



# Foreword

Michael McGregor  
The Robert Woof Director, Wordsworth Grasmere

As the country tentatively emerged from lockdown in 2021 museums found themselves facing multiple challenges: a public still cautious about visiting indoor attractions, staff and volunteers uncertain about returning to the workplace, the move to hybrid working and staff shortages due to new Covid variants. And of course, ever-present financial pressures were magnified by the prolonged period of closure and limited capacity when museums did reopen.

Despite this, museums have continued to do what they do best: adapting, innovating, supporting their communities, offering space for inspiration, reflection and discussion. And this is exactly what the team at MDNW has continued to do. They have adapted by moving their training and support online. They have innovated by developing exciting new programmes. They have supported the museum community by providing funding and expertise where and when it was needed most. Through their support of the region's museum networks they have created space for people to inspire each other, to reflect, discuss and look forward.

Covid has dominated our thinking for the past two years, but other challenges loom large. The biggest of these is climate change, and once again MDNW is leading the way. Roots & Branches is an ambitious partnership between Manchester Museum, Museum Development North West and The Carbon Literacy Project, which will create an environmentally aware and active museums sector. Add to this, initiatives such as Museocycle and the Green Grants Fund and it's clear that the MDNW is committed to helping museums address the defining issue of our time.

Each year I marvel at the industry of the team at MDNW and this year has been no exception. The statistics in the report back this up, but what they don't convey is how warm, friendly and approachable the team is. A huge thank you to Kaye, Lynsey, Alex, Abdullah and Alison.

The Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney wrote a wonderful poem about his brother called 'Keeping Going'. In closing I'd like to express my wholehearted admiration for colleagues in the museums sector, who have kept going despite everything.

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## Introduction

'Through promoting excellence, innovation, partnerships and organisational sustainability we enable museums to be resilient in challenging times.'

MDNW team Mission Statement, 2021

Our vision is a strong, agile and diverse museums sector in the North West, which is embedded in local culture and responds to local community needs as well as supporting cultural tourism to benefit local economies and engagement with collective histories.

#### MDNW values

- Help museums to support themselves
- Be even handed and fair
- Make good use of public funding
- Be a catalyst for change
- Be for the benefit of end users and visitors
- Strive for excellence in everything that we do
- Lead by example
- Supportive, collaborative, inclusive and passionate about museums

This report details the investment and delivery of the Museum Development North West (MDNW) programme in 2021-2022. It shows the impact of our work in the museums sector across the five counties of the North West. Museum Development is funded by Arts Council England (ACE) over five years; 2021-22 is year four<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> MDNW, as a National Portfolio Organisation, was originally funded by Arts Council England for four years from 2018 to 2022. Due to the pandemic, existing NPO arrangements were rolled over to 2022-23 with NPOs being given a fifth year, subject to an approved business plan

MDNW are a partner in Museum Development England (MDE) and Museum Development UK (MDUK), which exist to ensure greater collaboration of Museum Development work across the UK. Together we liaise with other Sector Support Organisations, funding bodies and strategic partnerships to deliver quality and good value for money programmes to support the museums sector.

The significant roles of MDNW are to:

- Assess real priorities for the sector
- Identify barriers that prevent raising performance of the sector
- Build capacity and resources for those museums that can attain excellence in meeting the particular and diverse needs of the communities they serve
- Provide regional leadership and act as 'first responders'

This is achieved through:

- Identifying where to direct support through knowledge of the sector
- Building trust and personal relationships through face-to-face meetings with key personnel
- Targeting funding, resources and governance development in ways that set 'staging posts' for museums to improve their offer

Our focus areas for this year have been:

- Supporting museums to navigate a constantly changing environment
- Helping to keep partnerships and networks connected
- Organisational resilience and sustainability of North West museums
- Providing responsive training and development opportunities

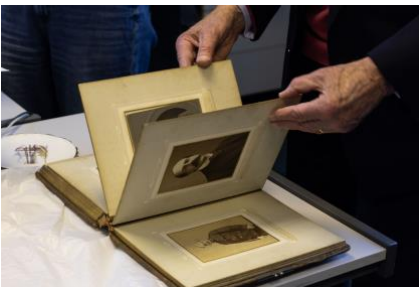
# The team



In 2021-22 the Museum Development team comprised three full time staff, two part time and a freelance post, managed by the Manchester Partnership and Cumbria Museum Consortium:

Kaye Hardyman, Museum Development Officer (North)

[kaye.hardyman@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:kaye.hardyman@manchester.ac.uk)



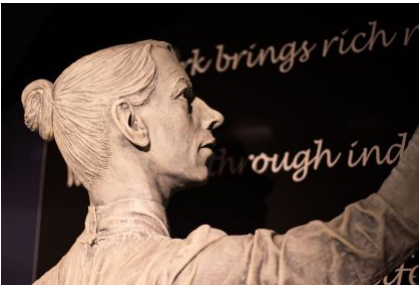
Lynsey Jones, Museum Development Officer (South)

