Collections Care for Access

Museum Development Fund Small Grants 2007 – 2008 Guidelines

The Museum Development Fund Small Grants is created through the use of Renaissance monies given directly to MLA North West. The Collections Care for Access grant fund has grown out of the recent *Collections Care and Conservation Mapping Exercise* undertaken by Halahan Consultants on behalf of Renaissance NW during 2006**.**

Renaissance NW is a strategic partnership between MLA NW and the North West Hub. Together we are providing a programme of regional investment that uses Collections for the Future as a model, and focuses on providing benefits to users by improving access and use of collections through better collections development and care & interpretation.

The Collections Care for Access grant fund is complemented by Renaissance North West investment in the Development Officer, (Renaissance) based at MLA North West, Accreditation training and support delivered by the Development Officer (Standards), Collections Care training opportunities and Collections Care Liaison post based at Lancashire County Museums Service, Collections for the Future Challenge fund: Small Grants scheme (Renaissance NW), Roman Heritage Development Officer post based at Manchester Museum, and a conference with the University of Manchester to be held 19th Spetmeber 2007.

Collections for the Future report by the Museums Association focuses on innovative ways in which museums can make their collections more accessible and engaging for current and new audiences.

See Collections for the Future report at the following link:
http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/ns/policy_collections.pdf

Application Guidance Notes

Application Form
An application form is available to download at: http://www.mlanorthwest.org.uk

How much is available?
£60,000 has been earmarked for the small grants scheme 'Collections Care for Access'. Applicants can apply for a maximum of £5,000. However, it is a competitive application process so not all will be successful. Applications requesting smaller sums of money will therefore be welcomed as will applications demonstrating matched funding.

What is the timetable?
Electronic applications must be submitted to Catriona West, MLA NW's Development Officer (Renaissance) at Catriona.west@mlanorthwest.org.uk no later than **5.00pm on 10th May 2007**. A signed hard copy must also be sent before we can release funds

A **confirmation email** will be sent on receipt of application within one working day. If you do not receive this email please contact Catriona West on 01925 625056 (direct dial) or 01925 625050 (switchboard).

The postal address for receipt of hard copy applications is MLA North West, Ground Floor, The Malt Building, Wilderspool Park, Greenall's Avenue, Warrington. WA4 6HL.

Timetable	
Closing date for applications	10th May
Decisions Announced & Funding Agreements Issued	22nd May
Deadline for Completion of Projects and Receipt of Evaluation Reports	31st March 2008

Who can apply?
- Applications can only be submitted by Registered / Accredited museums in the North West of England.
- Applications will also be accepted from Museums that are currently not accredited but can demonstrate that they are working towards the standard.
- NW Hub and National Museums are not eligible to submit an application on their own behalf but can be involved in partnership applications. The application must be submitted by a non Hub venue.
- We particularly welcome applications which directly foster partnerships with libraries and archives and other sectors.

What Type of projects will be funded?
All projects must be able to demonstrate how users will benefit and how access to the collections will be increased.
1. Open Storage
   a. Accessible storage boxes, archival materials and shelving
   b. Security upgrades
   c. Research facilities
2. Targeted conservation
   a. To support access to collections on display
   b. To support access to items for loan and touring exhibitions
3. Improvements to collections care for objects on display
   a. Purchasing equipment or materials
   b. Calibrating or recommissioning equipment
   c. Training in the use and interpretation of environmental data
   d. Equipment for store areas will be supported if the project can demonstrate how users will benefit and how access to stored collections will increase as a result
4. Funding for condition surveys to be carried out by conservators, to establish the conservation priorities of a museum.

Eligible Costs
- Equipment
- Materials
- Training
- Furniture (storage, display and for the purposes of research)
- Consultancies to carry out specific pieces of work on conservation or condition surveys
- Staff costs are only eligible where an individual is not a permanent member of staff but has been contracted specifically to carry out a piece of work, or where a post has been backfilled in order to release an individual to carry out such work.

Ineligible Costs
- Publications
- Purchase of collections
- Work funded through insurance claims
- Costs such as staff sickness and maternity leave cannot be covered by the grants.
- Ongoing operational costs e.g. on-going maintenance costs.
- Day to day running or maintenance costs, the costs of regularly occurring activities, or projects that have already begun.
- The costs of examination fees, personal equipment, accreditation fees or professional body membership fees

Who should you consult before submitting an application?
We expect any project to have been devised in consultation with an appropriately qualified person. This may require you to obtain professional advice from your Curatorial Adviser, or internally from colleagues. Please ensure that we know what advice you have taken, and from whom, whether internally or externally.

