

Contents:

- West Midlands Museum Development Update
- West Midlands Museum Development Events
- News
- Opportunities

West Midlands Museum Development Update



The West Midlands Museum Development (WMMD) office will be closed from 12 noon on Friday 23 December and will re-open at 9am on Tuesday 3 January.

Save the Date

The Ironbridge annual conference will take place on **16 and 17 March 2017**.

The conference, **Breaking Boundaries**, will encourage delegates to build resilience by thinking beyond traditional boundaries in relation to collections, physical space, audiences and the workforce.

Funded through Ironbridge's Major Partner Museum and Museum Development programmes, the two day conference will share best practice from a range of museums.

Full programme will be issued in January.

New Museum Development Officer

Michelle Davies has joined the team and will be supporting the museums in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Museum Learning Survey

WMMD is undertaking a short survey to gather research into existing learning programmes in museums and galleries in the West Midlands.

Simply click [here](#) to take part in the survey.

Thank you for your help, your responses will help to shape our future programme.

Snapshot Skills Survey

A huge thank you to those of you who have completed the Snapshot Skills Survey. We have already received over a hundred responses with some very interesting trends emerging.

The survey is open to staff and volunteers from the region's museums. Complete the survey [here](#) or request a hard copy by emailing wmmd@ironbridge.org.uk

Capital Grant Scheme

We will be inviting Expressions of Interest for the next phase of the Ready to Borrow Capital Grant Scheme in the first quarter of 2017. Now is the time to start thinking about what capital spend is required to give you the opportunity to borrow from a National museum or a Major Partner Museum. For an informal chat please contact [Helen Johnson](#).

'Off the Shelf' Archaeology Rationalisation Symposium

A range of West Midlands museums were joined by other regional and national organisations to discuss the findings of the report commissioned by WMMD earlier this year into supporting archaeology collections in the region's museums. The group listened to case studies and

discussed developing Regional Standards, a National Toolkit and the option of remote storage. Work is ongoing and we will keep you posted of developments.

Diversity Champions Scheme

We are pleased to announce that our inaugural Diversity Champions have been selected. You'll be able to hear more from them at the **Breaking Boundaries** conference on 16 and 17 March 2017.

Accreditation Support

The Accreditation support event in November was well attended. Do remember if you have questions and need Accreditation support you can [email us](#).

WMMD Events

See the **WMMD events section below** for our upcoming events and to book your places today.

Volunteers Portal

2017 will see the launch of a regional Volunteers Portal where Accredited museums and those officially working towards Accreditation will be able to advertise all of their volunteering opportunities.

Watch this space for further details on how to get involved!

Our Christmas present to you...

Father Christmas will be delivering an early present to your museum next week, remember to check your inbox!

Mystery Shopper Programme 2017 – Coming Soon!

Following on from our 2016 Mystery Shopper Programme, Service Science will be returning in the New Year to work with another 10 museums.

The programme will be launched with a workshop; 'Getting the most from your Mystery Shopper Programme'. The workshop, on **23 February** at Wolverhampton City Archives, aims to ensure museums understand the logistics and workings of their mystery shopper programme and how to use the feedback to drive standards and motivate staff and volunteers. Service Science will follow up with two Mystery Shopper visits to your museums and you will receive two sets of written feedback. On completion of the visits you will then receive a detailed report with recommendations on how to improve your service.

For more details please visit our website.