[lynsey.jones@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:lynsey.jones@manchester.ac.uk)

Alex Bird, Museum Development Officer (Workforce & Skills)

[alexander.bird@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:alexander.bird@manchester.ac.uk)

Abdullah Ahmad, Programme Assistant (to January 2022)



Alison Criddle, Museum Carbon Literacy Officer (from October 2021)

[alison.criddle@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:alison.criddle@manchester.ac.uk)

Jennie Pitceathly, Accreditation Adviser (to March 2022)



Changes for 2022-23

Bria Cotton, Programme Assistant

[bria.cotton@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:bria.cotton@manchester.ac.uk)

Emma Chaplin, Accreditation Adviser

[emma@emmachaplin.co.uk](mailto:emma@emmachaplin.co.uk)

# Goals

MDNW is a Sector Support Organisation funded by Arts Council England (ACE). We exist to support Accredited museums across the North West and those working towards Accreditation. Until 2020 our programmes were developed to respond to the five goals in ACE's 2010-2020 strategy 'Great Art and Culture for Everyone' and this report is still structured around those goals. Since 2020, however, and the publication of ACE's new ten-year strategy 'Let's Create'<sup>2</sup> we have been reflecting on the new Investment Principles within ACE's strategy. From 2021 we have begun to incorporate them within our plans; 2022 onwards will see a strategic shift in our business plans, strategic aims and our objectives as we respond fully to 'Let's Create'.

Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries

Goal 2: Everyone has the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries

Goal 3: The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable

Goal 4: The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled

Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate>

# Museum Development overview

In the funding period 2018-23 MDNW's remit is to support the North West Accredited museums, and those officially working towards Accreditation, which are not national museums, National Portfolio Organisations, National Trust or English Heritage properties. 112 fully Accredited or working towards museums came within our remit in April 2021 from a total of 152 Accredited or working towards museums in the North West.

In 2021-22 the MDNW team delivered a series of projects, programmes and support to react to the needs of museums within our remit. Below is a summary of the activities we carried out against ACE's five goals.

## **Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries**

- Provided site-specific advice and information, with reference to the impact of Covid-19
- Shared information and updates through forums, networks and blog
- Developed relationships with key partners to support the regional sector
- Carried out the annual survey of museums
- Continued collections management support with Collections Trust online
- Carried out scoping work for a new programme for smaller museums to use their collections to look at how they can be better representative and more inclusive

## **Goal 2: Everyone has the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries**

- Worked with MDE and The Audience Agency to continue the delivery of Audience Champions national pilot programme
- Continued the Marketing & Audience Development Mentor programme to provide bespoke support for museums
- Launched the Impact & Insight programme to start in 2022-23
- Worked with MDUK and the Arts Marketing Association on a national training programme to improve online marketing and digital content creation



### **Goal 3: The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable**

- Awarded eight grants through the Sustainable Improvement Fund (SIF) - Recovery Grants in partnership with Art Fund
- Awarded 22 Rapid Reopening Grants
- Continued to provide technical advice for the Accreditation scheme
- Began the first phase of Roots & Branches project, creating and launching a new Carbon Literacy toolkit for the sector
- Launched Museocycle, an experiment to stop materials going to landfill
- Awarded eight Green Grants
- Ran Museums' Organisational Health Check Tool with a package of support
- Worked with MDUK to deliver the UK-wide Equity in Museums Programme
- Worked with the University of Manchester's Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre to undertake some research looking at the EDI work being done by the sector
- Provided bid writing support to museums applying for ACE funding
- Continued delivery of our Organisational Health & Wellbeing programme

### **Goal 4: The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled**

- Delivered workforce development programmes responding to sector needs
- Worked with external partners to develop workforce programmes
- Ran a series of webinars specifically for visitor teams to support them to make museums safe spaces for themselves and visitors
- Provided funding to support participation in CPD activities
- Completed our second New to the Sector programme
- Delivered our second Professional Mentoring programme
- Continued to support existing networks
- Worked with Museum Development Yorkshire (MDY) and Museum Development North East (MDNE) to deliver the Northern Volunteer Pass
- Worked with MDUK to deliver a national Volunteer Development Programme

### **Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries**

- Continued as a partner in the 'Hope Streets' Kick the Dust project
- Continued work with Curious Minds to support museums funded through the Covid-19 Recovery Grants
- Offered financial support for the delivery of the annual SMILE event
- Co-managed the University Placement Programme with Curious Minds

# Financial report

1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

## **MDNW income**

<b>Core grant (ACE)</b>	£326,041
<b>Various small grants, programme contributions, earned income and underspend</b>	£67,451
<b>Art Fund Grant</b>	£12,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£405,492</b>

