

Heyworth
Heritage

EVALUATION REPORT

International Travel Grant Scheme

Run by The Heritage Alliance in 2019,
and funded by The British Council

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PUBLISHED JANUARY 2024



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Introduction

In late 2018, **The Heritage Alliance**, with funding support from **The British Council**, launched its first travel grant scheme to support UK heritage professionals to develop international projects and partnerships. The scheme was one of the recommendations in the Heritage Alliance's 2018 [International Report](#). The **International Travel Grant Scheme** opened for applications on 6th December, when it was announced in [a speech by Michael Ellis MP](#) (Minister for Arts, Heritage, and Tourism) at the Heritage Alliance's annual Heritage Day conference.

The total amount of funding available for the scheme was £15,500. Each grant was intended to enable recipients to undertake an international visit to meet with colleagues and share skills, expertise, and experience. Applications were considered for grants of up to £700 for visits within Europe, and up to £1,500 for visits beyond Europe.

Priority was given to small and medium UK heritage organisations (with a turnover of less than £1m), particularly those who were new to international working – and also to proposals for mutually beneficial visits to countries on the British Council's Overseas Development Aid (ODA) List. The deadline for applications was Friday 15 February 2019, and the travel had to be completed by 1 November 2019.

Thirteen travel grants were awarded to UK-based heritage organisations for partnership activities during 2019.

This *Evaluation Report* includes evidence from the original grant scheme applications, [the post-visit reports from grant recipients](#), and a further reflective survey undertaken by participants in early 2021.

Grant Recipients

Thirteen grants were awarded from the International Travel Grant Scheme to the following organisations:

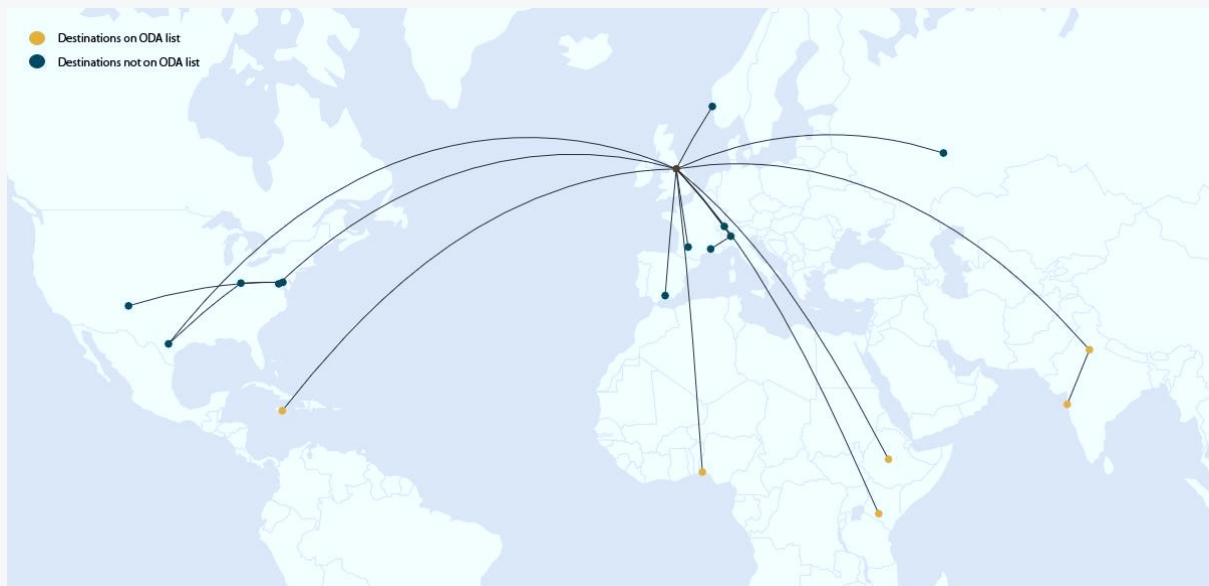
1. **Archaeology Scotland** (awarded £590)
2. **Council for British Archaeology** (awarded £1,337)
3. **Chartered Institute for Archaeologists** (awarded £700)
4. **Council on Training in Architectural Conservation** (awarded £1,100)
5. **Dyfed Archaeological Trust** (awarded £700)
6. **Ethiopian Heritage Fund** (awarded £1,500)
7. **Friends of Sierra Leone National Railway Museum** (awarded £1,448.72)
8. **Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway** (awarded £1,480)
9. **Lewes Priory Trust** (awarded £630)
10. **Milton's Cottage Trust** (awarded £1,500)
11. **Museum of British Colonialism** (awarded £1,010)
12. **Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature** (awarded £700)
13. **Serendipity Institute for Black Arts and Heritage** (awarded £1,500)

The grant recipients were based in England, Wales, and Scotland.

Countries Visited

The International Travel Grant Scheme funded visits to **twelve different countries** to build partnership projects, **including five that were on the Overseas Development Aid List**. The twelve countries visited were:

- **Ethiopia** (Ethiopian Heritage Trust) – *on ODA list*
- **France** (Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Lewes Priory Trust)
- **India** (Milton's Cottage Trust) – *on ODA list*
- **Italy** (Lewes Priory Trust)
- **Jamaica** (Serendipity) – *on ODA list*
- **Kenya** (Museum of British Colonialism) – *on ODA list*
- **Nigeria** (Friends of Sierra Leone Railway Museum) – *on ODA list*
- **Norway** (Archaeology Scotland)
- **Spain** (Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature)
- **Switzerland** (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists)
- **Tatarstan** (Council on Training in Architectural Conservation)
- **USA** (Council for British Archaeology, Friends of Stockton & Darlington Railway)



Projects and Impacts

1. Archaeology Scotland



Travelled to Norway (Bergen)



Awarded £590



Click [here](#) to read the full report

Archaeology Scotland was awarded £590 to support one person travelling to **Norway (Bergen)**. The visit took place in August 2019, and lasted for 2.5 days. The travel was arranged in direct collaboration with Norwegian archaeologists, which helped to maximise the beneficiary's time in the country.

Original purpose of the visit

The main purpose of the visit was to **exchange knowledge** with Norwegian colleagues about working in partnership with local communities to disseminate an understanding of local heritage and archaeology.

