

**'Unleash the power of your collections!'**

## **Collections for the Future Challenge Fund 2007 – 2008**

### **Guidelines**

The Collections for the Future Challenge fund is for inspired collections' interpretation and access projects carried out by regional museums and galleries and taking place by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. This is an opportunity to experiment, take risks, to do something imaginative and innovative with collections.

Renaissance North West support is available for initiatives delivered by non-Hub museums and galleries, which are realistic and deliverable, and have clear ambitions to explore the Engagement and Dynamic Collections themes of the Collections for the Future agenda, in particular by increasing access to unknown or underused parts of collections that may be currently in store or on display.

This may be through:

- redisplay and reinterpretation
- events and activities
- interpretative materials such as information panels, publications
- opening up collection stores
- digitisation
- research and development, including travel and buying in expertise for specific collections' access research projects, including long loans or transfers of collections

The Collections for the Future Challenge Fund aims to extend the benefits of Renaissance in the Regions and deliver the vision to increase participation by developing world class and sustainable museums in the North West.

It is part of 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, care & interpretation. It is managed by the Collections for the Future Steering Group, which is a partnership between MLA North West, the North West Hub and strategic regional partners.

It 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 Care for Access: Small Grants scheme (Museums Development Fund), Roman Heritage Development Officer post based at Manchester Museum, and a conference with the University of Manchester to be held 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

*Collections for the Future* is a report by the Museums Association, which 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](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?

£75,000 has been earmarked for the Collections for the Future Challenge Fund. Individual museums and galleries can apply for a maximum of £5,000; partnerships of museums can apply for more. However, it is a competitive application process so not all will be successful. Partnerships are encouraged, as are relationships with Hub venues and or National museums.

### Who is it for?

The Challenge Fund is for non-Hub museums and galleries in the North West region, who are Registered/Accredited. It is also for Museums that are currently not Accredited but can demonstrate that they are working towards the standard.

### Who or what isn't it for?

Hub venues  
National museums and galleries  
Initiatives that are already receiving Renaissance funding  
Freelancers or consultants

### What is the timetable?

#### 10 May - deadline for receipt of applications

Electronic applications must be submitted to Catriona West, MLA North West's Development Officer (Renaissance) at [catriona.west@mlanorthwest.org.uk](mailto:catriona.west@mlanorthwest.org.uk) no later than 5.00pm on 10<sup>th</sup> 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	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2007
Decisions Announced & Funding Agreements Issued	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2007
Deadline for Completion of Projects and Receipt of Evaluation Reports	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2008

## **What Type of projects will be funded?**

**All projects must be able to demonstrate how users will benefit and how access to collections will be increased, in particular to unknown or underused parts of collections that may be currently in store, in loan collections or on display**

- creating new environments for experiencing collections through reviewing collections for different types of use, through redisplay and reinterpretation
- creating new opportunities to understand collections through hidden histories and different voices in interpretative materials, such as information panels, labelling and publications including electronic interpretation
- creating new opportunities to engage with objects, ideas and knowledge through events and activities, such opening up of museum stores or working with conservators
- creating new opportunities for developing collections or increasing the mobility of collections through research and development, including travel and buying in external expertise for specific collections' access research projects, including long loans or transfers of collections

### **Eligible Costs**

- Events
- Materials
- Publications
- Training
- Furniture (storage, display and for the purposes of research)
- Consultancies to carry out specific pieces of work on collections
- 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 released an individual to carry out such work.

### **Ineligible Costs**

- 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

### **Assessment criteria and process**

- That the proposed project will bring benefits to users, 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.

Applications will be assessed by a panel made up of representatives from the Collections for the Future Steering Group, chaired by the Head of Collections & Access, Deputy Director, Manchester Museum; North West Hub Manager; Development Officer (Renaissance); Cheshire County Museums Officer; Museums & Heritage Manager, Blackburn & Darwen. The panel's decision is final and appeals against decisions and recommendations will not be considered, although feedback will be provided if requested.

### **Funding Agreements and Reporting**

Formal Funding agreements will be issued during the week of the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2007 which will set out the conditions of the grant. Renaissance North West monies will be managed and administered by MLA North West.

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 Renaissance North West can use the report and images in its publications and/or website.

Renaissance 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](mailto: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 the Collections for the Future Challenge Fund steering group.
- If it transpires that funds have been used inappropriately or fraudulently for an activity not covered by the funding agreement, MLA North West may terminate the agreement unilaterally and demand that the grant aid be refunded.
- MLA North West 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 Renaissance 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 Renaissance North West – Museums for Changing Lives.* The logo and guidelines for use can be provided in either hard copy or electronic format.
- The Renaissance North West logo must be used (this will also be provided with grant letter).