

Museum Development North West

2012-15 Report



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Report on Museum Development North West programme of activity 2012-15

Contents

Introduction	3
Impact of Museum Development North West	4
Goal 1	
Excellence is thriving and celebrated in museums	9
Goal 2	
More people experience and are inspired by museums	13
Goal 3	
Museums are sustainable, resilient and innovative	15
Goal 4	
Leadership and workforce in museums are diverse and highly skilled	19
Goal 5	
Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness and inspiration of museums	22
Sustainable Improvement Fund	24
Appendices	
1. Key performance indicators	26
2. Major Partner Museum contribution to MDNW programme	27
3. SIF-funded projects	28

Introduction

“Through promoting excellence, innovation, partnerships and organisational sustainability our aim is to help museums to become resilient in challenging times.”
MDNW team, 2014

Arts Council England's Renaissance funding over three years, 2012-15, funded MDNW.

The significant roles of MDNW are to:

- Assess real priorities for the sector
- Be ambitious for what the sector can achieve
- Identify barriers that prevent raising performance of the sector
- Build capacity and resources for those museums within the sector that can attain excellence in meeting the particular and diverse needs of the community served by the museums
- Provide regional leadership and act as “first responders”

This has been achieved through:

- Identifying where support should be directed through knowledge of the sector
- Building trust and personal relationships through face-to-face meetings, such as site visits, with key personnel
- Targeting funding, resources and governance development in ways that set “staging posts” for museums to improve their offer

Our focus areas have been:

- Developing partnerships and networks
- Understanding audiences through data collection and analysis
- Organisational resilience and sustainability
- Workforce development

Impact of Museum Development North West

Museum Development capacity and delivery

The 2012-15 application for MD funding proposed establishing:

- Two regional Museum Development Officers focused on coordinating collections development and knowledge sharing. These posts were appointed in spring 2013, but their remit has evolved more broadly, to be the “ear to the ground” to pick up on any development and organisational issues which then inform the MD programme of support, and to be the first point of contact for museums
- A Sector Development Officer focused on workforce and organisational development, and resilience around commercial development and fundraising. This post was filled at the end of 2012 and has concentrated on the original aims, but also coordinates the wider MD activity programme with the MDOs
- A Sector Improvement Officer focused on skills sharing and network development around environmental sustainability. The post was filled from 2012 to autumn 2013 when the duties were absorbed by the MDOs and Sector Development Officer. The salary was put into delivery programmes

The Partnership Manager and Performance Manager posts were both abolished in summer 2013.

From October 2014 to March 2015 we have had a Communication and Events Coordinator intern, partly funded by Manchester City Council through the Creative Employment Programme. In 2015-18 we will host another five interns.

Directors from the Manchester Partnership and Cumbria Museum Consortium manage the programme, with alternate monthly meetings, and quarterly contact meetings with ACE's Relationship Manager.

Communication

The MDNW blog is the main way of communicating with the North West museums sector. All information is published on the blog; anyone signed up to it receives an email with the latest posts, and updates are fed through to the Twitter feed. The blog has information on training opportunities, job opportunities, publications, MDNW's Sustainable Improvement Fund, information and contact details of the team, sources of funding, regional and national news and case studies.

In 2014-15 MDNW saw an average of 2,302 visits per month to the blog, up from 1,522 visits per month in 2013-14. In March 2015 we had a total of **1,560** followers, up from 950 in March 2014. The blog is updated regularly and to date we have published over 650 posts.

The Twitter feed is also popular with **1,057** followers in March 2015, an increase from 661 followers at end of March 2014. Twitter allows MDNW to share information quickly.

Museum Development support

The Museum Development North West 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 challenging times through promoting excellence, innovation, partnerships and organisational sustainability.

The team's time is split between face-to-face contact with museums across the North West, continuing support through email and phone, attending meetings with other partners and developing and delivering programmes of work to support organisations and the workforce.

In 2012-15, Museum Development Officers and the Sector Development Officer carried out **377** site visits.

The MD team have attended subregional forums and networks; these are a major channel through which to convey and obtain information. Forums and networks include Cumbria Museums Forum, Greater Manchester Museums Group, Museums of Cheshire, Stationary Steam Engines Group and the Capital Development Network. We are leading on establishing a working subgroup of the Cumbria Museums Forum and have brokered a meeting between the main networks in the region, Pennine Lancashire, Greater Manchester Museums Group and Museums of Cheshire.

We have developed relationships with:

- ACE - Relationship Manager has attended our funding fairs and conference, Director of Museums spoke at our "Don't Stop Me Now" conference
- Historic England – we have worked with the Industrial Heritage Support Officer to run a joint workshop programme, and attend meetings of the Stationary Steam Engines Group, chaired by Historic England

- AIM – Chief Executive has attended our funding fairs and spoken at our “Don’t Stop Me Now” conference; we have met to discuss areas of overlap of work
- Art Fund – launched their “Treasures Plus” funding stream at our numismatics event in June 2013
- NWFED – will become a delivery partner for workforce development in 2015-18; in preparation have funded them to look at their strategy and forward planning
- HLF – Development Officers have attended our funding fairs, we hold quarterly meetings to share intelligence and updates
- Curious Minds – partnerships developed on Arts Award and training

We have explored opportunities to coordinate and share with other MD programmes and MPMs:

- MPM expert staff have led some of our training
- Manchester Museum staff leading on natural sciences programme funded through MDNW
- Regular contact with Museum Development teams in Yorkshire and North East; funding fair and Collections & the Law conference held jointly, have launched joint volunteer pass across Northern England

Prior to the recruitment of the Museum Development Officers we worked with Collections Management Network to undertake Accreditation support and run regional workshops to complement the work of the Accreditation advisor.