## **MDNW expenditure**

<b>Goal 1</b>	£185,580
<b>Goal 2</b>	£4,500
<b>Goal 3</b>	£75,518
<b>Goal 4</b>	£32,255
<b>Goal 5</b>	£1,618
<b>Sustainable Improvement Fund</b>	£55,822
<b>Rapid Reopening Grants</b>	£24,815
<b>Total</b>	<b>£380,108</b>

Underspend carried over to 2022-23 **£25,384\***

**\*Underspend due to programme delays caused by Covid-19 and additional income for programmes to be delivered over two years**

# MDNW contact and support

The MDNW team has provided support and advice to museums across the North West reflecting individual and area needs. Our aim has been to help museums to become resilient in the most challenging of times through promoting innovation, partnerships and organisational sustainability, and being prepared to respond and adapt our programme of support as circumstances have changed.

Most of our programme for 2021-22 was delivered online. Whilst we've had very little face-to-face contact with museums, we have continued to be available via email, phone and online platforms to provide bespoke advice, and deliver training. We have supported four of the county forums to keep connected by hosting their online meetings. All of the Museum Development Officers have continued to attend online regional and national meetings with sector bodies and partner organisations, as organisations worked together to provide a strategic response to a constantly shifting situation.

'MDNW have been invaluable (as always!) in supporting us. We have benefited from grant information, advice and connections to other organisations. As a small team they are an important resource for us to draw on....they have provided much needed training and mentoring.... They also keep an eye on us and make sure we don't miss opportunities because we are struggling with staffing shortages! They support us by understanding our particular circumstances and providing tailored advice that takes these into account and are a much-needed critical friend when needed.'

Annual Museums Survey 2021 respondent

In 2021-22 the MDNW team<sup>3</sup>

- Supported **90** of our priority museums **462** times
- Of those 90 priority museums, **31** museums are classed as 'highly-engaged'<sup>4</sup>
- Directly delivered or brokered **73** training sessions attended by **618** delegates
- Offered **51** grants, from Sustainable Improvement Fund - Recovery Grants to bursaries enabling staff and volunteers to attend online conferences

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<sup>3</sup> Figures provided by MDNW to DC Research for Evaluation of Museum Development Programme, June 2022

<sup>4</sup> DC Research definition of 'highly engaged'- a minimum of three points of proactive engagement such as grants, participation in development programmes or ongoing development support

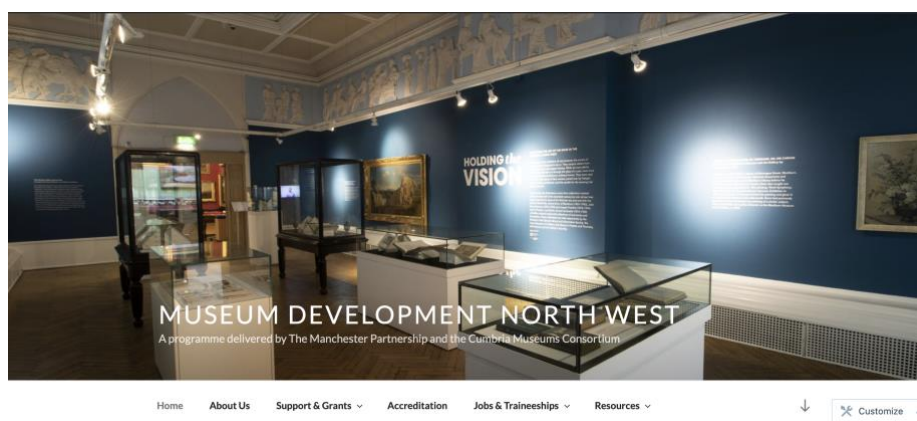
# Communications

The MDNW blog has always been our primary way of communicating with museums and became a critical method of communication this year. All our news and information is published here; anyone signed up to the blog receives an email with the latest posts, and updates are shared via Twitter.

The blog is used to share information on training opportunities from our programme as well as from other organisations, job opportunities, publications, sources of funding, regional and national news and case studies. Further resources are continually being added. You can find us at:

<https://museumdevelopmentnorthwest.wordpress.com>

In 2021-22 our blog had an average of 6,930 views per month. The blog is updated regularly and to date we have published over 4,300 posts.



The MDNW Twitter account is also popular with nearly 3,000 followers. Through this MDNW can share information quickly. You can follow us at **@MuseumDevNW**.

# National Museum Development programme

MDNW is one of nine regional Museum Development providers funded by ACE and together the nine teams collaborate as MDE. From 2018 MDE have been reporting to ACE on nationally agreed objectives and contributing data as part of a five-year evaluation of the Museum Development programme to ensure consistent reporting and to capture and measure the impact of the programme across the country. Reporting data includes pre- and post-workshop information, programme evaluation, project information and annual survey. Some of these statistics are reproduced on page 11 of this report.

