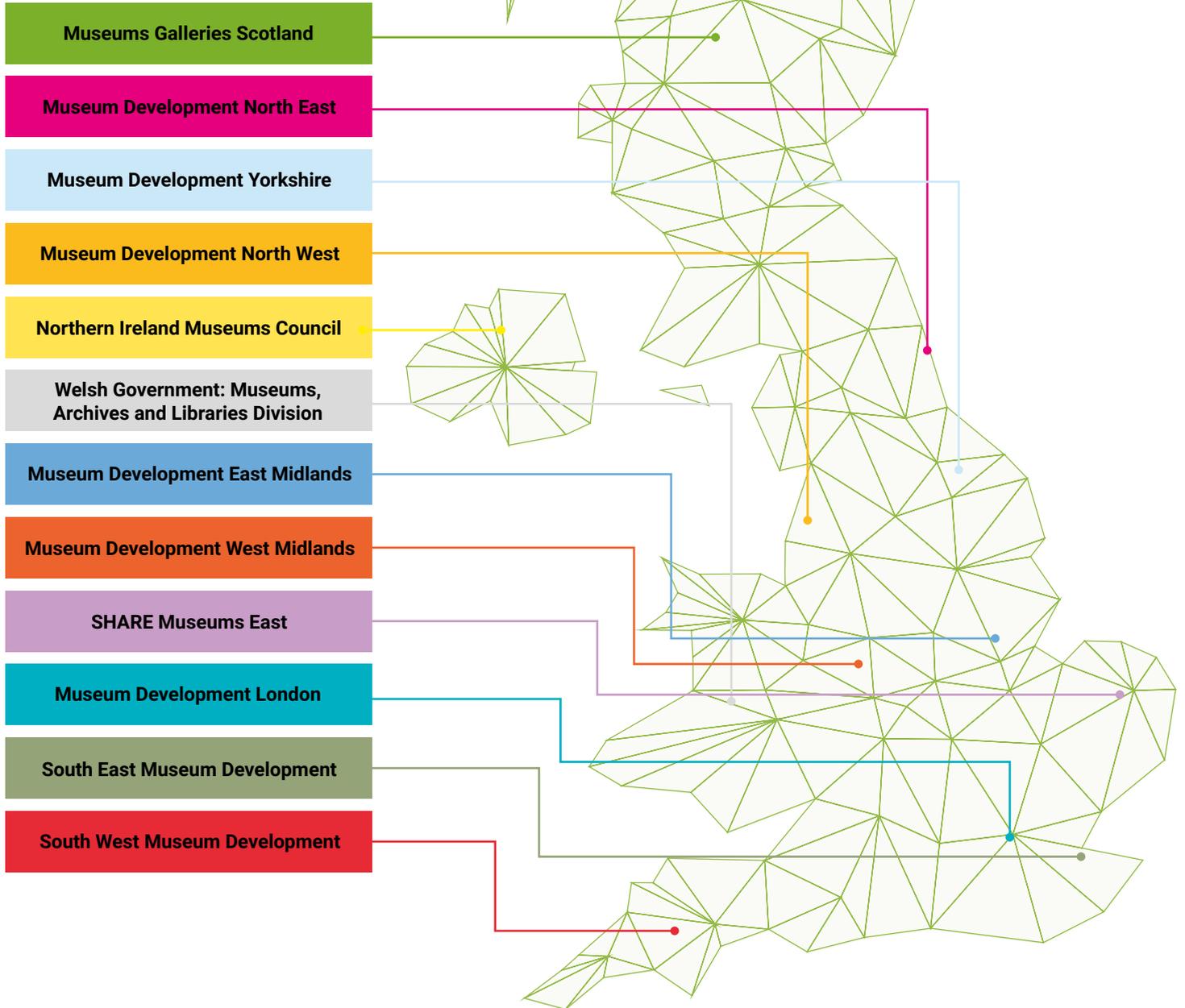
Our work supports excellence, innovation, partnerships and organisational sustainability across the sector.

As a national network, we advocate for the sector and provide a source of national benchmarking.

We enable museums to build their capacity to meet the diverse needs of the communities they serve.

Through collaborative working, we maximise investment from our funders.

Our UK Network



We aim to ensure that everyone can experience and be inspired by museums

We work to improve our knowledge of museum audiences, at a regional and national level – and to support activities to increase visitor numbers, reach and engagement.

Audience Development

North East: In 2017-2018, over £29,000 of strategic grants were awarded to support audience development activities, including to produce an audio guide for blind, partially sighted and older visitors.

London: The Digital Futures training programme helped smaller museums to innovate in areas such as 3D printing, virtual reality, film making and live streaming.