This knowledge exchange took place through two main activities:

1. The Hordaland County Culture Conference (Fylkeskulturkonferansen). Archaeology Scotland presented their community-led [Adopt-a-Monument](#) scheme, while Norwegian colleagues shared how community archaeology groups are supported by Norwegian heritage frameworks (e.g. through their [Cultural Schoolbag](#) programme).
2. On-site visits, to observe directly how heritage sites are managed, interpreted and presented to the public in Norway.

The topics covered during the trip were: the use of technology to enhance public understanding of heritage sites; practical examples of work with local communities; and the characteristics of specific community archaeology programmes.

Outputs

A reciprocal trip of Norwegian colleagues to the UK was planned, to allow them to undertake site visits and better understand initiatives managed by Archaeology Scotland. The publication of a joint document was also planned. Unfortunately, this was cancelled due to capacity issues created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

“This trip allowed me to spend valuable time learning about new and inspirational heritage practice.”

CARA JONES,
ARCHAEOLOGY
SCOTLAND

Lessons learned

- **Heritage-/practice-related:** Flexible solutions adopted in the presentation of heritage sites allow site managers to react to how visitors use the site, rather than work with informed guesses at the planning stage.
- **Programme-related:** Previous knowledge of the hosting team allows more effective use of the time during the trip, focusing on specific outputs/outcomes.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Strengthened partnership with Norwegian colleagues (Hordaland team).	Stable partnership with Norwegian colleagues, even after the Covid-19 pandemic.
Greater understanding of and interest in UK heritage site management and interpretation (particular interest in the Scottish Adopt-a-Monument scheme).	
Knowledge transfer on implementing more effective approaches in heritage interpretation and presentation to increase public benefit.	Knowledge transfer influenced working practice in the UK.

Challenges

- **During the visit:** Length of time for the visit, constrained by budget and capacity within the working schedule.
- **After the visit:** The Covid-19 pandemic forced the postponement of the planned reciprocal trip of the Norwegian team to the UK.

2. Council for British Archaeology



Travelled to the USA
(Washington DC and Boston)



Awarded £1,337



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The **Council for British Archaeology (CBA)** was awarded £1,337 to support one person travelling to the **USA (Washington DC and Boston)**. The visit took place in early September 2019, and lasted for 4 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to **build a new partnership** between the BDA key archaeological membership bodies in North America (based in Boston and Washington DC) – to encourage collaboration and the development of shared interests. Key activities that took place were:

- A meeting with the Executive Director of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA).
- A meeting with the team of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA), including: the Acting Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer/Publisher (*Archaeology Magazine*); the Director of Marketing and Professional Services; the Manager of Membership and Governance; the Communications Coordinator; and the Membership Services Coordinator.
- Visits to heritage attractions and cultural institutions in Boston and Washington DC to explore their heritage interpretation and presentation to the public.

“In our 75th anniversary year, it is an opportune time to reach out to similar organisations in other parts of the world and look to create strong and enduring partnerships to enhance our work and help showcase the value of what we do to an international audience.”

MIKE HEYWORTH, COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

Outputs

The exchange of a number of key internal documents and strategies, and ongoing engagement with American trustees, board members, and staff via email conversations (which will lead to video conferences).

Lessons learned

- **Programme-related:** Face-to-face meetings are important to establish new partnerships, which can be then developed remotely.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Increased beneficiary organisation's profile and membership internationally.	It was regrettable that the visit took place shortly before the Executive Director left the organisation – and also just before Covid-19 struck. As a consequence the personal relations established on the visit to the American institutions were not able to flourish as originally planned. However, sufficient basis for ongoing joint activities were established and recognition of each other's work enhanced. In particular, there has been ongoing liaison between the CBA and the AIA, and joint membership offers have been put in place with mutual advertising in relevant publications.
Agreement to continue to strengthen the strategic partnership in the future.	
Exploration of opportunities and challenges with international partners.	
Better mutual understanding of the legal frameworks for heritage protection.	
Exploration of joint opportunities to expand audiences.	
Exploration of opportunities to support advocacy through joint statements.	

Challenges

- **During the visit:** Limited time for the visit to two key organisations.

3. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA)



Travelled to Switzerland (Bern)



Awarded £700



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The **Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA)** was awarded £700 to support one person travelling to **Switzerland (Bern)**. The visit took place in early September 2019, lasting for 5 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The visit was planned to **strengthen collaboration with overseas partners**. The trip allowed CIfA to have liaison meetings with the European Association of Archaeologists (EAA), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ur- und Frühgeschichte (DGUF) and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI) under the terms of three Memoranda of Understanding already in place.

Key activities that took place during the visit were:

- Liaison meetings with EAA, DGUF and IAI.
- Participation in the EAA annual meeting.
- Introductions to two organisations: the Heritage Education Network (THEN), an alliance for those who use, manage, teach, or create information about past or present peoples and cultures, which UK archaeologists could be part of; and the Coalition for Archaeological Synthesis, which is working to bring together the results of many small archaeological projects to provide a grand narrative on the history of migration.

“Our visit to Bern has cemented and developed several partnerships to mutual advantage, and has identified new opportunities for us to promote high professional standards and strong ethics in archaeological practice, to maximise the benefits that archaeologists bring to society.”

PETER HINTON, CIFA

Outputs

The following outputs resulted from this visit:

- the development of the ClfA Registered Organisations scheme (professional practice registration) in Germany;
- the gathering of qualitative data about transnational working that could inform government migration policy; and,
- a better understanding of German professional practice and perception of ClfA Deutschland, an overseas sister organisation set up by ClfA. This supported ClfA's strategy as an overseas venture and increased its resilience.

Lessons learned

- **Business-related:** For an overseas venture, in-country partners or supporters are vital. The employment of an in-country national can be key to the success of overseas ventures.
- **Programme-related:** One-to-one meetings should be agreed in advance to maximise the use of the time during travel.
- **Programme-related:** Face-to-face meetings reinforce personal contacts.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Promotion of values and public benefit of UK archaeological professionalism.	ClfA Deutschland builds on the experience of ClfA UK.
Renewal of commitment to collaboration with European colleagues post-Brexit.	Enhanced mutual trust.
Knowledge exchange during presentations at the EAA annual meeting.	
Better mutual understanding of national legal frameworks (in the UK, Germany, Netherlands) and how they shape professional practice.	Support to strategic thinking re: international work.
Strengthening of key partnerships for the organisation (EAA, DGUF, IAI), and new partnerships built.	Strong partnerships continued over the Covid-19 pandemic period.
Support to beneficiary organisation's business strategy.	

