

National  
Museums  
Scotland



National  
Programme  
2017/2018



## National Programme Across Scotland

Through our National Strategy 2016–2020, *Across Scotland, Working to Engage and Inspire*, we are endeavouring to bring our collections, expertise and programmes to people, museums and communities throughout Scotland.

In 2017/18 we worked in all of Scotland's 32 local authority areas to deliver a wide-ranging programme which included touring exhibitions and loans, community engagement projects, learning and digital programmes as well as support for collections development through the National Fund for Acquisitions, expert advice from our specialist staff and skills development through our National Training Programme.

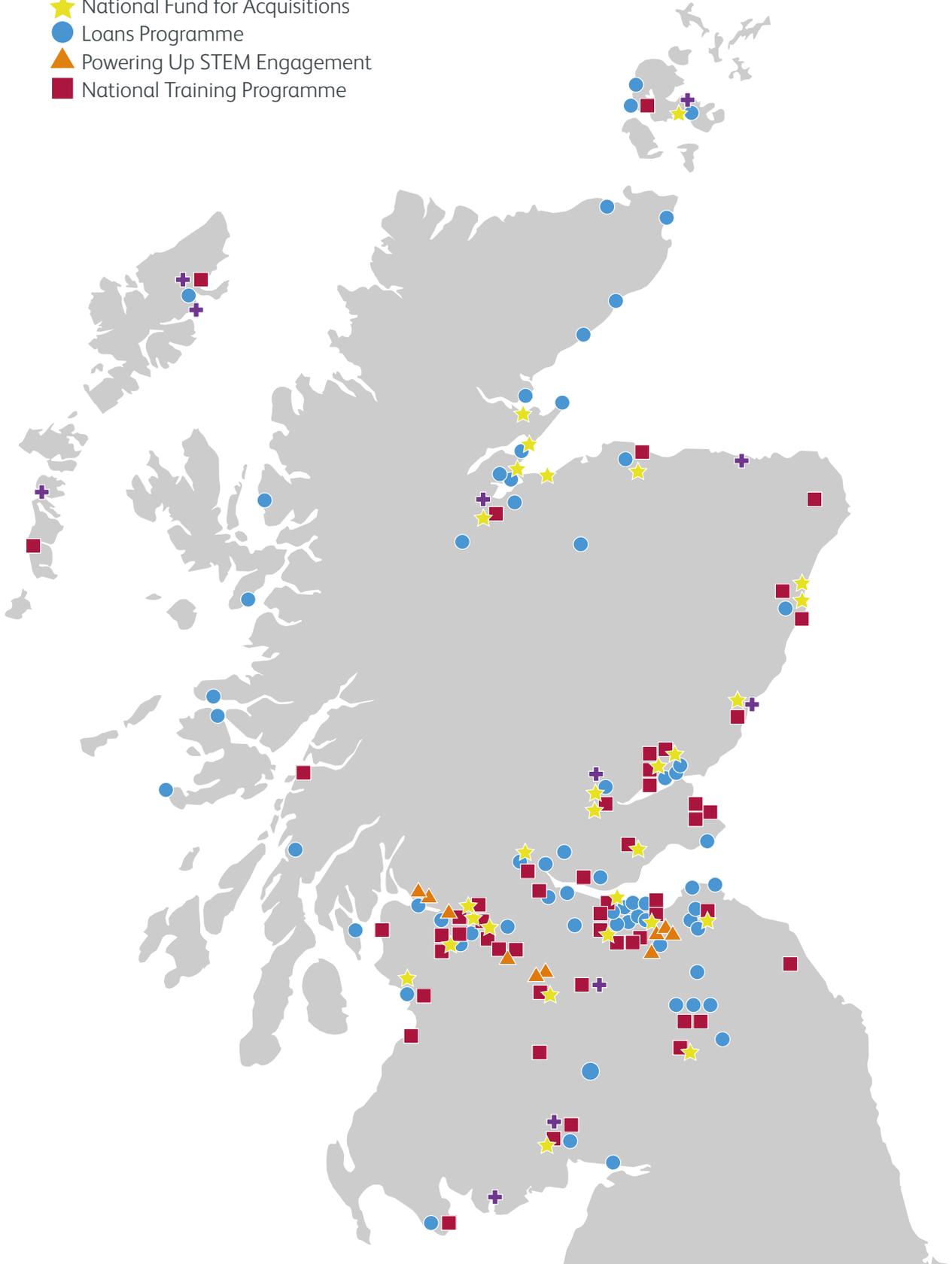
As part of our drive to engage young people in STEM learning (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), we developed *Powering Up*, a national science engagement programme for schools. Funded by the ScottishPower Foundation, we delivered workshops on wind, solar and wave energy in partnership with the National Mining Museum, the Scottish Maritime Museum and New Lanark World Heritage Site.