Impact of MDNW

An evaluation of the impact of MDNW, including consultation with the sector, was carried out in 2013-14 by an external evaluator. Feedback gathered informed the development of the 2014-15 plans and beyond.

Key quotes:

- MDNW “provide key information quickly”
- MDNW are an “important part of the landscape”
- MDNW have good understanding of the “complex challenges” faced by the sector
- They are effective in “making sense of the spider’s web that is the museum landscape”
- MDNW “always demonstrate a willingness to engage”

The MDNW team is effective in:

- Providing advice
- Facilitating networking events
- Guiding and supporting Sustainable Improvement Fund bids
- Promoting cross-regional initiatives

The work of MDNW is having an impact upon:

- Collections management
- Environmental sustainability
- Skills sharing
- Network development
- Workforce and organisational development
- Commercial development and fundraising

MDNW have been successful in achieving the following:

- Helping museums prepare for Accreditation and develop action plans for meeting standards
- Working with regional forums to ensure that their work responds to local needs
- Making links between geographically dispersed organisations
- Developing local networks that complement subject specialist networks
- Spending time on site visits that have been so valued by regional museums, who often feel excluded from major funding programmes
- Signposting organisations and individuals to sources of expertise, funding or research and evaluation
- Providing individual mentoring, often on-site with museum staff
- Developing and delivering programmes focusing on increasing understanding of the care, management and interpretation of specialist collections amongst an increasingly generalised workforce
- Increasing the dissemination of this expertise through filming and recording events and developing social media

MDNW have fulfilled the mission outlined in the submission for ACE funding:

- Giving support to all Accredited museums so that they can maximise their benefits to audiences and communities
- Helping museums deliver outcomes aligned to local need and political agendas
- Supporting forward planning, organisational health and sustainable business models
- Support for governance and leadership

- Supporting museums to genuinely connect their collections and mission to their communities and interest groups
- Supporting museums to achieve increased user figures and greater levels of satisfaction
- Supporting museums to develop their collections and engagement through specialist advice
- Empowering museums to work together in self-sustaining networks to share skills and meet their own basic training needs
- Maintaining the focus upon “green principles”

MDNW have been significant in enabling museums to meet the following outcomes:

- Delivering outcomes aligned to local need and local political agendas
- Connecting their collections and mission to their communities and interest groups
- Achieving increased user figures and greater levels of satisfaction
- Developing their collections
- Exploring organisational health, sustainable business models, and appropriate governance and leadership development
- Working together in self-sustaining networks as in Cheshire, Cumbria and Greater Manchester to share skills and meet their own basic training needs

Source: “Evaluation of the work of Museum Development North West”, Robert Meadows, March 2014

Goal 1 - Excellence is thriving and celebrated in museums

Excellence around care and support of collections

One of the keynotes of the Renaissance in the Regions work in the North West was the focus on improving excellence in collections development. This has been continued by supporting collections development, collections care, collections review and collections access, specifically through:

Numismatics

MDNW joined with the Money & Medals Network at the British Museum to create a North West numismatic network and to address the lack of specialist expertise:

- Five events have been held to date, in partnership with the Money & Medals Network, addressing storage, cataloguing and research, identifying Roman coins and paranumismatica
- One training day was held in partnership with MD Yorkshire
- A quarter of applications to the first round of the Art Fund's "Treasures Plus" funding were from the North West
- 18 North West museums were given a starter kit of materials
- Presentations from British Museum speakers are all on the MDNW YouTube page, creating a permanent resource
- MDO (South) was one of the speakers at the Money & Medals Network conference at the British Museum in March 2014
- An email network was set up, currently comprising 35 people from 24 organisations in the North West

2015-18 plans

- In 2015-16 a specialist post will be appointed to conduct collections reviews with four museums, resulting in increased access to the collections from new exhibitions or activities
- In April 2015 the Project Officer for the Harris Museum & Art Gallery's Esmée Fairbairn-funded "Money Matters" project will run a training day on behalf of MDNW for the numismatic network
- We will continue to work with the Money & Medals Network which is funded through ACE Resilience funding until 2018
- A Knowledge Sharing Fellowship around numismatic knowledge will be completed by the end of March 2016
- The numismatic network will be self-sustaining by 2017

Industrial heritage

- MDNW used SIF to support a region-wide collections review to provide a comprehensive, detailed view of the textile machinery holdings across the North West, led by Lancashire County Museums Service. The report, "Stepping Up", was launched at one of our industrial heritage training days
- We worked with the English Heritage Industrial Heritage Support Officer to run a series of three industrial heritage training days around volunteering, health & safety and fundraising & resilience. 44 people attended
- Through the English Heritage Industrial Heritage Support Officer we have attended meetings of the Stationary Steam Engines Group and are supporting them to work up a proposal to HLF to pilot succession training in steam technology, linking textile heritage and historic railways
- We funded a Knowledge Sharing Fellowship around the skills involved in maintaining and operating textile machinery in textile museums; the need for this came out of the "Stepping Up" report

2015-18 plans

- We will run another three training days with the Historic England Industrial Heritage Support Officer in 2015-16, each one will move the network the next step towards identifying a joint project and becoming self-sustaining
- We will work with LCMS to support them up to a Designation funding application when the fund reopens
- We will open discussions with The Whitworth to scope future work linking textile machinery and product, led by The Whitworth

Natural sciences

Natural sciences work was led by Manchester Museum's Head of Collections and Curator of Zoology. An informal partnership was established in 2013 which now includes 30 of the 31 museums with natural history collections in the NW.