South East: A Getting to Grips with Audience Data seminar gave attendees the opportunity to share good practice and challenges of audience data collection with colleagues from other museums and experts from The

North West

94

DELEGATES FROM

30

MUSEUMS

attended a four-day programme, looking at the basics of understanding who audiences are, and how to turn audience knowledge into action

Audience Agency, the Association of Independent Museums and Museum Development South West. Subsequently five small grants were offered to support museums to engage with standardised data collection under the Visitor Verdict and Visitor Finder schemes.

West Midlands: Specific training events have included: VocalEyes, a visual awareness course delivered to 14 museums, Raising Awareness of Autism, and Neurodiverse Audiences where 21 attendees offered suggestions for creating simple interactives and layered interpretation for young neurodiverse audiences.

WE WERE TASKED TO
WORK WITH OVER

1,930
MUSEUMS

ACROSS THE UK



Northern Ireland

As a Dementia Friend Communities Champion, the Development Officer (Learning) delivered dementia awareness training to

129

MUSEUM STAFF
& VOLUNTEERS

Northern Ireland

18 MUSEUMS & 13 VENUES

organised events for the
Playful Museums Festival, a pilot
project funded by the National
Lottery Heritage Fund to engage
children under the age of five

We aim to engage and inspire audiences of all ages

We work with other sector support organisations to help museums to gain insight into the audiences they serve and to improve service delivery to existing and potential visitors.

Children and Young People

North East: Secret World of Schools was delivered in partnership with Culture Bridge North East. 18 venues took part in workshops to discuss the impact of cultural learning and the curriculum, sharing best practice in working with young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

North West: Worked with Curious Minds' Young Associates Group on a series of mystery shopping exercises, enabling museums to gain insight from a different perspective and increasing engagement from younger audiences.





East Midlands

16

MUSEUMS

improved their offer to young people through a mystery shopper programme, with teenagers in Leicester giving their honest feedback about the sector and their own motivations for engaging with museums

We support the wider benefits of the museum sector—for people, for communities and for the economy

Through our network, we increased cultural tourism and enhanced the economic benefit of museums. We support volunteering and the employment sector, and we enable initiatives that increase health and wellbeing.

North East: The I Like Museums marketing initiative raised the profile of the region's museum offer, promoting over 70 museums with the Twitter feed @ilikemuseums.

East Midlands: Supported the development of a new initiative to address loneliness and isolation in older people with funding from Leicestershire County Council.

West Midlands

14
DIVERSITY
CHAMPIONS

were trained and supported. The Diversity Champions focused on activities across their organisations, from collections which resonate with diverse audiences, to specific activities such as early opening for people with autism, to staff and volunteer recruitment and strategic planning

North West

In 2016, Museum Development North West brokered a partnership between Lancashire Life magazine and the Lancashire County Council Heritage Learning Team creating

**A HISTORY OF
LANCASHIRE in**

70
OBJECTS

to mark the 70th anniversary of the magazine. The project celebrated Lancashire's heritage and showcased 70 objects from 70 museums

The programme of work provided training, guidance and mentoring through monthly local history cafés in museums.

Yorkshire: Delivered a nationally respected learning group supporting museums to engage with health and wellbeing agendas. This involved a number of museums engaging in workshops and mentoring from Museum Development Yorkshire and expert consultants; participants are now able to reframe their work in a health and wellbeing context, with increased confidence in working with practitioners and commissioners.



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Yorkshire, North East and North West

Jointly launched the

NORTHERN MUSEUMS VOLUNTEER PASS

that now has over 160 participating museums across Northern England, and over 6,000 participating volunteers. The scheme allows volunteers to visit museums for free, or with discount on admission as well as discounts for shops and cafés – the biggest scheme of its kind in the country

We exist to ensure that excellence is at the heart of the museum sector

We work to ensure greater access to collections, increased opportunities for research and interpretation, and to support collaboration and partnership working at a regional and national level.

South West

In 2015 - 2018 over

125 MUSEUMS

were supported to improve collections care through a mixture of direct support including remote advice, site visits, training and surgery sessions at county museum group meetings

North West: Developed projects to address the lack of specialist expertise in collections including numismatics, industrial heritage, natural sciences, human remains, textiles, and manuscripts.

Museum Development teams across England: Worked with Collections Trust to develop and deliver a documentation backlog support programme called Banish the Backlog, piloted in the North West and rolled out nationally by Collections Trust.

West Midlands: 12 museums participated in an Expert Eye programme, providing museums with specialist support regarding collections which are potentially at risk, particularly where objects or collections are not used or displayed due to a lack of specialist knowledge or expertise.