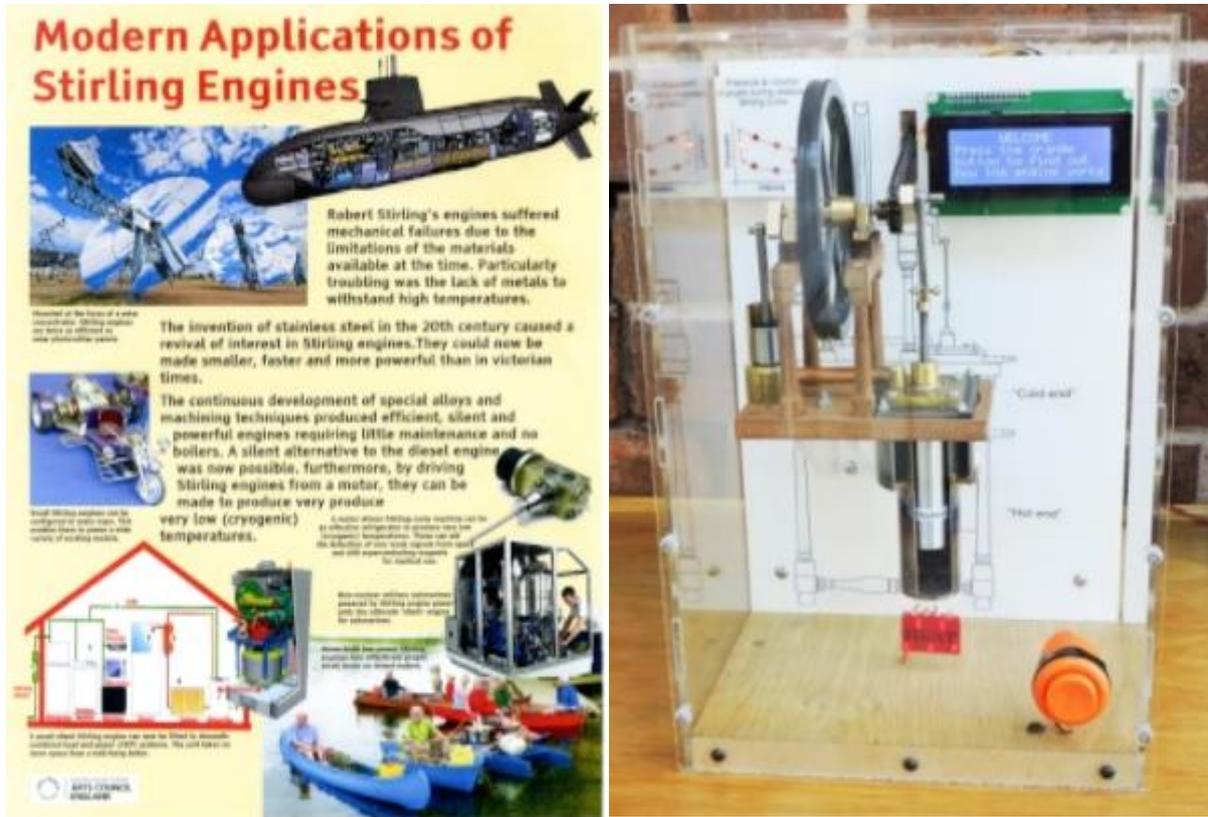
Visit
website

Small Grant Scheme

As this year's successful applicants work on their projects it is a good time to reflect on another of last year's successful recipients:

Waterworks Museum - 'Stirling Engine Bicentenary'

What they were able to achieve with their grant?



The aim of this project was to commemorate the bicentenary of the first patent taken out in connection with hot-air engines by their inventor, the Rev Robert Stirling, in 1816 and the museum had been chosen by the Stirling Engine Society of Great Britain as the hub for the celebrations.

A continuous display was created including a newly-created short video film explaining how the Stirling engines work, interactive models, and the bicentenary culminated in an exhibition of hot-air engines from all over the UK.

Two main display panels were created, the first focussed on the origins of the Stirling engines and the second on their modern applications including the on-going impact on renewable energy resources. The project effectively used layered interpretation to appeal to a wide variety of audiences including physicists, engineers, historians and family groups. The interactive models, aimed at all visitors, are deliberately simple and highly visible for children.

'This is the best place in the UK to actually see a Stirling engine and now with the Stirling engine display it is the best place to understand and learn more about the engines.'

'An impressive display and working examples - ideal for introducing youngsters to the technology!'

'We had no idea of the relevance today of a technology generated two hundred years ago - absolutely fascinating.'

West Midlands Museum Development Events



All West Midlands Museum Development events are free

18 January - Collections Knowledge Café

10am - 4pm, Coventry Transport Museum

Join the West Midlands Museum Development Team for the final Collections Knowledge Café on Wednesday 18 January at Coventry Transport Museum.

Choose from our selection of workshops and 'Ask the Expert' advice points to learn more about the areas you're interested in.

Our featured workshops:

- Handling and packing collections - Jane Thompson-Webb, Birmingham Museum Trust
- Hazards in museum collections - Derek Brain, Birmingham Museum Trust
- Identifying and looking after plastics - Abby Moore, Museum of London

Ask the Experts:

- Identifying and looking after numismatics collections - Henry Flynn, British Museum
- Identifying and caring for photographic collections - Chris Copp, Staffordshire Archives and Heritage Service
- Standards, copyright and collections care - Sarah Brown, Collections Trust
- Environmental monitoring equipment advice - Michael Hall, Meaco

Workshops will be repeated and our experts will be on hand throughout the day to offer advice and answer questions about different areas of collections care.