Work was delivered in four strands during 2013-15:

- Understanding the natural history resource in the North West
 - system of collections reviews established, including staff at venues
 - methodology of collections reviews developed to complement work done in the West Midlands
 - reviews are an ongoing process, with four completed and approximately 20 in the pipeline
 - worked in partnership with West Midlands and Welsh natural history review projects

- Using the resource
 - funding provided for staff in venues to attend conferences
 - network meetings held (two in Manchester, one in Kendal) to explore issues and concerns, and to provide practical support for one another
 - eight advocacy toolkits were developed (hosted on Naturally Curious website and on TES Connect website, where they have been viewed over 500 times)
- Communicating the resource
 - Manchester Museum's Head of Collections spoke on the work of the partnership at the SPNHC/NatScA joint meeting in Cardiff (2014) and at MDNW's conference
 - a website was developed to host toolkits and to signpost people to venues and good quality sources of information (the website was favourably reviewed in Museums Journal)
- Leading the debate
 - "7 Million Wonders", a collective vision and advocacy document has been produced and distributed

2015-18 plans

A national conference has been developed, "Refloating the Ark", which will be held in Manchester in June 2015. This includes presentations from ACE and the MA on the support they offer museums with natural history collections. To date over 90 delegates have booked places.

Collections care & management programme

In 2014-15 25 delegates from 16 museums took part in a five-day collections care & management programme run over six months. One day was run by the Accreditation advisor and MDO (South); eight staff from the Manchester Partnership delivered the other four days. All the participating museums completed a "Benchmarks in Collections Care" assessment to form the basis of a conservation policy and plan. 16 museums were given a collections care kit and an accessioning kit. Five were also given museum vacs and two museums borrowed Hygropalm environmental monitoring equipment. A valuable outcome of this programme was the contact delegates made with expert conservators and collections staff within the MPMs.

2015-18 plans

Later in 2015 we will follow up with the delegates to map developments and outcomes to form the basis of support for 2016 onwards, linked to Accreditation section 2 support.

Accreditation support

In 2012-15 MDNW worked closely with the regional Accreditation advisor to support museums with Accreditation returns and areas for improvement:

- Regular meetings with the Accreditation advisor to update and share intelligence
- MDNW delivered a series of four practical workshops run in conjunction with Accreditation advisor's surgeries:
 - Policies, plans and procedures
 - Collections management for Accreditation
 - Access policy workshop
 - Means to an end – the value of collections documentation, policies, plans and procedures
- Gave individual site advice for museums reapplying for Accreditation
- Used the Accreditation standard as the basis of advice to museums in the early stages of applying to become Accredited, as signposted by HLF
- Delegates on the collections care & management programme run in
- 2014-15 were selected based on their museums' areas for improvement in section 2 of the standard

2015-18 plans

From April 2015 MDNW have taken over the Accreditation technical advice support contract which will be run in-house. MDNW will be:

- working in partnership with other bodies delivering Accreditation-specific training and/or awareness workshops providing support based on the content of the Accreditation guidance documents to:
 - organisations wishing to complete an eligibility questionnaire
 - new applicants and returning participants
 - provisionally Accredited museums
 - museums which may require a significant change review
- advising museums regarding interpretation of the standard to their size and scale
- promoting and signposting opportunities to undertake the museum mentor role and to facilitate conversations between potential mentors and museums seeking a mentor
- raising the profile of Accreditation

Goal 2 - More people experience and are inspired by museums

Region-wide audience data development

Renaissance North West had its strongest regional impact in increasing understanding of audiences and audience engagement, which informed service development and delivery by regional museums with wider cultural partners, such as the ACE Strategic Support Funding for Pennine Lancashire museums based on their audience data collected via Standpoint.

Given the previous strong investment in audience development, together with consultation among regional museums, less emphasis was placed on goal 2 in 2012-15 in order to develop goals 1, 3, and 4, although we have continued to invest in much-valued audience research, in cultural tourism development, and support audience development through SIF funding.

MDNW has expanded the Viewpoint audience data capture programme (originally called Standpoint) that started under Renaissance from 36 to 79 data capture devices across the North West. Galleries and museums that hold a device for their organisation come under our regional Enterprise Licence, which runs until March 2018. Individually, the price of each licence for the system would cost approximately £1,500 per year and a device licence would cost £295 per year (2014 prices) so it has been more economical for Renaissance and MDNW to hold a central licence than for each individual museum to purchase their own.

In 2012-15 MDNW:

- coordinated the transfer of existing accounts to one central account
- supported and coordinated the regional “super-users”, trained museum staff across the North West who visited each participating venue to carry out the upgrade of software
- delivered six days of training on Viewpoint attended by 61 people
- funded another 10 places on online Excel training course to interpret and use data using pivot tables etc
- produced the first in a series of user guides

2015-18 plans

- continue to hold licence for 2015-18 and develop exit strategy from 2018
- refresher training for museums on using Viewpoint, run by manufacturer CRT
- produce epublication by December 2015, a central point of information for the various audience data programmes available e.g. Viewpoint, Visitor Finder, Visitor Verdict, and to provide a basic guide to audience data collection, whichever system is used
- produce three technical guides to support Viewpoint users
- support super-users to a higher level of proficiency with CRT support and for them to roll out updates where needed
- standard regional benchmarking questions evaluated annually
- “Knowing your Audiences” programme
 - Practical solutions training programme (open) on understanding audiences to complement Viewpoint and other programmes
 - Raise level of competence in analysing data and using it (open)
 - Collections interpretation training programme (closed) based on Viewpoint data, to address Accreditation section 3
 - Audience Insights training programme (open)
 - Audience and consultation basics on devising and implementing simple consultation and audience evaluation systems (open)