4. Council on Training in Architectural Conservation



Travelled to Tatarstan (a region in Russia)



Awarded £1,100



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The **Council on Training in Architectural Conservation (COTAC)** was awarded £1,100 to support one person travelling to **Tatarstan** (a region in Russia). The visit took place in June 2019, lasting for 7 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The primary purpose of the visit was planned to **exchange knowledge** on conservation practices, in particular:

- to see how 3D point clouds are used for heritage work in Tatarstan; and,
- to introduce Building Information Modelling (BIM) for Conservation.

The second purpose of the trip was to **build a partnership** with Kazan State University of Architecture and Engineering (KSUAE) and Tatarstan Special Scientific and Restorative Administration (TSSRA). The activities during the trip included:

- Lectures about BIM – and particularly BIM for Heritage and Conservation – delivered to the students from the Dual Degree programme (between KSUAE and University of East London) and members of the teaching staff. These included a site visit with a practical demonstration of the use of technical equipment.
- Site visits to investigate the processes, methods of conservation and finances involved and thus identify further training needs and methods.

Outputs

- Presentation of the findings to COTAC and the Building Crafts College (staff and students) and at the COTAC Conference.
- Report to BIM4Heritage Task Group.
- Guidance provided to one student as to how to improve and submit a project in a forthcoming competition.

- Introduction of some new teaching and assessment ideas for students' work in the BSc Historic Building Conservation, especially their final projects, making them more professional and work-ready.
- Planned exchange trips for teaching staff and students (which were unfortunately cancelled due to Covid-19).

"For COTAC, as we progress with our on-line conservation awareness programme, many of the ideas and examples gathered during the visit will be of great benefit in the development. For KSUAE, they will be making more use of BIM in the teaching of their conservation studies, with an increase in the use of laser-scanning to support student projects."

PETER LARKIN, COTAC

Lessons learned

- **Programme-related:** The offer of tangible benefits to the hosting institution (in this case lectures) motivates the host to arrange a wide range of meetings, introductions, site visits.
- **Programme-related:** Preparatory research is necessary before travelling (through UK contacts, or online).

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
New partnership set up.	
Supported skills-building in the hosting country.	Ongoing support to skills-building (other lectures given, lectures recorded and available).
Supported young people to increase their confidence and skills.	
Exploration of opportunities for further exchange.	This visit enabled KSUAE and COTAC to become partners of a successful EU-funded ERASMUS+ bid to set up centres for heritage conservation in Europe and the Middle East.
Increased mutual understanding of the education systems.	

Increased mutual understanding of professional practice in conservation.	
Promotion of UK professional knowledge in building and heritage conservation.	

Challenges

- **During the visit:** Language barriers – a translator was needed and provided by the hosting institution.
- **After the visit:** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the college where COTAC is based had to concentrate on local provision and withdraw from international collaboration.

5. Dyfed Archaeological Trust



Travelled to France



Awarded £700



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT) was awarded £700 to support a group travelling to France. The visit took place in June 2019, lasting for 5 days. The trip was part of a wider youth project, named [Unloved Heritage: Llanelli](#).

Original purpose of the visit

The main purpose of the visit was to **increase the confidence and skills of a group of young people, including some with unseen disabilities**. Through a trip to Agen in France (a city twinned with Llanelli), eight young people taking part in the project enhanced their understanding and perception of heritage, and built new skills through the production of creative outputs (a film and a blog). Thanks to this trip, the staff members of Dyfed Archaeological Trust started working internationally, and **built new partnerships** with French colleagues.

Planned activities improved young people's understanding in creative and fun ways:

- Reception at the Agen Museum hosted by the deputy mayor.
- Visits to a local school, rugby stadium, and farmers market.
- Participation in an annual music festival.
- Guided tour of the city and the surrounding area with a French archaeologist.

Outputs

Outputs of the trip included:

- A film of the journey realised by the young group, and subsequently used at community events to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the twinning.
- A blog on the trip.
- [An article](#) in a French local newspaper.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Greater understanding of Welsh culture in France.	
Young people's self-confidence increased.	
Young people's skills increased.	
New partnerships built.	Strong partnership (new application to continue working with new partners; a French group visited Llanelli after this trip).
Staff of the beneficiary organisation increased their ability to meet the needs of people with unseen disabilities.	Staff of the beneficiary organisation increased their confidence in fundraising.

"This kind of funding was a fantastic opportunity for our young people to learn about different cultures and try something new. All of the young people in our group came from disadvantaged backgrounds, over half of the group had never travelled abroad before. This funding was essential to the trip."

SARAH REES, DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

6. Ethiopian Heritage Fund



Travelled to Ethiopia (Tigray)



Awarded £1,100



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The **Ethiopian Heritage Fund** was awarded £1,100 to support two people travelling to **Tigray, Ethiopia**. The visit took place in April 2019, lasting for 4 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to **provide training** for local tour guides. The grant enabled the delivery of a 4-day training course for Tigray guides, to provide them with up-to-date historical information on the paintings, on their techniques of execution, and on relevant conservation issues.

The classes were followed by a site visit to painted churches at Qorqor, Gheralta.

Topics of the lectures included: overview of church architecture and history of painted churches; Ethiopian wall painting iconography and style; introduction to conservation and case studies carried out by the Ethiopian Heritage Fund; and risks and threats to painted churches.

“This type of funding is a lifeline for small organisations like the EHF, enabling us to use our resources more effectively. Our work with the local tour guides in the Gheralta area was important before the pandemic and the outbreak of hostilities, but it will be essential in the future. [...] The effects of war have brought the region to its knees, and we hope to contribute to recovery by helping Tigray to regrow its culture-based tourism sector.”

LISA SHEKEDE, ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE TRUST

Outputs

Outputs of the trip included:

- The delivery of a 4-day training course for Tigray guides
- Information gathering on the state of conservation and threats to Ethiopian painted churches.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Skills building in Ethiopia (heritage- and tourism-related skills).	Heritage protection enhanced: through the skills acquired thanks to the course, the local tour guides will help the Tigray Bureau of Cultural Tourism to better monitor and conserve the sites.
Raised international profile of the UK beneficiary organisation.	
Strengthened partnership with the Tigray Bureau of Cultural Tourism.	Strong and stable partnership with Tigray colleagues will facilitate heritage preservation following the war.
One-to-one partnerships built with local tour guides.	Strong partnership between Ethiopian Heritage Trust and members of the local community.
Promotion of UK professionalism.	

