

Budget 2021 and heritage science

On 3rd March the government published its [2021 budget](#) which sets out a three-point plan to protect the jobs and livelihoods of the British people as the country emerges from the coronavirus pandemic and forges a path to recovery.

Support schemes and tax reliefs to help ease the effects of the pandemic include:

- Job Retention Scheme will be extended until September and the Self Employment Income Support Scheme will continue with a fourth and fifth grant.
- There will be a further 100% relief from business rates until 30th June and a 66% reduction in rates for the rest of the year.
- The VAT rate for tourism and hospitality will be kept at 5% until 30th September and then will increase to 12.5% to 31st March.
- Restart Grants were also announced for businesses in non-essential retail, hospitality, and leisure.

The second part of the plan is to begin fixing the public finances, while the third step is to begin work to build the nation's future economy, with a focus on green growth and innovation.

Announcements in the budget with potentially relevant outcomes for heritage science are listed below. The numbers in brackets correspond to the paragraph numbers in the [print format budget publication](#).

Cultural Heritage

- Culture Recovery Fund – The government will provide £300 million to extend the Culture Recovery Fund to continue to support key national and local cultural organisations in England as the sector recovers. (2.56)
- National Museums and cultural bodies – The government will provide £90 million for continued support for government-sponsored National Museums and cultural bodies in England. (2.57)
- The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund will support local areas across the UK to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life. This will include regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport and investing in culture and heritage, ensuring that community assets continue to serve local people across the whole UK. (2.119)
- the £220 million UK Community Renewal Fund prospectus launch, providing funding for local areas across the UK in 2021-22 for projects investing in people, communities, and businesses. (2.123)

- the £150 million Community Ownership Fund, helping to ensure that communities across the UK can continue to benefit from the local facilities and amenities that are most important to them (2.124)
- investment of £18.8 million in local cultural infrastructure projects in Carlisle, Hartlepool, Wakefield and Yeovil to boost the vibrant cultural life of these towns and cities. (2.127)

Workforce

- The government is modernising the immigration system to attract and retain the most highly skilled, globally mobile talent – particularly in academia, science, research, and technology. By March 2022, an elite points-based visa will be introduced. Within this visa there will be a 'scale-up' stream, enabling those with a job offer from a recognised UK scale-up to qualify for a fast-track visa. The Global Talent visa will be reformed, including to allow holders of international prizes and winners of scholarships and programmes for early promise to automatically qualify. (2.140)
- High quality traineeships for young people – The government will provide an additional £126 million in England for high quality work placements and training for 16–24-year-olds in the 2021/22 academic year. Employers who provide trainees with work experience will continue to be funded at a rate of £1,000 per trainee. (2.29)
- Payments for employers who hire new apprentices – The government will extend and increase the payments made to employers in England who hire new apprentices. Employers who hire a new apprentice between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021 will receive £3,000 per new hire, compared with £1,500 per new apprentice hire (or £2,000 for those aged 24 and under) under the previous scheme. (2.30)
- Piloting new technologies to help people find jobs – The government will invest £1.3 million over 2021-22 and 2022-23 to pilot the use of new technologies to support in or out-of-work people to find new job opportunities which are best suited to their skills and experience. (2.32).

Research landscape

- The government will carry out a review of R&D tax reliefs, with a consultation published alongside the Budget. This review will consider all elements of the two R&D tax relief schemes, with the objective of ensuring the UK remains a competitive location for cutting edge research, that the reliefs continue to be fit for purpose and that taxpayer money is effectively targeted. The government is also publishing the summary of responses of the recent consultation on the scope of qualifying expenditures for R&D tax credits across the UK. The government will consider bringing data and cloud computing costs into the scope of relief alongside a number of other policy options and priorities at the wider review. (2.149)

Innovation/ Sustainable Development

- UK Infrastructure Bank – The new UK Infrastructure Bank will provide financing support to private sector and local authority infrastructure projects across the UK, to help meet government objectives on climate change and regional economic growth (2.112)
- Future Fund: Breakthrough – Building on the government’s Future Fund, the government will commit £375 million to introduce Future Fund: Breakthrough, a new direct co-investment product to support the scale up of the most innovative, R&D-intensive businesses. (2.142)
- Help to Grow: Digital – The government will launch a new UK-wide scheme in the autumn to help 100,000 SMEs save time and money by adopting productivity-enhancing software, transforming the way they do business. This will combine a voucher covering up to half of the costs of approved software up to a maximum of £5,000, and free impartial advice, delivered through an online platform (2.139)

See also:

[Build Back Better: our plan for growth](#) (March 2021) the government’s wider economic plan for investment in skills, infrastructure and growth

[Levelling Up Fund: Prospectus](#) (March 2021)

*National Heritage Science Forum
March 2021*