Cultural tourism

In 2012-15 MDNW used Cultural tourism funding to raise the profile of cultural heritage through initiating and supporting subregional tourism initiatives:

- Provided workforce development support for Greater Manchester Museums Group to mould the next generation of leaders; support front of house development to improve knowledge of collections and GMMG venues
- Used Museums of Cheshire as a pilot project to test the potential of Viewpoint as a marketing tool
- Funded the Harris Museum & Art Gallery to assess the impact their contemporary art programme could have in cultural tourism to Preston
- Supported the establishment of the HiDDEN network of small cultural venues within Manchester city centre up to a Grants for the Arts application for joint working; once established used HiDDEN as a model for using Viewpoint audience data to create a recognised brand aimed at target audiences

2015-18

- Support smaller Cumbria museums' participation in “Highlights” programme
- Support digital access initiatives to support cultural tourism
- Support HLF's work in “hard to reach” areas
- Share knowledge from Cumbrian museums' international work

Goal 3 - Museums are sustainable, resilient and innovative

Provide advice and guidance on resilience

The programme has built on investment to date in sustainable economic and environmental development, to enable North West museums to work together and with partners across the heritage and arts sector and more widely, taking risks, trialling new ideas, partnerships and business models. See below for details of individual resilience programmes.

2015-18 plans

- support implementation of action plans from 2014-15 work on organisational health and resilience
- Accreditation section 1 training programme on business management
- Accreditation section 1 training programme on developing effective boards

Organisational health programme

Working with Libertas Consultancy, the objective of this work was to bring together museums in the North West to discuss the challenges they face and explore solutions, particularly through collaborative working. The programme was intended to support the museums to implement organisational change. The work took place with two cohorts in Cheshire and Cumbria, involving nine museums in total.

The work consisted of site visits and cohort-wide workshops resulting in a greater understanding of individual organisations' and their staffs' needs. Some organisations were offered further support including mentoring and coaching sessions focusing on the challenges identified in the site visits.

In 2014-15 we also ran a Cumbria-specific organisational development programme with consultants Jennie Pitceathly and James Rebanks. Museums nominated themselves to participate and the programme consisted of board development sessions, all staff workshops, remote support and an action report.

2015-18 plans

We are extending the programme to incorporate more museums and we will further support participating museums to implement the recommendations.

Retail development programme

The retail development programme involved cohorts of museums in Greater Manchester, Cheshire, Cumbria and Merseyside working to develop their retail offer.

Working with Quince Retail, site visits were conducted to each participating museum to gain an insight into the museums' retail finances, product offer, staff needs and priorities for development. Tailored cohort-wide workshops were then delivered focusing on best practice in a number of areas - retail offer, customer knowledge, product development, visual merchandising, selling skills, and reporting.

Detailed reports were provided for the individual museums consisting of realistic recommendations and targets, aiming to give them a method of improving their retail offer taking into account the museums' financial situations.

In total 17 museums participated. After the reports were produced museums were offered funding to implement the recommendations. Grants were awarded to:

- Brantwood House
- Dock Museum
- Kendal Museum
- People's History Museum
- Ruskin Museum
- Senhouse Roman Museum
- Silk Heritage Trust

2015-18 plans

We have recently published our retail toolkit developed with Quince Retail and will continue to provide training for museums. We will also run a product development workshop and offer funding to museums that wish to use their collections for retail purposes.

We will partner with the Association of Cultural Enterprises on an extensive retail development programme. The programme will consist of training and the development of a network of 20 museums.

Funding Fair

To date we have hosted two funding fairs offering museums a chance to speak to a number of funders in one place. At the two events we have had a total of 119 delegates. An evaluation of the 2014 event showed that museums particularly valued this event for the opportunity to speak face-to-face informally with funders, and for the overview of funding it offered.

2015-18 plans

We will continue to run this event annually.

Sustainability

Be Carbon Literate were commissioned to run a year-long Green Museums programme in 2014-15. 14 delegates, mainly from small independent museums, completed the course of over 60 hours of training and are now Carbon Literacy Accredited. To date they have made actual savings of £21,688 and projected year on year savings of £28,372. They have collectively reduced waste by 82 tonnes, with projected annual savings year on year of 438 tonnes.

In addition:

- Green Museums Northern Network met in April 2013, and two additional training days on the 2014-15 Green Museums programme were opened up to them
- 37 delegates attended the sustainability conference in April 2013
- 11 people went on a three-day residential trip to the Centre for Alternative Technology in Machynlleth in April 2013
- The SIO spoke at the Museums & Heritage Show on the work North West museums have done around sustainability
- Delegates from the 2014-15 programme have set up their own Facebook closed group for peer-to-peer support

2015-18 plans

- Project funding for Green Museums delegates to implement action plans
- Work with ARUP and Lancashire County Museums Service to pilot a U-values toolkit

- Revive Green Museums Northern Network
- Two day-long refresher courses in Emergency Planning will be run in June 2015 and will relaunch and reconnect the region's Emergency Planning Network
- Support Facebook group to arrange their own visits to museums and other venues with sustainable good practice
- Be Carbon Literate to evaluate impact of 2014-15 programme
- Produce Green Museums epublication from evaluation data
- Sustainability event run as part of HLF Capital Development Network
- Run two visitor engagement training days
- Monitor progress of Curious Minds' transport toolkit

Regional benchmarking survey

In 2014 we conducted our first regional benchmarking survey and produced a report and infographic with the resulting data. The return rate from museums was 36%.