Simply click below to book your place on this free event. Lunch will be provided.

Book
now

30 January - Archives in Museum Collections: Meeting the Standard?

10am - 1pm, County Record Office, Stafford, ST16 2LZ

Many museums hold discreet archive collections within their main holdings. Owen Munday, Engagement Officer for The National Archives (TNA) will give an overview of the scheme and look at whether there is a case for museums working towards the Archives Accreditation Standard for these collections.

This half day workshop will help to answer the question, 'What is the Standard and is it right for us?'

Click below to book your place for this free event.

Book
now

2 February - Entrepreneurship in Cultural Heritage

10am-4.45pm, The Old Ikon Gallery, Fazeley Studios, Birmingham B5 5SE

This workshop will explore the need for museums and heritage organisations to become ever more entrepreneurial in order to increase their resilience by introducing ways and means to build profile, audiences, income and opportunities to communicate the heritage at their heart.

Speakers from across the UK will explore innovative approaches to entrepreneurial management practices of the heritage sector and the challenges and opportunities for future entrepreneurship.

Confirmed speakers include:

- Professor Mike Robinson - Ironbridge Institute for Cultural Heritage
- Dr Chris Ferguson - Auckland Castle
- Harvey Edgington - National Trust
- Traci Dix-Williams - Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust
- Colin Chester - Head of Buying, The National Gallery
- Tony Trehay - Director, Bury Art Museum
- Elliot Goodger - Birmingham Museums Trust Enterprise Committee
- Professor Kiran Trehan - University of Birmingham

Organised by the Ironbridge Institute for Cultural Heritage, University of Birmingham in association with West Midlands Museum Development. This event is for staff and volunteers from Accredited museums and those officially Working Towards Accreditation in the West Midlands.

Click below to book your place.

Book
now



8 February - A Smile is the Universal Welcome

10am – 4pm, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

We all know first impressions can set the tone for the whole visit so join us at Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust for a day of Customer Service Excellence. The morning will see examples of best practice from the sector including Vicky Howell from VisitEngland who will provide an overview of the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) and its benefits, ideal for anyone considering joining the scheme.

Vicky Parr, trainer and assessor for VisitEngland will provide an afternoon of 'Exceeding Visitor Expectation' which explores delivering a high quality service:

- Contributing to the visitor experience – what makes excellent service and what role do you play?
- Making an impression – what can you say and do to create a great first and last impression?
- Working as a team
- Welcoming everyone – those with access requirements, visitors of varying age groups, international visitors etc

It will also include:

- Answering questions and telephone calls
- Product and destination knowledge – what do you need to know about your attraction and the local area
- Dealing with challenging situations

This training is aimed at:

- New or experienced Front of House staff who are meeting customers regularly
- Museums who have participated in WMMD's recent Mystery Shopper programme

It is also beneficial to Supervisors and Front of House managers who are seeking new tips and suggestions on how to improve the customer service at their venue or simply to be re- energised for the new season!

[Book
now](#)



State of Museum Access 2016

VocalEyes has published a report revealing the poor provision of access information on UK museum websites, with many appearing to take no steps to provide information for blind and partially sighted people in particular. As a result, these museums will be losing visitors, revenue and reputation, and are potentially in breach of the Equality Act 2010, that requires organisations to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people can access their buildings and services.

Some key figures from the report:

- 27% of UK museums provide no access information on their website for disabled visitors planning a visit
- Only 30% of UK museums provide information on their website that would be useful for a blind or partially-sighted visitor
- Only 18% of museums publicise labels or information for their exhibits in large print
- Only 10% of museums publicise live audio-described tours / handling sessions for blind and partially sighted visitors

For too many museums, access information for blind and partially sighted people consists of a solitary message welcoming guide dogs. For every guide dogs owner in the UK, there are 75 other registered blind or partially sighted people who do not use a guide dog, and for whom information about the resources and events identified above would be welcome.

Evidence shows that online access information is a key factor in the decision-making process for disabled visitors, and that many will not visit if access information is absent.

Download the report [State of Museum Access 2016](#).

Subject Specialist Networks

The Money and Medals Network is just one of the many Subject Specialist Networks at work in the UK at the moment.

To find out more, please visit the Arts Council England website (<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/>) and search for 'Subject Specialist Networks' for information and contact details.