7. Friends of Sierra Leone National Railway Museum



Travelled to Nigeria



Awarded £1,448



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The Friends of Sierra Leone National Railway Museum (FoSLNRM) was awarded £1,448.72 to support one person travelling to Nigeria. The trip took place in September 2019, lasting for 10 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to **support local development** through a railway heritage park at Ebute-Metta National Railway Museum of Nigeria. Activities included:

- A site visit.
- A workshop held by FoSLNRM to gather feedback on audience development, site planning, activity planning and organisational structure.
- High-level meetings, including a presentation to the Minister in Abuja.
- Presentation on 'Guidelines on the Care of Larger & Working Objects' developed by the Association of British Transport & Engineering Museums.

Outputs

Outputs of the trip included:

- An interim report to present to the Nigerian Railway Corporation/Legacy 1995 Joint Committee, with some recommendations for action.
- Introductory training.
- Assistance in developing stakeholder engagement and audience development plans to support the project.
- Assistance in technical conservation for the museum.

Lessons learned

- **Programme-related:** Research needed on local customs and perceptions before travelling (in some cases they might require budget allowances).

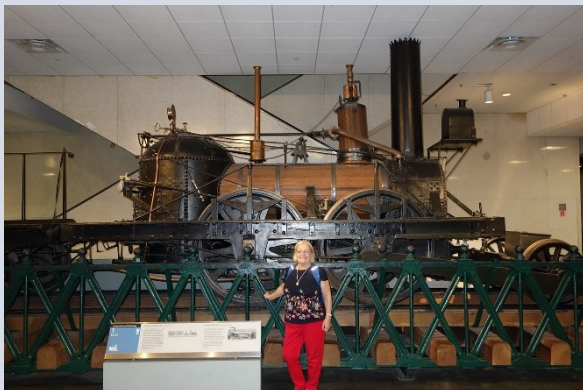
Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Promotion of UK professionalism in conservation of industrial heritage.	UK consultants invited to work in West Africa.
Strengthened partnerships in West Africa.	Strong partnership – new application for funding to Endangered Archives Programme. New partnerships enabled (e.g. with the International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH).
Initial plans for development of a railway museum.	Long-term plan for the development of a Nigerian National Railway Museum.
	Raised the profile of the UK as a facilitator of economic development in West Africa.

“Our visit has created a level of focus for Legacy 1995, validating the work that they have already done, setting the context for moving forward to deliver a National Railway Museum for Nigeria and has enabled the Friends of SLNRM to gather ideas and contacts in support of their work in Sierra Leone.”

HELEN ASHBY, FRIENDS OF SIERRA LEONE NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

8. Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway



Travelled to the USA



Awarded £1,480



Click [here](#) to read a blog series about the trip

The Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway (FSDR) received £1,480 to support one person travelling to **the USA** (San Antonio, Texas – College Station Texas; Cincinnati; Washington DC; Baltimore; Santa Fe, New Mexico). The trip took place in October 2019, lasting for 25 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to **build new partnerships** overseas ahead of the celebrations for the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (2025).

Activities during the visit included:

- Participation in the Presentation Summit Conference.
- Meetings with key organisations in the USA.
- Site visits (e.g. the Ohio Railroad Museum).

Outputs

Outputs of the trip included:

- Agreed loan of an ancient engine from the Smithsonian.
- Agreed participation of key organisations in a conference organised in 2025 by the FSDR and the Rail Heritage Board.
- Report to the Rail Heritage Board and the FSDR.

These outputs will be used to leverage funding ahead of the 2025 FSDR anniversary celebrations.

Lessons learned

- **Programme-related:** Clear outcomes set in advance help to maximise the opportunities in the hosting country.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
New partnerships built (e.g. with the Smithsonian) and enabled (Italian Railway Federation).	Strong partnerships in place – give organisations overseas the opportunity to take part in an international event.
Existing partnerships strengthened (e.g. Lexington Group).	
Raised profile of beneficiary organisation both overseas and in the UK.	
New funding opportunities enabled.	Use of international experience to support funding bids ahead of the celebrations.

“The status of travelling on a British Council/Heritage Alliance grant was also fundamental – for example, in supporting my credibility at the Smithsonian.”

PATRICIA ANN PEMBERTON, FRIENDS OF STOCKTON AND DARLINGTON RAILWAY

9. Lewes Priory Trust



Travelled to France (Burgundy) and Italy (Lombardy)



Awarded £630



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The **Lewes Priory Trust** was awarded £630 to support one person travelling to **France and Italy (Burgundy, France; Lombardy, Italy)**. The trip took place in April 2019, lasting for 6 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The main purpose of the visit was to **exchange knowledge** with Italian and French colleagues on the education and interpretation work on a group of religious buildings that during the Middle Ages were under the control of the Abbot of Cluny (France).

Activities during the trip included site visits and meetings with key people to discuss: understanding the historic, cultural and heritage importance of the Cluniac network across Europe; education and interpretation work undertaken; and the sharing of resources and ideas for the production of further resources to improve public knowledge of the shared Cluniac heritage.

"This visit has produced so much more than we anticipated. It has widened our horizons regarding the possibility of information exchange and research opportunities."

KATE HICKMOTT, LEWES PRIORY TRUST

Outputs

Outputs of the trip included:

- Exchange of resources.
- Identification of further opportunities to develop joint educational resources.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Knowledge gained will be used to improve work of the beneficiary organisation, and to inform a funding bid.	Knowledge gained informed workshops, and the production of educational resources.
Raised profile of the beneficiary organisation in Italy and France.	
New partnerships built.	Closer ties to European partners.
Greater understanding of shared heritage (Cluniac monasteries) in different parts of Europe.	Greater appreciation of Cluniac heritage.
	Application to an Erasmus+ bid.

Challenges

- **During the visit:** Language barrier. It is important to establish a common language before travelling or to arrange for a translator.

10. Milton's Cottage Trust



Travelled to India



Awarded £1,500



Click **here** to read the full report

The **Milton's Cottage Trust** was awarded £1,500 to support one person travelling to **India**. The trip took place in October 2019, lasting for 11 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The main purpose of the visit was to **build new partnerships** in India, the origin country of many tourists who visit the Milton's Cottage. The key partnership was with the Oriental Society of Mumbai – one of India's most historic literary venues, and one of the four depository libraries in India.