2015-18 plans

- Continue with the benchmarking survey to track trends and changes at regional level
- Use resulting data and infographic for advocacy purposes

Goal 4 - Leadership and workforce in museums are diverse and highly skilled

A powerful theme running through this programme has been rethinking the museum profession and professional career path in the context of:

- Increased generalisation of roles
- Increased isolation of staff
- Opportunities for sharing expertise
- Loss of collections' specialist staff
- Increased need for outwardly-focused working
- Increased need for brokering new relationships with education, leisure, wellbeing and tourism
- Increased need for moving between different sectors
- The need to retain knowledge within an organisation rather than just within key individuals

We have provided a full and well-attended workforce development programme across all five goals. Workshops are programmed on an annual basis but we ensure that we are also able to develop sessions based on feedback and requests. We try to spread the sessions across the region to enable everyone the opportunity to attend some of the sessions.

In 2012-15 we ran **69 workshops** for regional museums, attended by 1,227 delegates, an **average of 18 people per workshop**. The workshop programme consisted of four planned strands and a responsive strand to meet demand:

- Resilience e.g. bid writing, funding fair, sustainability conference, HLF Capital Development Network, gift aid, legacy, corporate sponsorship, online retail and museums, creating cafes in museums, retail development
- Accreditation - series of four workshops to complement training given by regional Accreditation advisor
- How to... Series – practical basic courses e.g. how to install exhibitions, social media, effective websites on a budget, make the most of your shop, security basics
- Curating for the non-specialist e.g. costume curating, Egyptology, natural sciences, furniture, decorative arts
- Responsive strand e.g. Museums, artists and collections; volunteers for now networking event, disability, equality and awareness training

Feedback from the courses show:

- 100% of delegates agreed that the courses were enjoyable
- 98% of delegates thought the courses were well conceived, well organised, relevant and a good use of time
- 97% felt that the courses were inspiring

Key quotes:

- "Excellent presenter. Perfectly pitched..."
- "Very well delivered. Helpful and knowledgeable."
- "Specific and tailored to the needs of the sector."
- "... very informative and I will implement the ideas."
- "Instructors were great. Explored everything practically. Felt at ease to ask questions."

Source: "Evaluation of the work of Museum Development North West", Robert Meadows, March 2014

An unplanned regional workforce development support came in 2013 when MDNW took on a volunteer, Paul Taylor, who offered his computing skills to museums across the North West whilst taking a year out from his degree in Forensic Computing. Paul volunteered for over 400 hours in five museums and this has led to the development of a strand of work for 2015-18 around student placements.

Online resources

We have 22 online resources on our MuseumDevelopmentNW YouTube page:

- Caring for furniture collections
- Caring for numismatic collections
- Museums, Artist and Collections presentations
- Four videos showcasing work in the region and shown at our annual conference, produced by Ryan Hughes, our Communication and Events Coordinator intern:
 - Lancashire Infantry Museum's "Call to Arms" SIF project
 - Astley Hall's Green Museums project
 - Warrington Museum's Knowledge Sharing Fellowship
 - Nantwich Museum's Dementia Group project

In 2012-13 we also ran four online "Any Museum Questions" sessions but due to limited engagement decided not to continue. The sessions looked at retail, partnership working, HLF funding and museum education.

Knowledge Sharing Fellowships

In 2013-14 we funded a Knowledge Sharing Fellowship pilot project with Lancashire Infantry Museum and Museum of Lancashire. The project offered a unique opportunity for a trainee curator to spend time with not just key military history collections, but with established curators in the field, and also museum professionals working in the related areas of conservation and education where these are used to support military collections in a museum.

Since the pilot project we have funded a further two fellowships at Warrington Museum & Art Gallery and at Lancashire County Museums Service. The Warrington project aimed to capture some of the knowledge of an outgoing member of staff who had worked at the museum for 50 years. The LCMS project focused on sharing knowledge of industrial heritage machinery conservation and collections care.

Conferences

Since 2012 we have funded 53 places at national and international conferences for first time delegates.

2015-18 plans

- We will continue to run workshops in 2015-18 but with a reduced number as we are focusing more on extended programmes
- We will undertake our first Emerging Leaders programme, a six-month programme for early career professionals looking to increase their leadership skills and confidence
- We are also working with NWFED to plan a development programme for museum volunteers which will run alongside our programme to develop museums wanting to recruit and retain volunteers
- We will fund two Knowledge Sharing Fellowships per year
- We will continue to fund places at regional, national and international conferences

Goal 5 - Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness and inspiration of museums

As with goal 2, less emphasis was placed on goal 5 work as Renaissance North West made a very significant investment in children and young people and much of the good practice is now embedded, and because the Bridge organisation has a role in this area.

In 2012-15 we:

- Facilitated Curious Minds to speak at regional forums to highlight their work
- Hosted two "Curious about... working with schools?" events with Curious Minds in Macclesfield and Preston; approximately 30 delegates attended
- Hosted joint event with Curious Minds and Manchester City Council on apprenticeships and creative employment programmes
- Promoted Arts Award
- Supported Cumbrian Learning Networks through the Sustainable Improvement Fund
- Supported Lancashire Infantry Museum and Astley Hall with their schools resource projects
- Identified one-to-one support for Museum of Wigan Life to develop an offer for schools based on their Egyptology collection, with another one-to-one support with the Museum of Policing in Cheshire to start in April 2015
- Chaired two meetings of the Children and Young People group, with a view to bringing together existing learning providers

2015-18 plans

- Joint briefing sessions with Curious Minds on being Artsmark supporters and Arts Award basics
- Incorporate Artsmarks activity into industrial heritage training day on interpretation
- Share learning resources - MDNW blog acts as focal point for resources and signposts to Curious Minds
- Develop joint events based around National Curriculum changes