Collections and Accreditation

Labelling and Marking Museum Objects Booklet (Collections Trust)

Guidelines on the labelling and marking of museum objects, developed by the Collections Trust with the help of Vivien Chapman at the National Conservation Centre, National Museums Liverpool (NML).

This guidance may be useful if you are preparing for Accreditation.

<http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk/collections-link/museum-development-support>



Disability Co-operative Network in Museums

The Disability Co-operative Network (DCN) is committed to raising the profile of inclusive practice in the museum, heritage and cultural sectors. The website of free resources (www.musedcn.org.uk) is contributed to by heritage, arts, charity and corporate sectors and there are case studies from arts, heritage and museum organisations. As the website is free, it is open to all museums, art galleries, heritage sites and cultural venues. Disabled artists have a free virtual exhibition space which includes a profile page and link to the artist's website.

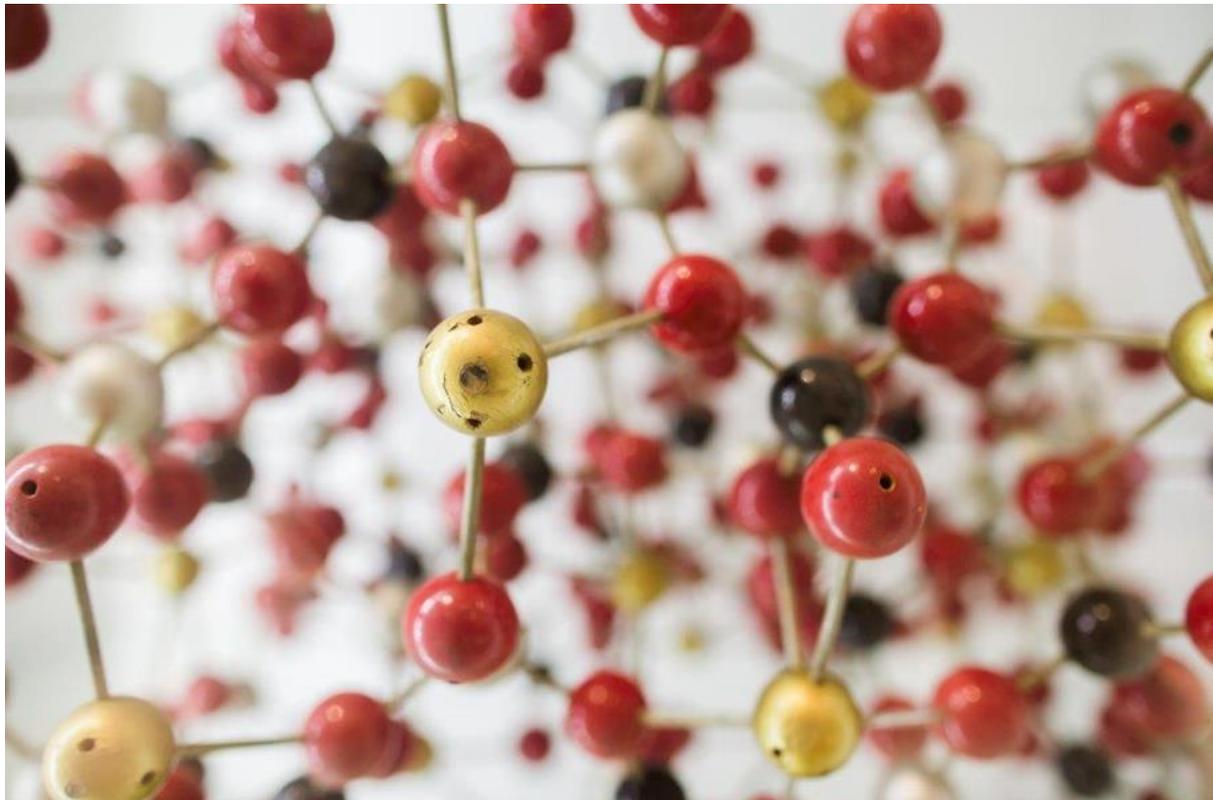
DCN aims to raise confidence, challenge preconceptions and reduce barriers to service delivery by broadening audience participation and engagement. They are raising the profile of universal design and attract disabled talent to the sector workforce.

They have working relationships with corporations, businesses, charities, organisations and individuals where they identify and challenge barriers, supporting inclusive service delivery, technological innovation and disabled talent in the workplace.

The DCN twitter account ([@museumDCN](#)) keeps people up to date with the latest information, news and updates of the website. They are planning a blog as part of the site for disabled people to share and feedback on their experiences of cultural venues.

