

Press release: The first review of England's museums in over a decade recommends practical guidance for museums and galleries to thrive and grow

The Museums Action Plan will help England's museums and galleries to thrive and grow.

The review asks Arts Council England (ACE) and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to show how they will deliver nine key priorities that will enable museums to diversify audiences, contribute to the identity of their local area and become more accessible.

Led by creative industry entrepreneur Neil Mendoza on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the review also recommends that DCMS and its sponsored museums and galleries develop a partnership framework to improve how they work with museums across England, particularly in sharing expertise and ensuring the national collection is accessible to people throughout the country.

The review has identified 16 different sources of public funding and support that have been granted regularly to the museum sector over the last 10 years. This includes investment from central government, local authorities and the National Lottery as well as VAT refunds and the acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Scheme.

The nine key priorities that the Mendoza Review recommends that DCMS, ACE and HLF include in the Museums Action Plan are:

- Helping adapt to today's funding environment
- Improving curation and management of collections so that they are accessible to the public
- Growing and diversifying audiences
- Ensuring museums contribute to the priorities of the local area
- Delivering cultural education
- Developing future leaders

- Diversifying the workforce of museums
- Increasing digital capacity and using digital technology to create innovative and engaging exhibition content
- Work internationally

Neil Mendoza, author of *The Mendoza Review: an independent review of museums in England*, said:

England has a world-class museum sector. Museums play a vital role in the cultural life of the country. Museums sit at the heart of our towns, cities and communities. They are also our most successful tourist attractions. Their curators care for collections for all of us now and for future generations.

National and local government are both deeply involved in this important sector. This review sets out a series of recommendations to government and its key strategic and funding agencies (like Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund) requiring them to work closely together to help our museums flourish.

John Glen, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism said:

I welcome this report from Neil Mendoza and want to thank him for his work. I am pleased that it has found such a successful and dynamic sector, and we can be proud that the UK boasts so many world-class museums.

The Museums Action Plan will provide additional leadership and expertise to local and regional museums to help them grow and thrive, increase audiences and ensure a sustainable future for this important sector.

The Mendoza Review found evidence of a “strong, dynamic” sector that is responding well to an increasingly competitive visitor market, with museums becoming more entrepreneurial and seeking other forms of income through cafes, shops and educational services.

More than half of England’s adults visited a museum last year and the sector now employs around 33,000 people. England is also home to three of the world’s most visited museums.

The review received over 1,500 responses from museums and members of the public describing what museums mean to them. Arts Council England (ACE) and

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) worked closely with the review team, commissioning data and research to inform the review and will be responsible for taking many of the recommendations forward.