- Run “Curious about working with schools” session at a Cumbria forum meeting
- Investigate offering “I’m a teenager, get me into here” programme in partnership with LCMS, University of the First Age and Curious Minds
- Young Evaluators programme - MDNW to identify museums to participate, with bursaries to part fund available from Curious Minds
- Young Advisors programme using children and young people as marketing experts, with possible links to Association of Cultural Enterprises retail project
- Curious Minds to promote funding kit bags at funding fair

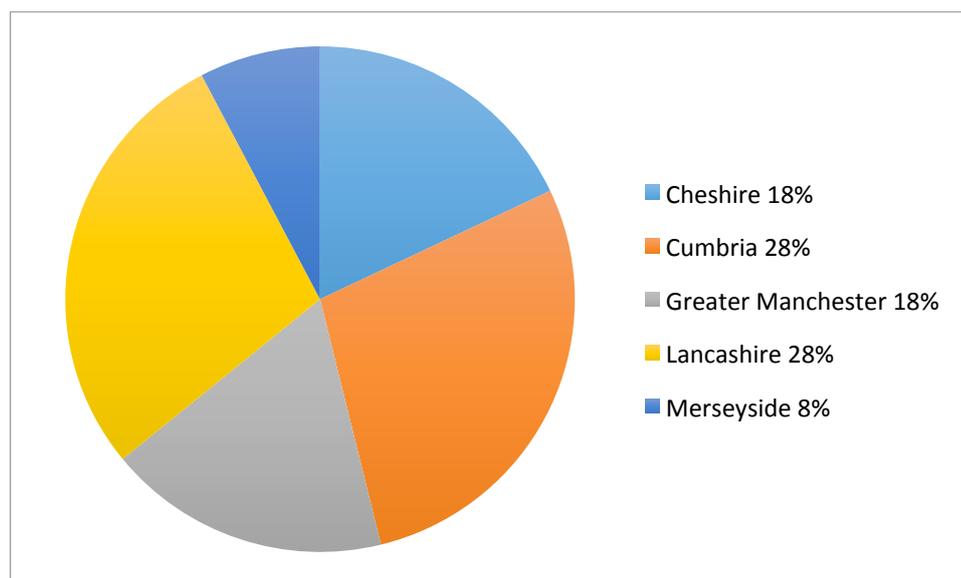
Sustainable Improvement Fund

The Sustainable Improvement Fund has been a major part of the MDNW programme and works across all five strategic goals to drive development and deliver sustainability, resilience and innovation in museums in the North West.

The programme has been an opportunity for Accredited museums, and those officially working towards it, to apply for support that enables them to become more resilient through new developments, partnerships and fresh approaches.

In 2012-15 **£206,261** was awarded to **39** projects. This is an average of £5,288 per project, but in reality ranged from £1,100 for the Cumbrian Learning Networks to produce online resources to £10,000 to Lancashire County Museums Service to lead a region-wide review of textile machinery collections. Nine of the projects involved a network of participants.

The geographical spread of projects is shown below:



These percentages also correlate to the funding allocated to each county.

The external evaluation found:

- The phrase ““Small Change, Big Change” was significant... for evaluating the potential of SIF to effect change”
- Compared to similar funds run by other museum development providers in England, MDNW allocates more money per application and also is innovative in its support for cluster development as a model for sustainability
- The “open application” process is also a distinctive and widely appreciated element of the programme

The following points were made by those interviewed for the evaluation:

- Those who have made applications and have been successful as well as those who have not been awarded funds have stated that the process is “clear and transparent” and this is valued by the sector
- The sector has found the prior discussions with the team helpful in identifying needs and focusing upon a relevant area
- It was also stated that “the tough advice given” was appreciated, “such as being told that it was not yet the right time to make an application”
- All those who had submitted applications were positive about the design of the form; it was “low tech”. It was “clear and relevant”, understanding that it offered a “strategic opportunity” to implement change
- The flexibility of the process was appreciated, particularly when the start of a project was, of necessity, delayed. The MDOs’ responses were thought to be helpful and supportive

Source: “Evaluation of the work of Museum Development North West”, Robert Meadows, March 2014

An epublication detailing all the SIF projects funded will be published later in 2015.

2015-18 plans

Continue to allocate funding to SIF each year as a core part of the MDNW programme. Changes to 2012-15 format:

- Main criterion is that the project must move the museum on in it's development in some way
- Can be used to extend projects previously supported from other MDNW programmes e.g. retail, Green Museums
- Two-stage process with Expression of Interest first to filter out ineligible applications
- Successful applicants must use some form of audience data collection and complete benchmarking survey

Appendix 1 - Key performance indicators

Target	Actual	Met?
Goal 1		
Support minimum of 10 organisations with collections care & management training	16 museums participated in programme	Met
Support 2 collections reviews	2 collections reviews on boats and textiles funded	Met
Develop 3 epublications for regional museums	Benchmarking report and infographic launched March 2015 Retail epublication launched April 2015 SIF, audience development and Green Museums epublications in production	Partly met
Develop 8 online resources for museums to complement our strands of work	4 sets of online videos developed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - caring for furniture - numismatics - Museums, artists & collections - Conference videos of MD funded projects 	Partly met
Goal 2		
At least 50 people to attend Viewpoint training sessions	61 attended	Met
Goal 3		
Support 8 museums on their organisational development	5 supported through organisational development programme, 4 supported through SIF	Met
Savings of £50,000 from environmental sustainability initiatives	Savings of £21,688 during Green Museums programme; in Q3 2015 evaluate the longer term savings	Partly met
Goal 4		
An average of 10 people to attend each workshop	Average of 18 people attended	Met
Send 10 people to regional, national and international conferences	53 places funded (since 2012), average of 18 per year	Met
Support 2 museums to do a Knowledge Sharing Fellowship	2 fellowships funded in 2014-15	Met