MDE delivered several joint projects and programmes in 2021-22, including the national Museums' Organisational Health Check Tool which was completed by 46 museums across England. Six of these were from the North West. As well as each museum receiving a bespoke advisory report to help them meet their priorities for development over the subsequent 12 months, the data is being used by Museum Development teams to inform our delivery plans for 2022 onwards.

The annual survey of museums for 2020-21 was carried out in summer 2021 by South West Museum Development on behalf of MDNW. 62% of museums in the North West completed the survey, slightly higher than the overall England response rate of 56%. Both the regional and national reports revealed the far-reaching impact of the pandemic on museums and their audiences, finances and workforce. The North West report based on the findings is available in the 'Resources / MDNW Publications' section of our blog.

MDNW has continued to work with MDY, MDNE and ACE Relationship Managers regularly. In 2021-22, this resulted in the delivery of Carbon Literacy courses for museums across the North as part of the Roots & Branches Project.

MDE also works closely with other UK partners who deliver support for museums in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Together we are MDUK and are supported by Coordinator, Jennie Pitceathly. MDUK look for opportunities to collaborate and in 2021-22 this led to the continuation of a partnership with Art Fund who awarded MDUK £175,000 to distribute as part of our Sustainable Improvement Fund - Recovery Grants (see page 14). For more information on MDUK visit <https://mduk.org.uk>.

# Sustainable Improvement Fund – Recovery Grants

Art Fund\_



The Sustainable Improvement Fund is a major part of the MDNW programme and reflects the ACE Investment Principles of 'Let's Create'. For 2021-22 MDNW's usual allocation of its funding towards the Sustainable Improvement Fund was supplemented by a contribution from Art Fund. Projects supported museums to develop new sustainable offers, re-engage with audiences and adapt programmes and services as a response to the pandemic.

The investment from Art Fund was the second year of a partnership in which it contributed investment to Museum Development Recovery Grant programmes across the UK to reach museums that had not yet received emergency public funding. Full details of the partnership and impacts are available at <https://mduk.org.uk/covid-19-recovery/>. The museums below were funded.

<p><b>The Armit: Museum, Gallery, Library</b>, Ambleside, LED lights to upgrade exhibition spaces and reduce carbon footprint</p> <p><b>Bolton Museum &amp; Art Gallery</b>, work with an artist to create a space and sensory objects linked to the collections for children with SEND to participate in interactive object handling sessions, either guided or independently</p> <p><b>Cheshire Military Museum</b>, Chester, market research and audience development to restart the education service</p> <p><b>Kendal Museum</b>, purchase of EPOS system to improve customer service and increase income generation</p>	<p><b>Keswick Museum</b>, consultancy support to establish a more inclusive, flexible approach to volunteering, with multiple volunteering pathways available</p> <p><b>Lancaster City Council</b>, Lancaster City Museums, consultancy support to establish an equal access strategy and develop a Disability Advisory Group</p> <p><b>Victoria Gallery &amp; Museum</b>, University of Liverpool, mindfulness programme to aid wellbeing of staff, students and visitors</p> <p><b>Williamson Art Gallery &amp; Museum</b>, Wirral, publicly searchable collections database to increase the digital accessibility; testing search terms and tagging with focus groups to ensure inclusivity and relevance</p>
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# Rapid Reopening Grants

In spring 2021 we reprofiled our budget to free up some funding to allocate as Rapid Reopening Grants, giving support to North West museums planning to reopen in late May or June 2021 when national restrictions allowed for reopening at that time.

This was not our main grant fund, but a light-touch small grants scheme to give a helping hand to those museums who intended to reopen in spring and summer. Funding was given to cover costs to re-open in a Covid-safe way, such as personal protective equipment, contactless payment systems, or to contribute to costs for Covid-safe activities to provide an offer for visitors in the May half-term.

Museums could apply for up to £2,000; the 22 museums below were funded.

The Armit: Museum, Gallery, Library, Ambleside	Gallery Oldham
Avro Heritage Museum, Stockport	Haworth Art Gallery, Accrington
The Beacon, Whitehaven	Helena Thompson Museum, Workington
British Deaf History Society, Manchester	Judges' Lodgings, Lancaster
Bolton Museum & Art Gallery	Keswick Museum
Chetham's Library, Manchester	Lancaster City Museum
Cumbria's Museum of Military Life, Carlisle	National Waterways Museum, Canal River Trust, Ellesmere Port
Congleton Museum	Prescot Museum, Knowsley
Elizabeth Gaskell's House, Manchester	Ravenglass & Eskdale Steam Railway
Fleetwood Museum	Salford Museum & Art Gallery
The Fusilier Museum, Bury	Tameside Museums & Galleries

# Accreditation support

MDNW is contracted by ACE to deliver Accreditation technical advice to give support to Accredited museums and those officially working towards Accreditation in the North West. Technical advice provides guidance based on the content of the Accreditation guidance documents to both new applicants and returning participants preparing a return.