Activities of the trip included participation in literary events, and meetings with key partners, writers, archivists, educators, and organisers to explore opportunities for future collaboration.

Outputs

Outputs of the trip included:

- Support for the launch of the 'International Friends of Milton's Cottage' group.
- Better understanding of the Indian literary scene.
- Exploration of potential opportunities for joint grant applications.

Lessons learned

- **Programme-related:** Impromptu encounters could lead to unexpected opportunities. Leaving some unscheduled time in the agenda for the trip is key to enable them.

“As India is one of Britain’s most important growth markets for inbound tourism – and the only country in the world where publishing is booming – we believe this knowledge, alongside the networks we have developed through this trip, will give us a strategic advantage as we look to increase the number of Indian and international visitors to Milton’s Cottage.”

KELLY O'REILLY, MILTON'S COTTAGE TRUST

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Knowledge gained (about Indian literary heritage scene) will be used to improve work of the beneficiary organisation with tourists.	Knowledge gained enhanced the resilience of Milton’s Cottage Trust during the Covid-19 pandemic.
New partnerships built will support joint initiatives for mutual benefit.	Partnerships built maximised the potential of new digital opportunities during the Covid-19 pandemic (advertisement of online lectures to international audiences). Likewise, Indian partners benefitted from the delivery of shared digital events at no additional cost in the critical period of the Covid-19 pandemic.
Increased mutual cultural awareness.	

Challenges

- **After the visit:** Turning common aspirations between partners into practical opportunities, considering the limited capacity and available funds.

11. Museum of British Colonialism



Travelled to Kenya



Awarded £1,010



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The **Museum of British Colonialism** was awarded £1,010 to support one person travelling to **Kenya**. The trip took place in late April 2019, lasting for 10 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The main aim of the visit was **to carry out research** into key sites in Kenya, and better understand the context of Kenya and its history. A secondary purpose of the trip was to grow stronger working relationships with the Kenyan team of the Museum of British Colonialism.

Activities included a series of site visits (Mau Mau sites in Nyeri, and the reconstruction of an emergency colonial village at Karatina University) and meetings with researchers working at the British Institute in Eastern Africa.

Outputs

Outputs of the trip included:

- A better understanding of the Mau Mau Emergency.
- Pictures, footage, and information to be shared through online resources (documentary videos shared on the museum's YouTube channel).

"My visit to Nairobi and Nyeri has helped me to further understand the work that I do for the Museum, as well as its subject matter, and has certainly helped me gain experience in field research, and working internationally as a heritage researcher."

HANNAH MCLEAN, MUSEUM OF
BRITISH COLONIALISM

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Knowledge gained (about Mau Mau Emergency in Kenya).	Knowledge used in an exhibition at the London's Africa Centre (January 2020).
Exploration of new digital joint opportunities to present complex heritage information to online audiences, and to build an online community.	
Strengthen partnerships with Kenyan colleagues and other international researchers.	New trip planned to visit newly discovered detention camp ruins.
	The trip increased the beneficiary's ambition and knowledge, supporting an application to a PhD position.

12. Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature



Travelled to Spain (Granada)



Awarded £700



Click [here](#) to read the full report

Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature was awarded £700 to support one person travelling to south Spain (Granada). The trip took place in May 2019, lasting for 6 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to **gain new knowledge** about a similar programme (Granada UNESCO City of Literature) and explore its impact and legacy at the local and global level.

During the trip, the beneficiary participated as a guest in the Granada Book Fair, and met key people relating both to the programme (e.g. the Programme Manager of Granada UNESCO City of Literature) and to the Spanish contemporary literary scene more broadly.

Outputs

- New prompts and ideas to explore during creative writing workshops in the UK (the creative responses of participants were shared with Spanish colleagues).
- Documentation of the trip.
- Resources exchanged.

“The visit has galvanised our mission of building a better world with words through international collaboration, during a time when this has never felt more vital to exchange ideas and build bridges.”

JIM HALL, UNESCO CITY OF LITERATURE

Lessons learned

- **Programme-related:** Impromptu encounters could lead to unexpected opportunities.

Impact

Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
Knowledge gained on practical approaches to maximise the impact and legacy of the UNESCO City of Literature programme.	
Beneficiary's self-confidence increased.	
Partnership built with Granada UNESCO City of Literature organisation and Spanish local poets and educators.	Partnership enabled joint work on digital projects including World Poetry Day 2021, the Quimera Project, Nottwich and the Granada Book Fair.
	The connections made allowed the beneficiary organisation to devise heritage projects with a global vision.

13. Serendipity Institute for Black Arts and Heritage



Travelled to Jamaica



Awarded £1,500



Click [here](#) to read the full report

The **Serendipity Institute for Black Arts and Heritage** was awarded £1,500 to support one person travelling to **Jamaica**. The trip took place in October 2019, lasting for 8 days.

Original purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to **build new partnerships** in Jamaica (the University of the West Indies, the National Library of Jamaica and L'Acadco: A United Caribbean Dance Force) and strengthen an existing partnership with Edna Manley College.

The trip coincided with Edna Manley College's biennial Rex Nettleford Arts Conference, which enabled further research into British-Caribbean connections around dance, performance, literature, and the visual arts.

Outputs

- Donated material (film footage of performances, interviews, publications, pictures) added to the Serendipity's digital archive.
- Exhibition hosted in the UK.

Lessons learned

- **Programme-related:** While it is important to have a schedule to maximise the use of time abroad, spontaneous experiences might lead to unexpected outcomes.

"This trip has provided a unique opportunity to connect the dots around arts and culture on an international scale, providing consolidation and affirmation for us as an organisation and the work that we do."

PAWLETA BROOKES,
SERENDIPITY

- **Programme-related:** Time for review and reflection should be scheduled, to make sure the trip is achieving the planned outcomes/outputs.