Appendix 2 - Major Partner Museum contribution to MDNW programme

The Museum Development programme in the North West is run by the MDNW team on behalf of the two Major Partner Museums in the North West:

- the Manchester Partnership:
 - Manchester Art Gallery
 - Manchester Museum
 - The Whitworth

- the Cumbria Museum Consortium:
 - Lakeland Arts comprising Abbot Hall, Museum of Lakeland Life and Industry, Windermere Jetty and Blackwell, the Arts & Crafts House
 - Wordsworth Trust
 - Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery

The success of the MDNW programme relies on the contribution from staff and managers of the Major Partner Museums. Staff from these museums have contributed to diverse strands of activity, from carrying out collections reviews to delivering social media training.

The following table shows how the contribution to the MDNW programme is growing:

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Manchester Partnership	Not counted	18 hours	237 hours
Cumbria Museum Consortium	Not counted	46 hours	111 hours

Appendix 3 - SIF-funded projects

The main themes of MDNW's work have been based around Arts Council England's five goals as set out in their 10 year strategic plan "Great Art and Culture for Everyone". All SIF-funded projects had to address at least one of the goals.

Goal 1

Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries

[Gawthorpe Textiles Collection, Padiham](#)

Review of whitework and patchwork/quilting collections to inform interpretation and access

[Lancaster Maritime Museum](#)

Review of boat collection – survey, consultation and conservation options for key boats in the collection

[Museum of Lancashire, Preston](#)

"Stepping Up" review and report of textile machinery holdings in the region

[Peter Scott Gallery, Lancaster](#)

Pilot to use image licensing for income generation, resulting in Digital Image Management toolkit

[Williamson Museum & Art Gallery, Birkenhead](#)

Scoping work to explore possibilities for contemporary artists to work with the collections

Goal 2

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

[The Armit Library & Museum Centre, Ambleside](#)

Design and promotion of permanent Beatrix Potter exhibition

[Cumbria's Museum of Military Life, Carlisle](#)

Two rounds of funding for First World War Centenary Coordinator to lead countywide planning for events

Gawthorpe Textiles Collection, Padiham

Outreach and adult learning programme of events, working with textile community artist

Haig Colliery Mining Museum, Whitehaven

"Our Space" - community events programme working with groups which hadn't previously engaged with the museum

Helena Thompson Museum, Workington

Upgrade of Curwen Room

Kendal Museum

"Scene Setting" – funding for four striking images to reinterpret the main exhibition space

Kendal Museum

"Capturing Attention: Enticing to the Museum" – series of displays in and around Kendal

Manchester Jewish Museum

"Building More Bridges" – Volunteer Coordinator post to diversify volunteers; develop and train them in new ipad tours of the museum

Port Sunlight Museum

"House to Home: Celebrating 125 years of Port Sunlight people" exhibition

Quaker Tapestry Museum, Kendal

Pop-up gallery in main shopping precinct in Kendal

Goal 3

The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable

British Commercial Vehicle Museum, Leyland

Initial funding to review current audience development and income generation activity. A second SIF grant to implement the action plans for improvement

Congleton Museum

Security improvements to enable the museum to borrow locally significant objects from national museums

Dock Museum, Barrow

Installation of EPOS system in the museum shop

Greater Manchester Fire Museum, Rochdale

Museum development and feasibility study to inform application to Heritage Lottery Fund

Greater Manchester Police Museum, Manchester

Purchase of collections management system to allow greater access to collections

HiDDEN network (previously SHOWT! Small Heritage Organisations Working Together) Manchester & Salford

"Into the Future" – network of 8 heritage attractions in Manchester and Salford city centres using shared Viewpoint data to understand audiences and target activity

Manchester Jewish Museum

Funding for security improvements to bring in "Chagall, Soutine & School of Paris" exhibition

Museums of Cheshire

"Working Together" – 15 museums trial joint marketing, promotion and activities; strengthen governance of regional forum through joint activity

Nantwich Museum

"Nantwich Online" – new website

Nantwich Museum

"Green Steps" - energy consumption reduction pilot to replace halogen lights with LEDs

Norton Priory, Runcorn

"Through the Rabbit Gate" - Increase revenue by making courtyard space more accessible, volunteers provided guided tours around the walled garden

People's History Museum, Manchester

Reduction in electricity consumption through installation of voltage optimisation, cost savings invested back into core activities of the museum

Ribble Steam Railway, Preston

Funding to provide leadership support and guidance to develop an audience-focused organisation, involving trustees, staff and volunteers

Senhouse Roman Museum, Maryport

Funding to review the current service and clarify the vision and future direction of the museum

Silk Heritage Trust, Macclesfield

Operational and strategic review to support the Trustees in making key strategic decisions

Williamson Art Gallery & Museum, Birkenhead

“Managing the Transition” - support staff to develop activities during a period of change

Goal 4

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

Cumbria Cultural Learning Networks

“Unpicking Interpretation in a Cultural Venue” – online training resources

Greater Manchester Museums Group

“Open Source Workforce” - funding to support leadership development programme and training to develop front of house knowledge of collections

Harris Museum & Art Gallery, Preston

“Sharing Skills” – supporting visitor services staff and volunteers in five other museums to improve visitor services and customer care