Since 2019 the role of Accreditation Adviser has been carried out by Jennie Pitceathly as a freelance contract. ACE paused the Accreditation scheme at the beginning of the pandemic but re-opened it in 2021-22 to new applicants, provisionally-Accredited museums and those that had submitted a return just before the pandemic happened which was returned to them for revision and reapplication. During the year Jennie:

- Delivered direct support to **6** Accredited museums resubmitting returns
- Delivered direct support to **2** museums currently working towards Accreditation
- Delivered direct support to **2** museums considering submitting an eligibility questionnaire to the scheme
- Ran **1** online training day specifically for non-Accredited museums thinking of applying to the scheme

For 2022-23 Emma Chaplin is MDNW's Accreditation Adviser.



# Supporting collections

## Working with Collections Trust

For 2021-22 we continued to deliver online workshops with Collections Trust, running an adapted version of the Banish the Backlogs programme we have run in partnership with them since 2016, and introducing a new programme, Getting Your House In Order.

Getting Your House In Order arose from the financially precarious situation museums may have found themselves in resulting from the pandemic, and the increased risk of insolvency, merger or splitting up a collection. Using the framework of Spectrum 5.0 and its procedures that should be used to make a museum collection accountable and manageable under any circumstances and referencing the Museums Association's guidance 'Museums Facing Closure: Legal and Ethical Issues', the workshops focused on the planning and work required for museums to get their collections documentation in order. They also acted as a refresher for museums wanting to tighten up their documentation, and a reminder of why this work is necessary.

89 places were taken up across all the Banish the Backlogs and Getting Your House In Order workshops. Delegates that attended a number of workshops were also offered additional 1-2-1 support from Sarah Brown at Collections Trust. MDNW also awarded CPD bursaries to four museums that had previously participated in the Banish the Backlogs programme to allow all-staff access to Collections Trust's online conference.

## Re:collections contemporary collecting programme

Some projects that were delayed due to the pandemic were picked up again this year.

Jen Kavanagh, freelance consultant who worked with delegates on the Re:collections programme, also carried out a scoping report for MDNW to form the basis of a new collections programme for 2022-23 supporting smaller museums to look at how they can be better representative and more inclusive.

# Developing audiences

## Audience Champions programme

In 2019-20 MDNW partnered with The Audience Agency and Museum Development teams across England to deliver the Audience Champions programme, starting in January 2020. Supported by ACE, this programme aimed to help participating museums to develop a data-driven approach to audience development using Audience Finder.

12 museums across nine organisations from the North West were involved in the pilot. Due to Covid-19 the timescales for this programme changed and we continued to work with these museums in 2021-2022. In March 2022, the cohort's first year of audience data collection ended and the group will meet online in June 2022 to share their experiences as they also embark on their second year of data collection.

## Impacts & Insights

Museum Development North West (MDNW) is working with Museum Development teams across England and Counting What Counts to deliver a new Impact & Insight programme in 2022-23, supported by Arts Council England (ACE).

MDNW offered 3 places on this programme for North West museums in January 2022, to support the development of organisational approaches to evaluating public programme outputs, such as exhibitions and events.

Using the Impact & Insight<sup>5</sup> tool to carry out self, peer and audience evaluation, participating museums will deepen their understanding of the quality of their exhibitions and events and will develop their overall approach to evaluation.

Starting in March 2022, the Impact & Insight programme offers participating museums the opportunity to trial the online, 360-degree evaluation platform, which is supported by ACE.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance-library/impact-and-insight-toolkit>

## Marketing & Audience Development Mentor Programme

A Marketing & Audience Development Mentor Programme was delivered by freelancer Marge Ainsley who provided bespoke support for museums with their strategic planning during the pandemic from February 2021 to March 2022. 43 people from 20 organisations were involved in the programme with Marge delivering 51 sessions in total. Amongst many topics, discussions included:

- Planning communication for reopening and rethinking priorities
- Supporting understanding and awareness of audience research and data
- Writing effective, usable marketing and audience development plans
- Developing communication and evaluation plans
- Marketing to schools
- Conducting marketing audits
- Recruitment of marketing staff members
- Using data strategically
- Online evaluation and audience consultation
- Focus Groups

“It was great to set aside some time to get some tailored advice.”

“Very useful external overview in a work environment that sometimes clouds the bigger picture.”