Impact

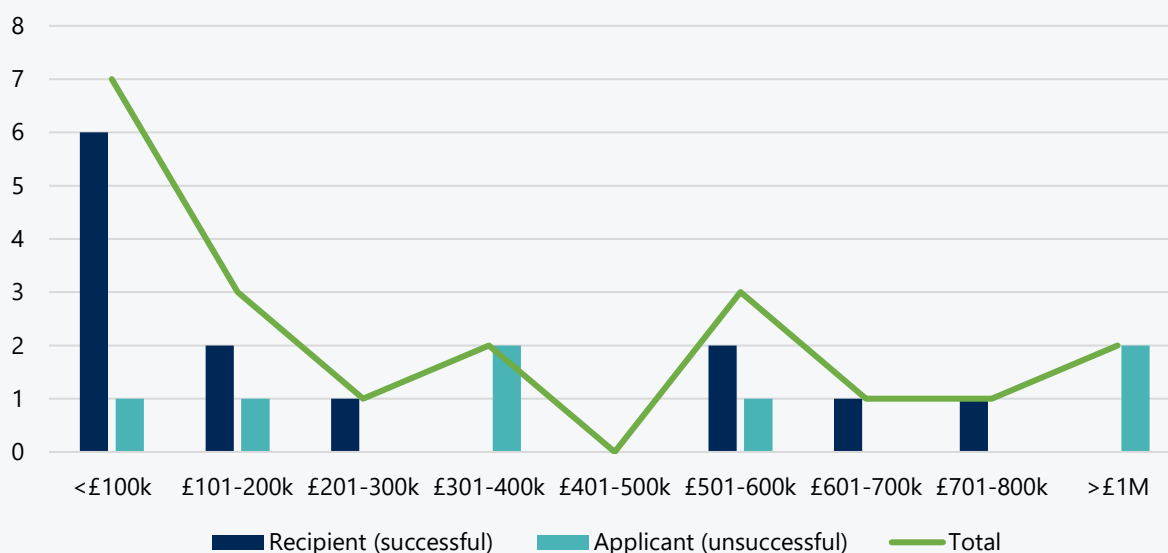
Short-term impact (2019)	Long-term impact (2021)
New partnerships built with cultural institutions that also specialised in creative cultural practice.	New partnerships continued to contribute to enrich the Serendipity's archive.
Existing connections strengthened.	
Gained new knowledge about the Caribbean creative scene and Black-led visual arts and history.	
Raised profile of the beneficiary organisation overseas.	
Exploration of opportunities for future exchanges with new partners, crossovers, collaborations.	Partnerships created supported several projects, including a podcast.

Projects and Impacts: Aggregated Data

(a) Profile of grant applicants and recipients

The International Travel Grant Scheme supported a total of 27 people to travel. All applicants to the scheme (both successful and unsuccessful) were staff members of heritage organisations. The scheme was appealing especially to small heritage organisations (turnover under £100,000), which often do not have enough funds to support international travel (see Graph 1).

Graph 1: Profile of applicants (*organisational turnover*)

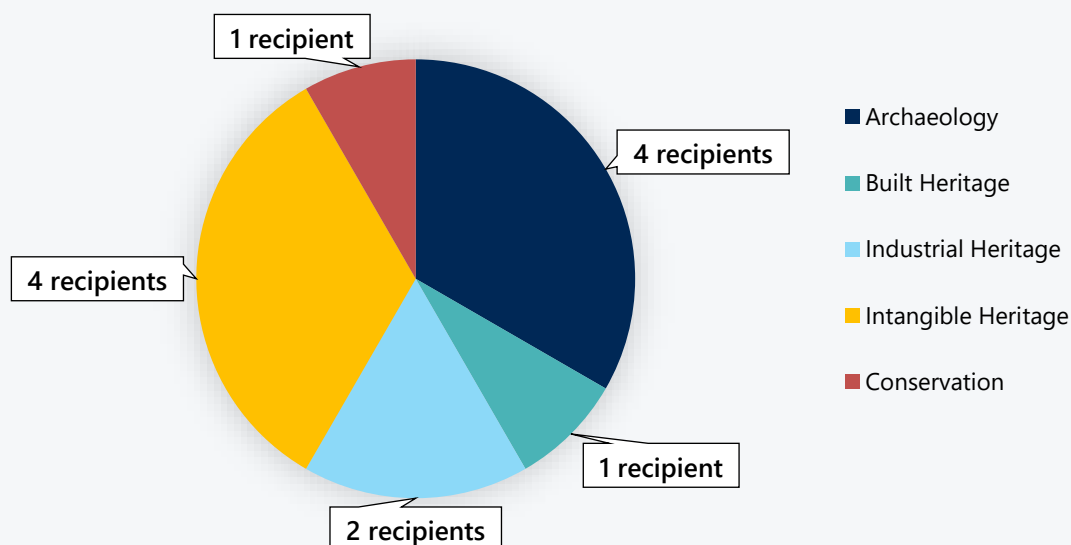


The scheme supported organisations working with different types of heritage. Alongside beneficiary organisations working on the historic environment (from archaeology, to conservation and built heritage), it is positive to note that recipients include a number of organisations working with industrial heritage (in particular, railways) and intangible heritage (literature linked to cultural places; and visual, creative, and performing arts linked to cultural connections and history). This shows a cross-cutting interest in international collaboration amongst different types of organisations (see Graph 2).

“For small organisations, travel grants can make the difference between a project going ahead or not and we would not suggest you change that.”

LISA SHEKEDE, ETHIOPIAN
HERITAGE TRUST

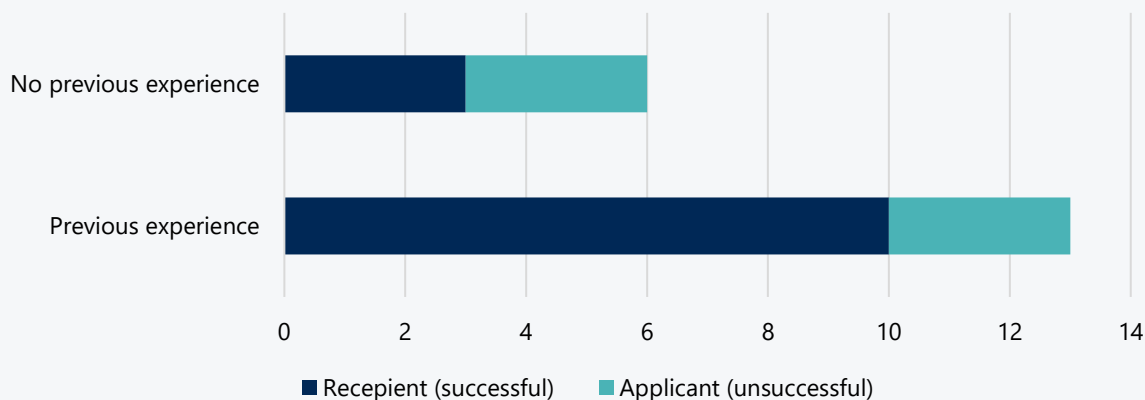
Graph 2: Profile of recipients
(*type of heritage organisation*)



The trips took place in a number of contexts, from formal events (e.g. conferences), to activities within academic environments, to individual meetings, to spontaneous and impromptu activities and encounters (which often led to unexpected outputs). This variety contributed to the realisation of outcomes at different levels.

