



NHSF responded to the recent [Heritage Lottery Fund consultation](#) on its role, vision and funding priorities for HLF's next Strategic Funding Framework 2019-2024.

NHSF has submitted a response that focused on the areas of the consultation that touched on the well-being benefits of heritage participation, place-making, and digital and innovation. The Forum contributed ideas and insight gained from recent events it has run, and work on the new National Heritage Science Strategy which is under development.

- HLF's role now and in the future

NHSF responded that HLF's most important role, beyond grant-giving, lies in advocating for the value of heritage, as HLF is in a strong position to carry out evidence-supported advocacy, through its overview of the sector and related data, and its direct links to a broad public audience.

- Strategic priorities for heritage & people + measuring impact

Well-being benefits of heritage: "we want to recognise the personal well-being benefits which heritage projects achieve for those with lowest relative well-being".

NHSF contributed ideas on 'how people might gain greater well-being through heritage projects' based on the 'health, wellbeing and cultural heritage research, evidence and practice' event & debate held in November 2017, and the subsequent emerging health and wellbeing strand of the new National Heritage Science Strategy. The Forum raised the potential to create citizen heritage scientists as a means of providing new opportunities for people to engage with heritage and increase their sense of well-being.

- Strategic interventions and partnerships

Place-making: The HLF consultation proposed place-based funding that "would cover all types of heritage, including those previously funded through programmes targeted at parks, townscapes, landscapes and places of worship" (i.e. a broader definition of heritage).

NHSF strongly agreed that HLF should focus on putting heritage at the heart of place-making across the UK, adding:

"NHSF is currently exploring the need for, and benefits of, better physical and digital heritage science research infrastructure across the UK, so that there is a better geographical distribution of, and access to, heritage science research."

NHSF brought to HLF's attention the recently launched UK hub of the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science (E-RIHS) as one means of achieving this. "We would like to see the conversations around the role of heritage in place extending to heritage science and research.

Again, the potential of creating heritage citizen scientists could provide a new way for people to engage with their local heritage.”

- Digital

NHSF made suggestions on how HLF can better support organisations to use digital technology, including:

- Promote the use of consistent standards and guidelines
- Share examples of practice gained from its own (HLF) projects, but also practice in other sectors
- Ensure organisations are able to collect good quality audience data to know where their ‘gaps’ are
- Carry out research on behalf of the sector into how target audiences use technology and share this in a format that is accessible to organisations big and small so that they can use (or use as a basis for further exploration) this sector research and apply it to their own identified audience gaps
- Explore projects (such as those from Culture24) to build the digital literacy of staff, volunteers and governors

In terms of helping organisations ensure that their digital content is accessible to the public and safely guarded for the future:

- Require that a digital preservation plan is included in any application that produces digital output
- Point to existing guidance for doing this (gave examples), or work with other sectors such as ADS to develop guidelines that are fit for the sector

How can HLF support innovation in the use of digital tech by organisations that look after heritage and engage the public with it?

- Support heritage organisations to take risks in exploring the potential use of technology as a tool for looking after and engaging the public with heritage. It could be useful to partner with other non-heritage organisations to do this (e.g. NESTA, ACE).

“NHSF is currently investigating ways that will improve the translation of heritage science research into practice. This includes how organisations are developing and applying new technology for conservation management and engagement. NHSF would be interested in talking to HLF about its initial findings from this consultation, and possible models for developing this idea to make better use of existing and future innovative use of technology so that it delivers greater impact for society and the economy.”

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