If you would like to contact them, please do via info@musedcn.org.uk

Opportunities



Call for participation in 'Symbiosis: a new model of resilience for specialist museums'

Would you like your museum to become more sustainable and resilient through collaboration with industry or other commercial bodies that are key for your development?

The Museum of Design in Plastics (MoDiP) has received Arts Council England Resilience Funding (Round 2) to explore, create and share a model that will do that not just in terms of industries relevant to MoDiP but also those relevant to your museum, whether for example those industries are agriculture, architecture, astronomy, fashion, healthcare, maritime, medicine, military, music, photography, printing, textiles, toys, and so on. The project will focus on the industries relevant to the museums that participate.

They are looking for small* specialist museums to join the project. The benefits of participation will be greater understanding of the potential of knowledge exchange with relevant industries to enhance what your museum offers, increased ability to engage with the industries that relate to your museum and better fundraising skills within your museum. Most importantly, it will give you the tools to make your museum more sustainable.

Participating museums will be asked to take part in a workshop with an industry consultant to be held in London in January/ February 2017 to discuss their experiences of working with industries to date and the potential they see in this project for their development. They will also be asked to peer review the ensuing 'how to engage with your industry' resource and have the opportunity to attend a masterclass towards the end of the project (early in 2018) to discuss with the industry consultant their particular needs in terms of applying the model developed to their situation.

Places are limited. If you are interested please contact Susan Lambert by email asap slambert@aub.ac.uk.

Travel expenses will be reimbursed. If you have other costs please discuss with Susan Lambert.

* Five or fewer full time equivalent staff

Museum + Heritage Awards 2017

Entries Now Open!

The annual Museums + Heritage Awards, now in its fifteenth year, recognise projects of excellence, innovative and ground-breaking exhibitions from galleries and visitor attractions across the UK and Europe.

These range from remarkable achievements of national institutions to projects crafted with limited resources and those championing their staff and volunteers who work hard to deliver inspiring visitor experiences.

With [11 categories](#) to choose from the Awards are open to all museums, galleries, cultural and heritage visitor attractions and their suppliers, no matter what size, this is an unrivalled opportunity for everyone.

For more information click here: <http://awards.museumsandheritage.com/>

Short-term Volunteer Development Officer

Herefordshire Museum Service Support Group and Herefordshire Library User Group

January to May 2017

Experienced volunteer development professionals are invited to tender for a contract to the maximum value of £10,000 to lead a project for volunteer development at Hereford Library and Museum in Broad Street, Hereford for the Herefordshire Museum Service Support Group (HMSSG) and Herefordshire Library User Group (HLUG). The project, which will run from January to May 2017, will support the re-opening of services in Broad Street following a period of closure for refurbishment by setting up a sustainable volunteering scheme to support delivery of these services. The Broad Street Library and Museum are expected to reopen on 31 January 2017.

Full time, part time or flexible hours of work will be considered. Tenders should specify an equivalent day rate (assuming a 7 hour day) and the total hours and the days per week they are available to work. Subject to agreement, some work may be home based.

For full Tender brief please contact Jane Adams on jane.m.adams@btinternet.com

Closing date Friday 16 December 2016

Community Engagement and Audience Development Co-ordinator

Museum of Carpet, Kidderminster

17.5 hours per week - £20,475 pro rata

1 January 2017 and 30 April 2017

The Museum of Carpet, Kidderminster would like to engage a temporary project co-ordinator to deliver a concentrated project that will strengthen its relationship with existing audiences and develop new audiences for the offer during 2017.

This process will include work to better understand the barriers to engaging with the Museum and its offer; work to reach out to new audiences; and work to support the delivery of three pilot projects currently underway aimed at developing new audiences and partnerships.

For more information or to apply please contact Elizabeth Broadway, Museum Manager:
elizabeth.broadway@museumofcarpet.org.uk

Closing date Friday 6 January 2017

Keep up to date with the Leicester University Museum Studies jobs desk site [here](#).

Images copyright Lee Allen Photography except Reindeer courtesy of Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and Stirling Bicentenary Exhibition courtesy of Waterworks Museum

What we need from you.....

There are still many museum staff, volunteers and trustees within the West Midlands who do not receive our newsletter.

PLEASE make sure your colleagues don't miss out and forward this newsletter today!

To sign up for our newsletter visit [our website](#) and submit your email address at the bottom of our home page or at the bottom of all our web pages.



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west midlands museum development team

Helping the museum sector develop, thrive and
collaborate

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