The majority of applicants and beneficiaries had previous experience in international working (see **Graph 3**). This indicates a long-term commitment amongst the applicant pool to work that focuses on international collaboration.

Graph 3: Profile of applicants
(*previous experience in international work*)



(b) Purpose of the visit

The most popular reason to travel to another country was to build or strengthen partnerships (see Graph 4). The two next most common reasons for international collaboration were to gain new knowledge and skills, and/or to exchange knowledge with others.

Graph 4: Profile of successful recipients
(*purpose of the visit*)



Instances of knowledge exchange took place mainly through peer-to-peer learning. For example, Archaeology Scotland and Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature exchanged ideas with their colleagues overseas, and we able to bring useful insights to their own work back to the UK. COTAC used the experience to improve their teaching techniques.

While many recipients recognised the value of digital tools, which increased after the Covid-19 pandemic, they also underlined that initial face-to-face meetings are key moments to reinforce personal connections. For example, the Council for British Archaeology agreed key shared strategic priorities with their partners overseas thanks to face-to-face meetings, and the following actions were taken forward through digital tools.

On-site visits are another popular way of learning among beneficiaries. Beneficiaries of the Travel Grant scheme were able to gain knowledge on a diverse range of topics: from observing how heritage is interpreted and presented to the public (Lewes Priory Trust); to researching the effects of colonialism through the material remains of the past (Museum of British Colonialism); to exploring the practical effects of a different philosophy around conservation (COTAC).

(c) Impact: Value for professional skills development and employability

The travel grants increased the professional skills **of the beneficiaries** themselves. In particular, they reported:

- Increased knowledge, skills and ideas to use in their own work in the UK (see the above section on 'Purpose of the visit').
- In some cases, the experience provided a solid background to build new opportunities in higher education (e.g. an application for a PhD position) or professional work (e.g. fostering further opportunities for consulting).
- The grant provided applicants with a track-record of success in international work and increased their confidence in applying for future funding for similar purposes.
- In one case (Dyfed Archaeological Trust), the grant contributed to significantly increasing the confidence of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds or with unseen disabilities, who went abroad for their first time. The trip helped them to better understand their local heritage by comparing it with the historic sites of their twinned city.

The travel grants also fostered skills development and employability **of partner organisations overseas** in different contexts:

- *In academic environments.* For example, COTAC delivered a series of lectures with on-field practical activities at the Kazan State University of Architecture and Engineering. The students learned new models (BIM) and tools (laser scanner) to use in the conservation of historic buildings, thus increasing their professional skills. COTAC also helped a student to improve their project to be presented in a competition.
- *In formal training courses.* Ethiopian Heritage Fund delivered a course to tour guides on painted churches, improving their knowledge and skills in this peculiar heritage.

Furthermore, two trips **supported applications to Erasmus+ bids** (COTAC and Lewes Priory Trust), which will further enhance professional skills development and exchange in the long term.

(d) Impact: Cultural relations

The International Travel Grant Scheme enabled the creation of at least **17 new partnerships overseas**, and the strengthening of 11 existing partnerships. Most of these partnerships continued over the difficult period of the Covid-19 pandemic, despite many planned trips being cancelled or postponed due to the long-lasting travel restrictions.

The impact of these cultural relations is multifaceted:

- They **increased the resilience of beneficiary organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic**, providing a solid basis for **new creative opportunities** thanks to the use of digital tools. For example, Milton's Cottage Trust, Serendipity, and Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature organised with their new partners international digital events at little or no additional costs during the Covid-19 pandemic, increasing their international audiences throughout this time.
- They will **support strategic thinking around joint advocacy**, within both Europe (CIFA) and North America (CBA).
- They supported **mutual understanding of commonalities and differences in heritage** and associated professional practice. For example: the Lewes Priory Trust discovered similarities and differences in Cluniac buildings in Europe; the Chartered Institute for Archaeology investigated the different European legal frameworks for archaeology protection and how they shape professional practice; Milton's Cottage Trust explored the Indian literary scene and the reasons of the fascination of Indian readers for Milton; and Dyfed Archaeological Trust brought a group of young people to Agen to discover the industrial heritage of the city twinned with Llanelli.
- They unlocked **new funding opportunities**. COTAC and Lewes Priory Trust took part in an Erasmus+ bid – a Serendipity, the Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway, and the Friends of Sierra Leone National Railway Museum all explored new funding opportunities as a result of new partnerships.
- They **stimulated cultural protection in the partner country**. Thanks to the training course held by the Ethiopian Heritage Fund, local tour guides in Tigray are better-equipped to understand conservation issues of the fragile painted churches and report damage to local authorities.

(e) Impact: Soft power

The United Kingdom is one of the leading world nations in soft power; in the [Global Soft Power Index 2023](#) it came second, behind the United States. Culture and heritage are key elements of soft power and, according to the Index, the UK ranks particularly high in 'influential in arts and entertainment'.

The International Travel Grant Scheme is an example of a heritage programme that directly contributes to soft power metrics:

- Five heritage organisations (38% of the recipients) reported that the trip **helped to raise the international profile of the organisation**. For example: the Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway built bridges with leading heritage organisations in the United States (Smithsonian Institute), and as a result they agreed on the loan of an important piece of industrial heritage for a future exhibition in the UK; and the Friends of Sierra Leone National Railway Museum raised the profile of the UK as a facilitator of economic development in West Africa.
- Through their trips, four organisations (30% of the recipients) **promoted UK professional values and expertise in heritage**. For example: the Friends of Sierra Leone National Railway Museum acted as consultants for the development of a railway heritage park in Nigeria; the Ethiopian Heritage Fund trained local guides; and the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists supported their counterpart in Germany.

Additionally, as a result of eight trips funded by this scheme, a number of people in overseas countries have **gained a greater understanding of the UK culture**. For example: the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists disseminated knowledge about the UK legal framework at the Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists in Bern (1,854 participants from countries all over the world); and thanks to the trip of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust, people in Agen better understand Welsh culture and history.

