

**Written evidence to the Science & Technology Select Committee (Lords) inquiry into EU membership and UK science submitted by the National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF)**

8 July 2016

The National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF) welcomes the opportunity to submit written evidence to the House of Lords inquiry into the Relationship between EU membership and UK science in advance of the Committee's follow-up session on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

1.1 NHSF was set up in response to a recommendation in the House of Lords Select Committee report on Science & Heritage (2006).

1.2 Since 2006 the heritage science community in the UK has responded. The Science and Heritage Programme (funded by the AHRC and EPSRC) ran from 2007-2013. It supported 39 projects (14% of the 282 projects that bid for funding) with £6,866,771 of investment (6.5% of the more than £105 million that was bid to the research councils).

1.3 Evidence on the priorities for heritage science in the UK was gathered and in 2010, the National Heritage Science Strategy was published. In 2013 the National Heritage Science Forum was launched to take forward the implementation of the strategy.

1.4 Having been at risk of losing its pre-eminence in the field of heritage science, the UK has regained its global standing as stated by Dr Robert J Koester, the Director and Chief Scientist of the Museum Conservation Institute of the Smithsonian at the launch of the EPSRC CDT Science and Engineering in Arts, Heritage and Archaeology in 2014. The NHSF is now urgently concerned that heritage science will be disproportionately affected by the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union and the potential impact of reduced access to European scientific research funding.

1.5 Cultural Heritage research, including Heritage Science research, has benefitted from European Community RTD funding in recent years through the FP5, FP6, FP7 and Horizon 2020 programmes.

1.6 Of the €57 million of funding for cultural heritage research under the FP7 Environment programme, UK institutions benefitted from €3,857,657 (source: CORDIS: Community Research & Development Information Service). This is 6.7% of total EU funds awarded to the programme. Whilst this level of funding is significant to the heritage science sector, of at least equal importance is the ability of the UK to work with European research partners. The UK participated in 16 out of the 25 projects in the FP7 environment programme.

1.7 Looking ahead, cultural heritage is eligible for significant EU funding from 2014-2020 including for conservation, digitization, infrastructure research and skills from a number of programmes including: European Structural & Investment Funds, Horizon 2020, Creative Europe, Erasmus + and Europe for Citizens (source: [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/culture-policies/cultural-heritage\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/culture-policies/cultural-heritage_en.htm)).

1.8 For heritage science the most significant of these is Horizon 2020, the EU framework programme for Research & Innovation. The programme has €80 billion to invest over 2014-2020. Support for heritage-related research is available through at least 16 different funding strands.

1.9 Continued access to EU funding is of particular importance to heritage science research because any reduction in EU funding, coupled with HM Treasury/ Department for International Development's 'UK

Aid: Tackling global challenges in the national interest' (November 2015) and BIS's 'The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2016/17 to 2019/20' (March 2016), send 'take home' messages that the conventional research council pot is going to reduce and instead Grand Challenge projects and developing country projects will increase. Large projects tend to penalise small sectors such as heritage science due to scaling problems which is what happened with FP6. (Credit: Professor May Cassar, UCL Institute for Sustainable Heritage).

1.10 The UK has contributed significantly to the policy initiatives associated with the development of the research programmes to support cultural heritage. In the 'Joint Programming Initiative in Cultural Heritage & Global Change' the UK has representation on the governing board, executive board and as one of 12 experts on the scientific committee. In the Horizon 2020 'Expert group on Cultural Heritage' the UK had two members out of a group of ten.

1.11 Heritage science is now on the European road map of the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructure (ESFRI) having received the support of AHRC and STFC. This has opened up the opportunity to develop an ERIC (European Research Infrastructure Consortium). An [E-RIHS.EU](https://www.e-rihs.eu) (European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science) has been developed in which the UK is a partner and a mirror organisation is being developed in the UK (E-RIHS.UK). An H2020 (CALL: DEVELOPMENT AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF NEW PAN-EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES) INFRADEV proposal was submitted on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

1.12 NHSF calls on Government to advocate strongly for access to funds and mobility of people in its future negotiations with the EU. This advocacy should not just be on the behalf of the UK's universities but also its major cultural organisations (many of which have IRO status) and the independent organisations and businesses that have much to contribute to the highly interdisciplinary field of heritage science research.

Submitted on behalf of the National Heritage Science Forum  
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