Goal 5

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

Astley Hall, Chorley

“Serving Stories” – activities to interpret the lives of servants at Astley Hall in the 1850s

Lancashire Infantry Museum, Preston

“A Call to Arms” – schools resource on recruitment in the First World War

Acknowledgements

Robert Meadows: MDNW Evaluation

Front cover image: MDNW funding fair, © Simon Critchley 2014

MDNW, April 2015

Smithills Hall Fleetwood Museum [Armitt Museum & Library](#) Bolton Museum, Art Gallery & Aquarium [Macclesfield Silk Heritage Centre](#) South Ribble Museum [Windermere Steamboat Museum](#) [Prescot Museum](#) [Tameside Central Art Gallery](#) [Helena Thompson Museum](#) Judges Lodgings Town House [The Lowry Penrith & Eden Museum](#) [Catalyst Chetham's Library](#) Lancaster Maritime Museum [Wythenshawe Hall](#) [Garstang Museum of Archaeology](#) [Paradise Mill Keswick Museum & Art Gallery](#) Ruskin Library [Museum of the Manchester Regiment](#) [Dock Museum](#) Cottage Museum [Haig Colliery Mining Museum](#) [Rochdale Pioneers Museum](#) [Dunham Massey Gallery](#) Oldham [Gawthorpe Hall](#) [Port Sunlight Museum](#) [Kendal Museum](#) [Platt Hall](#) Lancaster City Museum [Staircase House](#) [Cheshire Military Museum](#) [Towneley Hall](#) [Wordsworth House & Garden](#) [Birkenhead Priory & St Mary's Tower](#) [Greater Manchester Police Museum](#) [Astley Hall](#) [Brougham Castle](#) [Museum of Transport](#) [Grosvenor Museum](#) Peter Scott Gallery [Stockport Story Museum](#) [Smithy Heritage Centre](#) [Clitheroe Castle Museum](#) [Museum of Hatting](#) [Maryport Maritime Museum](#) [Helmshore Textile Museum](#) [Saddleworth Museum & Art Gallery](#) [Weaver Hall Museum & Workhouse](#) [Dove Cottage, The Wordsworth Museum & Art Gallery](#) [Queen Street Mill](#) [National Waterways Museum](#) [Whitworth Art Gallery](#) [Lytham Hall](#) [Heaton Hall](#) [The Atkinson](#) [Grundy Art Gallery](#) [Ordsall Hall](#) [Norton Priory](#) [Quaker Tapestry Exhibition Centre](#) [Williamson Museum & Art Gallery](#) [Astley Cheetham Art Gallery](#) [Museum of King's Royal Hussars](#) [Portland Basin](#) [Senhouse Roman Museum](#) [International Slavery Museum](#) [Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry Museum](#) [Abbot Hall Art Gallery](#) [Stockport Art Gallery](#) [Cheshire Police Museum](#) [Museum of Science & Industry](#) [Conservation Centre](#) [Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery](#) [Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery](#) [Guildhall Museum](#) [Bolton Steam Museum](#) [Tatton Park](#) [Merseyside Maritime Museum](#) [Rutherford Gallery](#) [Haworth Art Gallery](#) [Touchstones](#) [Rochdale Lancashire Infantry Museum](#) [Lyme Park](#) [Silk Museum](#) [Ribble Steam Railway](#) [Cumbria's Military Museum \(Border Regiment & King's Own Border Regiment\)](#) [Museum of Liverpool](#) [Fusilier Museum](#) [Little Moreton Hall](#) [Manchester Metropolitan Museum Special Collections](#) [The Beacon](#) [King's Own Royal Regiment Museum](#) [Rochdale Arts & Heritage Store](#) [Congleton Museum](#) [Museum of Lakeland Life & Industry](#) [Trencherfield Mill](#) [Speke Hall](#) [Lytham Windmill Heritage Museum](#) [HiDDEN network](#) [Weavers Triangle Visitor Centre](#) [Blackwell, The Arts & Crafts House](#) [Manchester Art Gallery](#) [Nantwich Museum](#) [Sudley House](#) [The Whitaker](#) [Victoria Gallery & Museum](#) [Peoples' History Museum](#) [Englesea Brook Museum](#) [Greater Manchester Museums Group](#) [Lady Lever Art Gallery](#) [Yorkshire Dales Mining Museum](#) [Furness Abbey Museum](#) [West Park Museum](#) [Hall I' Th' Wood Museum](#) [Astley Green Colliery Museum](#) [Royal Northern College of Music](#) [Millom Discovery Centre](#) [Museums of Cheshire](#) [Tate Liverpool](#) [Salford Museum & Art Gallery](#) [Walker Art Gallery](#) [British Commercial Vehicle Museum](#) [Brantwood](#) [Imperial War Museum](#) [North Quarry Bank Mill](#) [Mr Hardman's Photographic Studio](#) [Manchester Museum](#) [Rufford Old Hall](#) [Stretton Watermill](#) [Bramhall Hall](#) [Museum of Lancashire](#) [Manchester Jewish Museum](#) [Gawthorpe Textiles Collection](#) [Museum of Wigan](#) [Life Warrington Museum & Art Gallery](#) [World of Glass](#) [University of Salford](#) [Harris Museum & Art Gallery](#) [Chadkirk Chapel & Country Estate](#) [Pendle Heritage Centre](#) [National Football Museum](#) [Ravenglass Railway Museum](#) [Museum of Local Crafts & Industries](#) [World Museum](#) [Liverpool](#) [Stockport Air Raid Shelters](#) [Turton Tower](#) [Ruskin Museum](#) [Bury Art Gallery & Museum](#)