Assessment criteria and process

- That the proposed project will bring benefits to audiences, either in the immediate or longer term.
- That appropriate standards have been identified for the project.
- That the project meets the museum's own long term development plans and priorities as set out in Forward, Development or Business plans.
- That clear objectives, deliverables and outcomes have been drawn up and that an appropriate timetable and evaluation strategy is in place for the project.
- That the proposed project will offer value for money.
- That the project will improve practice.
- Include elements of partnership and collaboration with external bodies and/or internally across departments of the museum.
- Foster cross-domain working between museums, libraries and Archives.

Applications will be assessed by a panel made up of representatives from MLA NW, and the NW Conservators Group. Our decision regarding the award is final and appeals against decisions and recommendations will not be considered, although feedback will be provided if requested.

Standards

- Benchmarks in Collections Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries, available to download from the Collections Link website at http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/collections_care

- Any external conservation practices should be included on the Conservation Register managed by the Institute for Conservation (Icon) or an individual who is accredited by one of the recognised conservation professional bodies.

- The Accreditation Standard, in particular but not exclusively Section 4.5. The Accreditation Standard is available at: www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//A/accreditation_standard_pdf_5640.pdf

- Inspiring Learning for All: A Framework for Access and Learning in Museums, Archives and Libraries http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/

- Collections for the Future, available at http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/ns/policy_collections.pdf

Funding Agreements and Reporting

Formal Funding agreements will be issued during the week of the 21st May 2007 which will set out the conditions of the grant.

We will require a final report which provides quantitative information, describes project activity and provides qualitative information using the generic learning outcomes in the ILFA framework. A simple report template will be provided to all successful applicants.

The report **must** be accompanied by two digital photographs of publishable quality which relate directly to the project, together with a statement, signed by the applicant, that MLA North West can use the report and images in its publications and/or website.

MLA North West reserves the right to disseminate these case studies to promote new/best practice and to advocate the impact of museums to other organisations.

Queries
Any queries regarding this grant programme should be directed to:

Catriona West, Development Officer (Renaissance)
01925 625056
Catriona.west@mlanorthwest.org.uk

Appendix A - General Conditions of Award.
- Grant aid cannot be claimed on work undertaken before an application is made and no work can commence prior to formal written approval of the project.
- All projects must be completed within the stated timescale. MLA North West should be notified as soon as possible if there is any variation, with an explanation. Severe slippage in the project timetable may result in the withdrawal of the grant.
- The grant must not be used for any purpose other than that stated in the grant award notification letter. Consent to change the project must be sought from and is at the discretion of MLA North West.
- If it transpires that funds have been used inappropriately or fraudulently for an activity not covered by the funding agreement, MLA may terminate the agreement unilaterally and demand that the grant aid be refunded.
- MLA is required to ensure that all purchases of works, equipment, goods and services are based on value for money, i.e. quality and delivery against price. Contracts should be placed on a competitive basis unless there are good reasons to the contrary.
- The grant recipient must have systems in place to provide an adequate audit trail.
- Support by MLA North West must be acknowledged in any advertisement, report, publicity or permanent record associated with the scheme, as follows: *This project has been supported by MLA North West through the Museums Development Fund*. The logo and guidelines for use can be provided in either hard copy or electronic format.
- The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's logo must also be used (this will also be provided with grant letter).

Appendix B Renaissance Vision and Priority Areas

Renaissance Vision

Renaissance: increasing participation by developing world-class and sustainable museums. This vision has been developed following a review of Renaissance implementation and is aligned with MLA's own Mission and Vision. World-class sustainable museums in the 21st Century should ensure that:

- users are at the centre of all the museum does;

- users represent diverse communities;

- users receive a high-quality experience through engagement with collections;

- museums and their users have high expectations of each other, met through-high quality services;

- museums support regeneration, sustainable communities and community cohesion agendas within their localities;

- collections comprising real evidence of the diversity of the cultural and natural history of people and places are valued and developed;

- knowledge and expertise is shared between institutions and all communities, where users bring their own experience and meanings to objects, and specialist staff actively facilitate learning, discovery and research;

- museums are learning organisations, where staff are developing themselves and their practice based on continuous evaluation;

- the workforce is representative of the diverse communities it serves;

- partnership-working is key to the development of services with and for users.

Renaissance Priority Areas

In order to achieve the Vision, all partners and programmes within the Renaissance framework need to deliver against the three Priority Areas, which are as follows.

- **Priority Area 1**: Increase and sustain user participation.

- **Priority Area 2**: Provide benefits to users by developing the organisation and workforce.

- **Priority Area 3**: Provide benefits to users through improving access to and use of collections, through better collections development, care and interpretation.

In order to increase and sustain user participation it is understood that collections and the organisation itself must be developed. These three priority areas are therefore interconnected and cannot, and should not, be tackled in isolation. This interrelation is outlined in the diagram overleaf.