In January 2017, as part of the final phase of redevelopment of the National Museum of Scotland, we launched an ambitious national programme to support engagement with Ancient Egyptian and East Asian collections held in museums across Scotland. Funded by the National Lottery and the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, the project is providing national partnership exhibitions and supporting collection reviews, skills development and new approaches to audience engagement.

All of this work is contributing to our ambition to share our collections and expertise as widely as possible, ensuring that we are a truly national museum for Scotland.

# National Programme Across Scotland

- ✚ Touring Exhibitions
- ★ National Fund for Acquisitions
- Loans Programme
- ▲ Powering Up STEM Engagement
- National Training Programme



## National Programme in numbers

In 2017/2018 our work across Scotland included:

**115**

### **museums supported**

through training, loans, acquisitions, touring and community engagement projects

**48**

### **acquisitions supported**

by the National Fund for Acquisitions with a total purchase price of £367,740, helping to develop and enhance the collections of 29 organisations in 17 local authorities across Scotland

**3,895**

### **objects loaned**

to 107 organisations across Scotland, including loans to 15 new venues

**24,977**

### **people engaged**

through outreach programmes beyond our sites

**377**

### **training experiences**

provided to 75 organisations

**1,623**

### **people participated**

in 60 renewable energy workshops in our ScottishPower funded *Powering Up* programme

**23,279**

### **people visited**

*Fossil Hunters* with an average visitor increase of 30% across five venues



## Sharing Scotland's Collections

### Touring Exhibitions

Our National Strategy commits us to expand our National Touring Programme and make it as accessible as possible. To deliver on this ambition we have developed an annual programme of touring exhibitions and secured external funding to allow us to provide tours free of normal hosting costs in 2017 and 2018.

#### **Fossil Hunters: Unearthing the Mystery of Life on Land**

Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) this exhibition showcased research by the TW:eed Project (Tetrapod World: early evolution and diversification), a partnership of scientists from the Universities of Cambridge, Leicester and Southampton, the British Geological Survey and National Museums Scotland. The exhibition showed how recent fossil discoveries in Scotland explain how vertebrate life stepped from water onto land 360–345 million years ago. In 2016–2018 the exhibition toured to Biggar and Upper Clydesdale Museum; Montrose Museum and Art Gallery; Museum nan Eilean, Lews Castle, Stornoway; Museum nan Eilean, Uist & Barra (Benbecula); and Dumfries Museum & Camera Obscura (pictured above).

#### **Next of Kin: Scottish Families and the Great War**

Our First World War centenary exhibition displayed objects treasured by Scottish families whose loved ones served in the conflict. With funding from Scottish Government and Heritage Lottery Fund, the exhibition toured to nine museums across Scotland. Each venue incorporated local stories, developed a community engagement programme and participated in our project training programme. We worked with seven partner museums to create First World War handling resources as a legacy of the project. The tour attracted 63,000 visitors and over 1,900 people attended community events. External evaluation showed that 96% of visitors surveyed rated the exhibition as very or quite good while 85% said they had learned something new. Across partner museums *Next of Kin* attracted a median increase in visitors of 51%.