London

Delivered a programme of collection management and care

69 GRANTS WERE AWARDED

WITH A TOTAL VALUE OF
£34,000

Many of the grants were for the purchase of equipment or materials to enhance collection care or management

South East: A Volunteers in Collections Care Peer Development Group was established in the Hampshire Solent sub-region comprising representatives from many organisations including Royal Armouries Fort Nelson, Dimbola Lodge, National Trust, Jane Austen's House, Portsmouth Museums, Southampton Arts and Heritage, and Isle of Wight Heritage Service. The group aims to improve the management and development of volunteers in collection care to protect museum collections for future generations.

SHARE Museums East

160

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

attended 17 free courses, covering everything from emergency planning to documentation basics



Delivered the Conservation Advisory Network, raising standards of collections care through free conservation advice. Support included training on emergency planning, object cleaning and industrial heritage conservation

North East

151
ENQUIRIES
ANSWERED

108
ADVISORY
VISITS

59
TRAINING
DAYS

397
STAFF AND
VOLUNTEERS
TRAINED

We support the museum sector to learn-increasing knowledge, capacity and skills

Through collaborative working, we enable training, shared best practice, and provide a forum for museum teams to inspire, guide and support each other – creating a stronger sector.



North West: Worked alongside the British Museum to deliver a skills sharing programme to support 11 museums requesting and borrowing collection materials for short and long-term exhibitions and displays. Some went on to successfully apply for Arts Council England's Ready to Borrow funding.

East Midlands: A Digital Engagement Facilitator worked with 34 museums to offer support on website and social media development as well as digitisation of collections, mobile technology, online membership systems and communications. Support was delivered directly one-to-one through email, meetings, phone, training and more extensive group work over time. Specialist training enabled museums to access experts in industry and universities.



West Midlands: An Access Audit programme was delivered with 33 participating museums. An initial workshop outlined a broad range of physical and social access considerations focusing on a range of disabilities and was followed up by individual site visits from a consultant to undertake full access audits, making suggestions for development and producing a detailed written report.

South West: A volunteering advice service was delivered through county museum forums along with 'Question Time' peer advice sessions in Dorset and Bath. In-depth support was provided to 22 museums advising on issues such as governance, diversity in recruitment, volunteer management systems and succession planning.

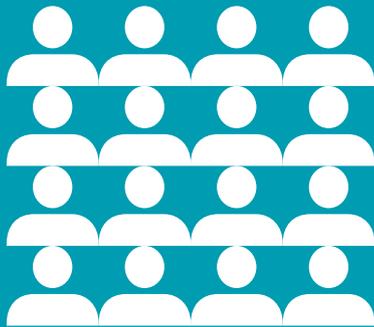
Museum Development Network

are the largest training providers
for museum staff and volunteers
in the UK.

IN 2015-2018 WE DELIVERED:

1,372

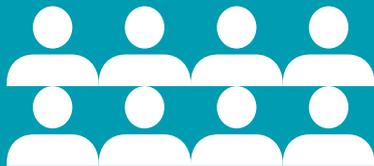
TRAINING SESSIONS



with over

18,330

delegates attending



Topics included
Accreditation, organisational health,
collections management and
development, audience development,
environmental sustainability, digital
engagement and skills, access and
health and wellbeing



We support the museum sector to be resilient and sustainable for the future

We work to ensure that museums are more commercially aware and are generating a greater proportion of their own income – as well as ensuring that as a sector we build an evidence base to demonstrate the value and economic importance of regional and national museums.

Museum Development Network:

Worked alongside Museums Association and Arts Council England to develop the Museums Facing Closure: Legal and Ethical Issues guidance for the sector.

Museum Development Network:

Led on providing Accreditation advice, including training to support museums preparing an Accreditation return. This support has helped museums keep a focus on their resilience during the ongoing tough financial times - minimising the number of closures.

South East: A number of museums embarked on international peer learning trips supported by the Museum Development team. The Mary Rose retail team visited a selection of highly

North West

Delivered five environmental sustainability projects to turn environmental ideas into reality. They also delivered Carbon Literacy training to

100

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

and supported museums across Cumbria affected by storm flooding in 2015 to be better prepared for risks to their buildings, business and to protect collections for the future

entrepreneurial museums in Amsterdam to seek inspiration for the redevelopment of their shop. The Museum of Army Flying sent their archivist for a one-week placement to the Airborne Museum, Netherlands, to build a new international partnership and improve their own archiving procedures.

London: The Survive and Thrive programme supported museums to refresh and refocus their organisational priorities, improve their financial sustainability and respond to change. Five museums were supported through a process of self-assessment and peer review, with a total of £24,000 available for museums to carry out the improvement projects identified.