Marketing & Audience Development Mentor programme participants

## MDUK Online Marketing, Audience Segmentation and Content Creation Training

MDUK commissioned the Arts Marketing Association to develop and deliver a series of three online training sessions open to museums across England and Wales. The live sessions took place in September and October 2021 and were attended by over 150 delegates from across Wales and 8 regions of England. The sessions were recorded and have been made fully accessible with captioning provided by Stage Text. They are available to view at <https://mduk.org.uk/online-marketing-training-films/>.

# Environmental sustainability

## Carbon Literacy - Roots & Branches project

In summer 2021 MDNW, Manchester Museum and The Carbon Literacy Project (CLP) were awarded a National Lottery Project Grant of £136,750 for 'Roots & Branches', a project supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

This two-year project will scale up the roll-out of Carbon Literacy training for museums. The 'roots' are at Manchester Museum, creating a nationally significant co-working hub of cultural environmental action that will become a feature in the newly-reopened Museum, all coordinated by Hannah Hartley, the new Environmental Action Manager who started in post in March 2022.

The 'branches' of the project are the scale up of Carbon Literacy training, which MDNW has been delivering as part of its programme since 2016.

The MDNW team has been joined by Alison Criddle, our Museum Carbon Literacy Officer, who is working with MDE, to help them in their roll-out of Carbon Literacy in their regions. Ali has been working closely with Jack Rhodes-Worden, Museums Coordinator at CLP.

Ali and Jack created and piloted the new Carbon Literacy toolkit with museums across the North of England. The pilot courses formed part of CLP's 'Carbon Literacy Action Day', in which an astonishing 502 people trained in Carbon Literacy in one day, taking place on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021, the first day of COP26 UN Climate Change Conference.

As part of COP26 CLP also hosted a Museum Sector Focus Day, with content coordinated by MDNW, highlighting the importance of the museum sector in tackling climate change with a broadcast showcasing experiences and perspectives from a range of museums and sector bodies.

MDNW also ran #MuseumCarbonStories campaign on social media in the run-up to COP26, with over 80 organisations contributing more than 200 posts on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and blogs showcasing their sustainability work and stories using their collections.

The toolkit was launched in January, attended by the largest number of delegates for a sector launch by CLP, and is now freely available for any museum in the UK to use themselves, in addition to the training available through MDE for our priority museums. Full details of the toolkit are at <https://carbonliteracy.com/toolkits/museums/>.

At the end of March 2022, 146 delegates have completed a Carbon Literacy course run by MDE, 58 of them from museums in the North West. We are also providing Train the Trainer courses to support museums and people wanting to roll out courses themselves.

Outside of the museums which are a priority for MDE, we have also had interest in the Carbon Literacy Toolkit from national museums, museums elsewhere in the UK and beyond.

This year the Roots & Branches project has featured in articles by ACE and Museums Journal, been used as a case study by National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC) and is also included as a top tip to do by Julie's Bicycle. We have spoken about it at, amongst others, the AMOT (Army Museums Ogilby Trust) conference and it had a presence in the form of a 'Carbon Literacy lounge' at the NMDC environmental conference at The Whitworth in March 2022.

MDNW was recognised for its Carbon Literacy specialism and expertise within the sector by having its certification as a Carbon Literate Training Organisation renewed again. We were one of only three organisations to be recognised with this accreditation when the scheme was first launched in 2018, acknowledging organisations that are pioneering Carbon Literacy training across multiple organisations and sectors.



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## Museocycle

In addition to Roots & Branches, we also launched Museocycle (<https://museumdevelopmentnorthwest.wordpress.com/museocycle/>), our museum-focused recycling scheme for museums to give away unwanted display and storage materials and other equipment to museums, to avoid material going to landfill.

Originally a six-month experiment, starting on the first day of COP26 in November 2021, it will be extended and reviewed in 2022.

## Green Grants

We also launched our new Green Grants fund to support museums to accelerate their action against climate change.

Eight projects, involving 19 museums, were funded. Museums which had taken part in the piloting of the Carbon Literacy toolkit were funded for activities directly relating to the actions they pledged as part of their training. Museums which hadn't yet undergone the training committed to sending staff on Carbon Literacy courses run by MDNW in 2022.

Projects ranged from the practical, such as lighting efficiencies, to a sustainability festival, new exhibitions and interpretation with community groups, and to greening a local urban environment.

# Organisational resilience

## Museums' Organisational Health Check Tool

The MDE Museums' Organisational Health Check is a self-assessment tool for museums, designed as an indicator to help highlight museums' current best practice, understand where they have areas of development and to feed into forward planning. It enables museums to prioritise areas of working over the subsequent 12 months and provide a benchmark for future work.

It was mandatory for museums in receipt of MDNW SIF - Recovery Grants to complete it and we have advertised through forum groups. Six museums completed the tool and received bespoke advisory reports. Two museums applied for and received grant funding to support developments in their identified priority areas and others went on to take advantage of other bespoke offers of support.

