

## A new strategic partnership between NHSF and E-RIHS UK

**Press release – 6 December 2018**



In the latest move to build UK heritage science capacity, E-RIHS UK and the National Heritage Science Forum (NHSF) announce a new strategic partnership for wider engagement with the UK research and heritage sectors. The partnership will help develop a distributed heritage science research infrastructure hub in the UK and will open new avenues for engagement between British and international heritage science communities.

The partnership helps strengthen NHSF relationships with those who already are part of E-RIHS such as the National Gallery or the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre. Once the research infrastructure is launched, the NHSF members will be able to access a range of research facilities and expertise in the UK and internationally, from mobile instrumentation, archival material to integrated databases. That's because E-RIHS and the NHSF will be part of a wider research consortium bringing together renowned heritage organisations in sixteen countries. E-RIHS UK will benefit from NHSF's wide-ranging expertise in the areas of policy engagement, strategic insight, sector research and resource sharing.

May Cassar, the national coordinator of E-RIHS, said: *"this partnership will increase the visibility and strength of UK heritage science distributed infrastructures"*

The National Heritage Science Forum brings together leading heritage science organisations in the UK. It is committed to demonstrating the public benefit of heritage science and works through its members to improve partnerships within the sector and with others. The Forum responds to policy issues, facilitates the sharing of equipment and resources, improves access to heritage science research, collates data on funding and research activity and increases public engagement with heritage science through its communication activities. The current membership of NHSF comprises eighteen organisations, including The National Archives, Tate, National Galleries Scotland, Historic Royal Palaces, ICON and the National Trust.

Alastair McCapra, NHSF Chairman, said: *"NHSF is delighted to have formed this partnership with E-RIHS UK and sees the opportunities it presents for mutually supportive activity as critical to achieving the step-change in heritage science infrastructure that we need. UK heritage science research has a key role to play in addressing important challenges such as adaptation to climate change or*

*enhanced access to, and understanding of, heritage through developments in digital technology. These challenges are best addressed by working together and this new partnership will help organisations in the UK to do that.”*

E-RIHS UK is a national heritage science hub comprising thirteen institutional members from universities, to research facilities, heritage organisations and museums. It seeks to build a British chapter of an international consortium with a vision to transform research on heritage interpretation, preservation, documentation and management. E-RIHS aims to provide advanced services to the scientific community through bringing together cutting-edge tools and expertise:

- (i) E-RIHS ARCHLAB: access to physical collections, such as objects, technical images, samples and reference materials, analytical data and conservation documentation, as stored in museums, galleries and research institutions
- (ii) E-RIHS DIGILAB: online access to digital tools concerning heritage and data, with the aim to make it FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable). This includes and enables access to searchable registries of datasets, reference collections, thesauri, ontologies etc., and supports data interoperability through the creation of shared knowledge organization systems
- (iii) E-RIHS FIXLAB: large-scale and medium-scale fixed facilities – e.g. particle accelerators, neutron and laser sources and other essentially immovable research facilities including the associated unique expertise
- (iv) E-RIHS MOLAB: access to a comprehensive selection of mobile analytical instrumentation for non-invasive measurements on objects, buildings, and sites, allowing the implementation of complex multi-technique diagnostic projects for in situ investigations.

The partnership with NHSF is part of E-RIHS overall strategy to build connected national and international heritage science research capabilities. As part of the new partnership, in the first place NHSF representatives will join the E-RIHS steering committee during the forthcoming annual meeting in January 2019.

**Further information:**

National Heritage Science Forum, [www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk](http://www.heritagescienceforum.org.uk)

Caroline Peach – [administrator@heritagescienceforum.org.uk](mailto:administrator@heritagescienceforum.org.uk)

E-RIHS UK, <https://e-rihs.ac.uk/>

Magdalena Buchczyk - [m.buchczyk@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:m.buchczyk@ucl.ac.uk)