Application process and reporting

The application process for the Travel Grant Scheme consisted of a single Word document, downloadable from the Heritage Alliance website, which included:

- Information about the scheme (rationale, total grant amount available, funding limit to applications in Europe or beyond Europe).
- Deadlines for application and reporting.
- A table to be filled with details on: the applicant and their organisation (including turnover); the travel (destination, date, organisation(s) to visit); purpose of the visit; mutual benefits of the visit.

The document was to be sent via email or post to the Heritage Alliance. Successful applicants were informed via email, with an offer letter and an acceptance form to be filled with further details (such as the bank account to transfer the funding amount offered). This process was modelled on a previous British Council travel grant project [managed by ICOM UK](#).

"I found the whole process very easy to manage and approached the matter with no expectation of success. I think the grant scheme is extremely worthwhile."

PATRICIA ANN PEMBERTON,
FRIENDS OF STOCKTON AND
DARLINGTON RAILWAY TRUST

In early 2021, recipients of the travel grants were asked to undertake a reflective evaluation of their experiences. This included a question which asked for suggestions on how the scheme could be improved (from the perspective of recipients) if it were to run again in the future. All the beneficiaries had a **positive perception of the application process**, and they highlighted:

- The application was easy and straightforward.
- There was no expectation of success, even though all the trips realised significant outcomes with short- and long-term impacts.

Additionally, two beneficiaries added that the staff from the Heritage Alliance were particularly helpful and supportive throughout the process.

After the trip, beneficiaries were required to submit a report, with details on: the activities carried out during the trip; the benefit for the organisation; top tips for other heritage professionals working internationally; next steps; and quotes. Beneficiaries were also asked to submit a blog entry (max. 500 words) and a picture. All of these materials were then published on a [dedicated page](#) on the Heritage Alliance website. The opportunity to provide more creative evaluation by blogging was appreciated by beneficiaries.

Summary of lessons learned

Programme-related

- Previous knowledge of the hosting team allows more effective use of the time during the trip, focusing on specific outputs or outcomes.
- One-to-one meetings should be agreed in advance to maximise the use of the time during travel.
- Face-to-face meetings are important to reinforce personal contacts and establish new partnerships, which can be then developed remotely.
- The offer of tangible benefits to the hosting institution (e.g. lectures) motivates the host to arrange a wide range of meetings, introductions, and site visits.
- Research is needed before travelling on local customs and perceptions (through UK contacts or online); in some cases, specific budget allowances might be required.
- Clear outcomes set in advance help to maximise the opportunities in the hosting country.
- Impromptu encounters could lead to unexpected opportunities. Leaving some unscheduled time in the agenda for the trip is key to enable them.
- Time for review and reflection should be scheduled, to make sure the trip is achieving the planned outcomes or outputs.

Business-related

For an overseas venture, in-country business partners or supporters are vital. The employment of an in-country national can be key to the success of overseas ventures.

Heritage-related

Flexible solutions adopted in the presentation of heritage sites allow for site managers to react to how visitors use the site, rather than work with informed guesses at the planning stage.

Recommendations

This scheme unlocked the potential of international connections for beneficiaries and partner organisations. It enabled positive change, with impacts ranging from new knowledge gained around improving heritage practices, to enhanced resilience and confidence amongst partners and participations, to supporting new funding opportunities in the future.

Schemes such as the Heritage Alliance/British Council International Travel Grants are even more important in this present culture moment, in the aftermath of Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. They can contribute to replacing the EU-funded Erasmus programme, in tandem with other initiatives such as the Turing Programme. They can enhance the resilience of UK and partner organisations, providing new creative opportunities and helping to grow audiences. Finally, they promote cultural collaboration between trusted partners, which – amongst many other benefits – increases the global soft power of the UK.

To maximise these positive impacts in the long term, it is recommended **that there are further rounds of funding to facilitate international work in the heritage sector.**

Building on the findings of this Evaluation Report, **the new funding scheme should take into account the following elements:**

- **Profile of the beneficiaries.** Small and medium heritage organisations often do not have enough funds to support travel, and therefore are at risk being cut out of international work and the multifaceted benefits it brings. The new funding scheme should therefore target small and medium heritage organisations (with a turnover of less than £500,000).
- **Grant amount.** Some beneficiaries of the Travel Grant Scheme reported that one of the challenges was the limited amount of time in the partner country, constrained by the budget. Since these trips took place, inflation has increased significantly worldwide and the cost-of-living crisis has had a global impact. Therefore the grant amount – originally set to £700 for trips in Europe, and £1,500 for trips outside Europe – should be revised to reflect rising costs.
- **Support for long-lasting collaboration.** Further rounds of funding might consider providing support for ongoing collaboration beyond the initial visit (e.g. making use of the digital tools, see below).
- **Digital.** The Covid-19 pandemic sped up the use of digital tools in most of the sectors, including heritage. New funding should account for the increased use of digital platforms internationally.

- **Application process.** Beneficiaries reported that the application process was straightforward and easy. This element should be kept in other rounds of funding.
- **Addressing language barriers.** While English is the most common language in international work context, grants might consider supporting the use of a translator during the trip, or to translate resources written in other languages that may be useful for the UK heritage sector.
- **Reporting.** Individual people express themselves and their experiences in different ways. Therefore, in addition to filling a standard form for reporting on the outcomes travel grant, it would be good to expand creative approaches to give beneficiaries the opportunity to express themselves in a way that makes them feel confident (such as using videos, pictures, and other mediums).

Travel Grant Scheme 2019



The scheme supported UK heritage professionals to develop international projects and partnerships

13 organisations awarded a total of **£14,195**

27 people travelled in 12 countries

Purpose of the visit

Build or strengthen partnerships: 17 new partnerships created



Knowledge transfer



Gain new knowledge



Increase young people confidence and skills

Key impacts

Cultural Relations



Increased resilience of the organisation during the pandemic



Support to strategic thinking



Stimulated heritage protection in the partner country



New funding opportunities



Mutual understanding of commonalities and differences in heritage

Soft power



Raised profile of the British organisations



Promotion of UK values and expertise in heritage

Professional skills development and employability



Confidence increased for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds



New opportunities in higher education and/or work

“ For small organisations, travel grants can make the difference between a project going ahead or not ”