This programme will be rolled out in summer 2022 and be compulsory for museums who receive grant funding and in-depth support from MDNW. Museums will only be expected to complete it every two years.

## Bid-writing support

In 2021-22 we extended our bid-writing support, again working with Laura Drane to support museums to apply for ACE funding, namely National Lottery Project Grants. Laura provided expert guidance and acted as a critical friend for museums with their applications, often with a tight deadline to meet, to lever in additional funding. To date, the offer has seen 34 participating museums raise in excess of £3.2million.

## Organisational health & wellbeing programme

Working with ABL Health, the programme assessed the five participating museum services' policies and procedures, HR practices and health & wellbeing initiatives. At the end of the programme it is hoped the participating museums will have initiated new ways of working to support better staff retention, reduce sickness and increase wellbeing amongst the workforce. The programme began before the pandemic and was originally due to be completed in autumn 2020 but further delays mean this programme will now be completed in 2022-23.

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

## Equity in Museums Programme

MDUK worked in partnership with NoBarriers to deliver a new programme that aimed to support 20 museums in England and Wales, of which four were from the North West, to improve their understanding of equity and inclusion.

The aim of this three-month programme was to increase participants' knowledge and skills around the equity and inclusion-related issues being faced by people working and volunteering in museums, their communities and audiences. It also supported museums to have conversations at their museums to lay strong foundations for taking action.

The programme also saw the development of some introductory resources to EDI in different formats and media, outlining key concepts, inclusive language and examples of practise from the UK sector as we recognise organisations are at different stages of engagement with equitable and inclusive practise (<https://mdem.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Equity-and-Inclusion-Resources-MDUK.pdf>).

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Work Within the Sector Research

In 2021-22 we worked with West Midlands Museum Development (WMMD), MDY and the University of Manchester's Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre to undertake research looking at the EDI work being done by the sector, the aim of which was to establish how the sector is delivering this type of work, where the gaps are, and what would help organisations move forward.

The research was completed at the end of 2021-22 and the final report will support programme development and delivery in 2022-23.



# Workforce development

## Responsive training

During 2021-22 we continued to deliver responsive training sessions online. This enabled attendance by those who previously found it difficult to travel to face-to-face workshops. We always give priority to museums in the North West but where we have had spaces available, places were opened up to museums from outside of the region.

Non-attendance rates for online workshops continued to be higher than our normal face-to-face workshops and we understand why – Covid-related issues, last minute changes to staffing, operational issues, childcare responsibilities etc can and have derailed plans. We do encourage people to only book spaces on a workshop if they have a serious intention and realistic chance of attending. Whilst online workshops might not incur the costs of face-to-face training, there are still some financial costs involved in the planning and delivery of training sessions.

The bulk of our responsive training programme took place January to March 2022, informed by the results of the MDE Skills Needs Analysis carried out earlier in the year to ensure we fully met the needs of the sector. In light of this analysis we commissioned and delivered a new Bid-writing Success Programme, and also commissioned Culture24 to deliver a number of programmes looking at digital storytelling and wider digital activities.

## Training data

In 2021-22 we ran **73** workshops for regional museums across all our programmes (27 were open workshops and 46 were part of long-term programmes), attended by **618** delegates representing **125** museums and services.

Feedback from the workshops show that of the delegates that completed the survey:

- 78% said that the workshops completely met learning expectations
- 98% rated the speakers as 'Excellent' or 'Good'
- 90% will do things differently as a result of the workshop they attended

We use the expertise of a range of consultants and companies to deliver our training programmes; the high-quality content and delivery from these contributes to the continued success of these workshops.

## Continuing Professional Development funding

In 2021-22 we allocated £3,200 in bursaries to support nine people to attend national conferences and online events.

## Professional Mentoring programme

With museums continuing to face challenging times and many drastically changing their priorities and ways of working, we repeated our mentoring programme to support those responsible for implementing these changes. Working with Shirley Collier and Alex Lindley, the programme allowed people to discuss professional challenges, professional development and potential ways forward. Another nine people participated this year, taking the total programme participants to 22.

'Simply the opportunity to talk freely and openly without concern of repercussions or pre-known knowledge. It enabled me to just speak, think, and reflect which in my work, I don't get a lot of time to do... It will stay with me for a long time, and is going to be hugely beneficial to the way I move forward.'

Professional Mentoring programme participant

# Leadership & development programmes

## MDUK Volunteer Development Programme

In 2021-22 we worked with Museum Development East Midlands, WMMD, MDNE and colleagues in Wales to undertake a new Volunteer Development Programme delivered by volunteer sector specialists 10GM.

