



# **Delivering Across Scotland**

**National Strategy 2023-2027**

# WELCOME TO OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

This is our fifth National Strategy, which continues long-standing programmes delivered by National Museums Scotland across Scotland and in support of our sector.

Every year we share our collections and expertise through loans, participation in national projects, community engagement, funding for acquisitions and free knowledge and skills development opportunities for other museums.

This work across Scotland plays an important part in helping us deliver the aims and priorities set out in National Museums Scotland's Strategic Plan (2022- 2027) towards our vision, *Inspiring People: Addressing the Challenges of Our Age*.

Our consultation earlier this year identified strong support for continuation of this work with communities and our sector. It confirmed the strengths and impact of our national role but also the current fragility of the culture and heritage sector and its funding environment. Gaps in expertise and support have emerged, which have helped us consider where National Museums Scotland can best place its activities in the coming years.

We look forward to collaborating with partners and stakeholders, old and new, to deliver this new Strategy.

**Dr Chris Breward**  
**Director, National Museums Scotland**



# Delivering Across Scotland 2023-2027



**The context in which we are delivering this new National Strategy has shifted significantly in recent years. The museum sector is experiencing challenging economic constraints across public services. Our consultation confirmed a decline in local staffing numbers and expertise, potential local closures and reduction of opening hours. Repeated concerns were expressed about Scottish museums' long-term ability to care for, curate, manage and display collections. This will be a challenging period for all.**

There are, however, opportunities that unite the sector, and National Museums Scotland can add value in furthering these interests with communities and museums across Scotland. We will collaborate with Museums Galleries Scotland to support aspects of the new Strategy for Scotland's Museums and Galleries, partner with other museums on shared priorities and work towards net zero. We will support public sector reform interests and deliver high-quality community-led experiences in person and online, as well as embracing and exploring national colonial histories and their legacies, and broadening audience engagement.

In our consultation to produce this Strategy, we heard a strong and consistent request for National Museums Scotland to continue to provide collections training, lending and acquisition funding programmes, lead initiatives and be an advocate for the importance of investment in caring for and managing collections and improving access to them. While we are not resourced to provide all the support the sector and communities require, this National Strategy has identified two clear priorities for our work.

## **Our focus in 2023-2027**

### **Share Scotland's collections**

We will increase engagement with the National Collection for the benefit of people, places and communities across Scotland through maximising our national partnership working.

### **Support our sector**

We will increase the impact of the support we provide to the sector around collections knowledge and skills.



# Vision, Aims and Objectives



## **Vision**

*To engage and inspire people across Scotland by sharing our collections, their stories and our expertise for the widest benefit.*

## **Aims and Objectives**

### **1: Share Scotland's collections**

- Provide a National Loans Programme aiming to increase the overall reach, profile and impact of the National Collection.
- Deliver learning and engagement activities that engage and inspire broad audiences across Scotland (including National Schools Programme and Maths Week Scotland).
- Develop our practice, partnerships and external funding to support or trial new approaches to access the National Collection across Scotland.

## 2: Support our sector

- Administer the National Fund for Acquisitions, enhancing its reach and impact.
- Share our expertise through our National Training and Advice programmes, targeting known gaps in national collections skills, knowledge and standards.
- Champion improvements in collections infrastructure nationally and facilitate a series of strategic partnerships and projects to assist in building this national capacity.
- Raise funds for a series of targeted collections knowledge and skills-building projects.



# Values and Resources



## Values

Our organisational values describe how we want to operate – with each other and externally – and underpin our delivery of this Strategy:

### **Creative:**

we are innovative and thrive on good ideas

### **Inclusive:**

we are open, friendly and enabling

### **Collaborative:**

we are enquiring, receptive and well connected

### **Forward-thinking:**

we look for the big picture as well as the detail

## Resources

Our ambition to deliver and enhance our programmes across Scotland remains high. However, the real terms reduction in our Grant in Aid funding over the past 10 years, alongside the decline in investment in local museums, means the entire sector faces significant challenges. We will, therefore, need to prioritise our national work on meeting needs or opportunities where we are uniquely placed and appropriately resourced to advise and where there is strong alignment with our own strategic interests.

Our core priorities are delivery of the National Training Programme, the National Fund for Acquisitions and National Loans programmes. Delivery of our full National Strategy stated aims and objectives is reliant on successfully harnessing additional external funds.





# Measuring and evidencing our impact



**We will measure and manage our performance and report on its impact annually, both by qualitative review and quantitative evaluation. Our development will be based around the four principles that steer the activities we undertake, so that by 2027 we will have:**

## **Shared expertise**

*Increased our activities around sharing our expertise and, as a result, our support for national collections knowledge, confidence and skills needs.*

## **Measured by**

- Seeking and responding to sector audience-led skills consultations or event evaluation and feedback to target specific skills needs.
- Measuring and monitoring participation levels in terms of the type of programme accessed, location, target audience reached, or funds dispersed.

## **Broadened audiences**

*Broadened and diversified the range of people and places across Scotland accessing, engaging with and benefitting from the National Collections.*

### **Measured by**

- Monitoring, reporting and responding to feedback on our work by audience type
- Measuring and monitoring participation levels in terms of the type of programme accessed, location and target audience reached.

## **Maximised our national contribution**

*Enhanced the public impact generated from our national programmes through strategic collaborations, effective communications and harnessing external funds.*

### **Measured by**

- Reporting annually on progress in meeting and progressing our strategic aims and objectives.
- Requiring use of our Acknowledgment Guides to credit National Museums Scotland and external funders.
- Collecting and reporting on ongoing and new partnerships and their funding.

## **Reduced our carbon footprint**

*Reduced the carbon footprint of our work ‘beyond our walls’ and shared our practice on this aspect of our work with the aim to inspire similar change in the wider museum sector.*

### **Measured by**

- Measuring and reporting on our carbon use across all activities.
- Promoting environmental sustainability methods and content across our programmes

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National Museum of Scotland  
National Museum of Flight  
National Museum of Rural Life  
National War Museum  
National Museums Collection Centre

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