East Midlands

9

MUSEUMS

were supported to create fundraising strategies or to be more sustainable through a Greener Museums Programme



Seven Museum Development teams across England: Worked with the Association of Cultural Enterprises' Arts Council England funded retail development programme. The programme helped to improve the sustainability of smaller regional venues by providing high quality training on core retail skills and resources accessible to over 200 participants from 180 Accredited museums.

Yorkshire, North East and North West: Worked with Arts & Heritage on an Arts Council England resilience-funded Meeting Point project to improve museums' skills and confidence in working with contemporary artists by giving them the opportunity to commission site-specific artwork. 19 museums from across the North were selected to participate in this programme between 2015-2018.



Wales
IN
2015

the Welsh Government published the findings of an Expert Review into the provision of local museums in Wales. The purpose of the Review was two-fold:
to review the proposed changes by local authorities to local museum provision from April 2014, and to identify opportunities for collaboration, partnership and innovation



IN 2015-2018
THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY

1,720

ACCREDITED MUSEUMS
IN THE UK

We support museums to find funding to deliver world-class activities

Through collaborative working, we maximise investment from our funders – and support funding opportunities at a regional and national level.

Museum Development teams in England

Administered over

£3.3m

of Arts Council England's small capital grants and funding. The funding supported museums across the country to secure national and international loans

Eight Museum Development teams across England: Collaborated with the Museum-University Partnership Initiative and the Share Academy, creating opportunities for museums and universities to develop joint projects. In the North East, Kirkleatham Museum secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to work with Teesside University, celebrating the lives of iron and steelworkers through a touring exhibition called Year of Steel.

South West: In 2017-2018 the pilot project Muse: Makers in Museums explored how small, primarily volunteer-run museums could create mutually beneficial collaborations with artists. Eight participating museums across Devon and Somerset had their first experience of working with local arts organisations and collaborating with contemporary artists with the aim of creating new opportunities for community groups to engage with the collections.

Yorkshire

In 2015–2018, Yorkshire supported

35%

of local authority museum services to explore transferring to Trust. As a result of their work, these organisations understood the opportunities, threats and processes of changing governance and became more resilient and strategically focused museums

North West: The Sustainable Improvement Fund works across all of Arts Council England's five strategic goals to drive development and deliver sustainability, resilience and innovation. In 2015-2018 £126,867 was awarded to 27 projects.

London: Ran a programme of funding for small-scale digital projects across London's Accredited museums. 21 grants, with a total value of £10,500, were awarded to London museums for a variety of projects including to purchase a 3D printer for printing models from historic architectural drawings.

SHARE Museums East: In 2017-2018 seven museums were awarded grants to help them review, rationalise or assess the significance of all or part of their collections. The grants were supported by training in collections review and rationalisation from Norfolk Museums Service staff.



ACHIEVING GREAT
ART
MUSEUMS
LIBRARIES
GALLERIES
DIGITAL ARTS

In 2015–2018, Museum Development Network awarded over

£5.2m

IN GRANTS SUPPORTING

1,267

projects



Highlights of 2018–2022

Museum Development Network continue to work together and strive to work harder on developing cross-network partnerships.

National Museum Development working groups across the themes of collections development, audience development, learning, organisational resilience and workforce development are being established to enable us to share information, collaborate on programmes - and to ensure the service we provide, nationally, is the best it can be.

Toolkits such as the North West's Age Friendly Accessibility Audit Tool and the South East's Special Schools and Museum Toolkit are being shared across the network to be used nationally.

Museum Development teams across England are working together to refine and implement a programme to support organisational resilience in museums - using a nationally developed tool with support from Arts Council England.

Museum Development teams across England now use national booking and evaluation forms for events, helping us to assess the quality and reach of our provision and to inform future programmes.

Five Museum Development teams in England are working together with The Audience Agency and Arts Council England to develop and deliver a national model of audience development support.

The network will have a coordinator to support activity including how we work together more effectively and with other Sector Support Organisations to maximise reach and value for money for the sector.

North West, North East and Yorkshire are working together to provide joint support for Accreditation mentors.





Our Partners



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Museum Development Yorkshire



Museum Development programmes are funded and supported by a wide of organisations and programme partners.

For more information on how individual teams operate and what support your museum can access, visit our website and follow the links to your local museum development team:



museumdevelopmentnetwork.org/regional-programmes/



Email: mdn@museumdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk

Twitter: @MuseumDevNet

Website: museumdevelopmentnetwork.org

Visit the website for more information on our activities and to find contact details of the Museum Development teams across the UK

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