This project arose due to the dual challenges of a longer-term shifting volunteering workforce in the heritage sector, and the particular strains of the last two years due to the pandemic. Through the Museum Development Annual Museums Survey results, localised surveying through regional teams, and the results of the Spotlight survey in Wales, a clear need emerged to support organisations to review their operating models to ensure volunteering is sustainable and responsive to the museum sector's needs and the communities they serve.

The aim of the programme was to support participating museums to review their volunteering strategy and explore new ways to embed sustainable volunteer development practice tailored to individual organisational needs.

## Safe Spaces Programme

In attending the quarterly Visitor Team Management & Development Network meetings throughout the year it became increasingly obvious that they needed a programme to support visitor team members to make museum spaces safe for both themselves and the visitors they engage with. The programme gave participants a good understanding of the needs of different audiences and how to best engage with those that enter museum spaces. 20 people from six organisations took part in the programme.

The programme consisted of four workshops which covered:

- Bereavement Training for Visitor Teams
- Introduction to Equity in Museums
- Mental Health Awareness
- The Art of Connecting

# Supporting networks

## Heritage Volunteering Group: North West

Co-chaired by Kate Glynn of Manchester Museum and Esther Lisk-Carew of The World Reimagined the network is broadly, but not exclusively made up of heritage and cultural Volunteer Managers. It meets every two months and has recently moved to hybrid meetings.

MDNW has been integral in supporting this group, from initiation meetings with the national Heritage Volunteering Group to providing funding for the group to run training for Volunteer Managers across the region. The Chairs work closely with the group and MDNW to establish training needs and develop training programmes.

## Visitor Teams Management & Development Network

We continued to work alongside Chad McGitchie, Head of Visitor Teams at The Whitworth and Manchester Art Gallery to coordinate the regional Visitor Teams Management & Development Network. The aim of the network is to bring together those that manage Visitor Teams in museums to discuss best practice, share ideas and develop partnerships.

## Northern Volunteer Pass

Working in partnership with MDNE and MDY and delivered by Gillian Waters, the Northern Volunteer Pass is the biggest scheme of its kind in the country. It is a mutually beneficial partnership between participating museums and entitles volunteers to free entry (and/or additional benefits where advertised) at participating museums across the North and this year 161 museums representing over 8,000 volunteers participated.

# Children & young people

## Curious Minds

We have continued to work with Curious Minds as the Bridge organisation for the North West to deliver the majority of our work around children and young people.

## 'Hope Streets' Kick the Dust programme

MDNW is a partner, alongside Youth Focus North West, in the Hope Streets programme, led by Curious Minds and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund as part of the five-year long Kick the Dust programme.

Hope Streets is in year four of the project to transform the way museums work with young people. Working in partnership, the project will test, refine and embed new models of youth engagement and leadership; to locate the heritage sector at the heart of young people's services and young people at the heart of heritage.

The focus of the past year has been on our five lead museum partners (The Atkinson, Bolton Museum & Art Gallery, Lancashire County Museums Service, Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery and West Cheshire Museums) embedding learning from the previous year's youth-led Festival of Hope and creating opportunities for young people to be involved at all levels of their organisations. This has involved creating seven paid Alternative Saturday Job work placements for young people, setting up young directors' groups and youth forums to influence museums on a strategic level, and creating new policies and strategic documents setting out young people as priority audiences and collaborators. This leads us into the final year of the project, when we will share key learning from the project with the heritage and youth sectors and partners will ensure their work with young people is supported to continue into the future.

## University Placement Programme / Alternative Saturday Job

During 2021-22 we continued to work with Curious Minds to manage Victoria Smith who joined us as part of our University Placement Programme in 2020-21, but who went on to participate in Curious Minds' Alternative Saturday Job Programme in which she travelled across the North West to meet museum professionals and interview them about their careers to create case studies for young people.

## Science in Museums Inspiring Learning and Engagement (SMILE)

In 2021-22 we continued to financially support the SMILE network. Led by Alex McLeman from Bolton Museum & Art Gallery, SMILE professional development and networking events occur at least once a year. The SMILE events take place in museums or other cultural learning venues to provide the opportunity to share ideas and expertise about science learning with museum educators, managers and curators.

## Covid-19 Recovery Grants Support

In 2020-21 eight museums were funded through our Covid-19 Recovery Grants programme to develop new initiatives in partnership with local schools to meet the needs of teachers and pupils in the post-Covid world. In 2021-22 we continued to support these museums as a network, using the expertise and knowledge of Curious Minds to guide museums through an ever-changing landscape for schools.



### **MDNW, June 2022**

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Front cover – Bolton Museum and Art Gallery

p3 from top – People's History Museum; Bury Art Museum; Gallery Oldham; Judges' Lodgings Museum

p6 from top – Weaver Hall Museum and Workhouse, Northwich; Catalyst Science Discovery Centre and Museum, Widnes; Port Sunlight Village Trust; Dock Museum, Barrow

p30 Dock Museum, Barrow