1. Pictish silver-gilt penannular brooch with animal-head terminals from St Ninian's Isle, Shetland, 8th century AD. The brooch is part of the exhibition *Scotland's Early Silver*, touring to Museum nan Eilean, Lews Castle (3 May–23 June 2018), Kirkcudbright Galleries (7 July–30 September 2018) and Duff House in Banff (12 October 2018–17 March 2019). Drawing on new findings from the Glenmorangie Research Project, the exhibition tells the story of silver during the emergence of early medieval kingdoms across Europe.



2. A highlight display of a Highland sword and targe, *Gifts for a Jacobite Prince*, toured in advance of the major exhibition *Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites* which opened at the National Museum of Scotland on 23 June 2017. The display toured to Perth Museum and Art Gallery and Inverness Museum and Art Gallery in 2016–2017.



## Loans

Our active programme of loans to museums across Scotland brings the national collection to a wider audience, inspiring fresh engagement with local communities. In 2017/18, 3,895 objects were loaned from the national collection to 107 organisations, including loans to 15 new venues.

### Grantown Museum and Heritage Trust

*The Laird of Grant's Piper* (pictured left), painted by Richard Waitt in 1714, was loaned to Grantown Museum and Heritage Trust for their exhibition *Richard Waitt - Family Portrait Painter to Clan Grant* (15 July–31 October 2017). Visitors to the exhibition were able to view the portrait with its pair, *The Laird of Grant's Champion*. These outstanding portraits are key images for the understanding of traditional highland culture in the early eighteenth century.

### Trimontium Heritage Centre

Five artefacts from the Roman site at Newstead were loaned to *Putting Their Feet Down* (4 April–31 October 2017) at the Trimontium Heritage Centre in Melrose. They included a large gilded bronze foot, dating from c100–180 AD, found at Milsington near Hawick in 1820. Dr Fraser Hunter, Principal Curator Prehistoric & Roman Archaeology, co-organised a symposium, *New Light on Old Metal*, at the National Museum of Scotland on 24 February 2018 with Dr John Reid of the Trimontium Trust. Supported by Historic Environment Scotland, Museums Galleries Scotland and Archaeology Scotland, the symposium showcased cutting edge archaeometallurgy research and explored how and why metals should be preserved and interpreted.

### Museum of the Isles

A replica of a stem post from a wooden boat, dating from c885–1035 AD, was loaned to *The Vikings and Our Maritime Heritage* (1 April–31 October 2017) at the Museum of the Isles, Isle of Skye. The stem post, which was found in a bog at Laig in the Isle of Eigg, was displayed alongside original boat timbers found in Skye to highlight the importance of seafaring and the prominence of the area in Viking times.

### The Orkney Museum

A collection of 59 archaeological artefacts, including material from Knap of Howar, was loaned to *Conversations with Magic Stones* (16 June–30 September 2017) at the Orkney Museum. The exhibition explored archaeological evidence for magic and belief, displaying stone tools dating from the Mesolithic period to the Bronze Age.

### Clydebank Museum and Art Gallery

An oil painting by John Fleming, *A Panoramic View of Dumbarton from the North West featuring the Dumbarton Glasswork Company*, 1832, was loaned to Clydebank Museum and Art Gallery for *A Touch of Glass* (15 January–11 May 2018) which focused on the history of the glass manufacturing industry in the area.

### Perth Museum and Art Gallery

Two brooches, a cast of King Constantine's cross from Dupplin and a reconstruction throne, handbells and a satchel made as part of the Glenmorangie Project were loaned to Perth Museum and Art Gallery for their exhibition *Picts and Pixels* (20 May–12 August 2017). The exhibition gave visitors the opportunity to explore recent research on the Picts through artefacts, digital interactives and immersive reconstructions of Pictish sites.

## National Fund for Acquisitions

National Museums Scotland manages the National Fund for Acquisitions, an annual grant of £150,000 provided by Scottish Government to help museums throughout Scotland to acquire objects for their collections. In 2017/18 the Fund contributed 48 grants worth £129,085, helping to develop and enhance the collections of 29 organisations in 17 local authorities across Scotland. At 31 March 2018, a further 13 grants with a total value of £43,483 had been committed but not yet paid. The total purchase value of the objects to which the Fund contributed was £367,740.

1. *Wee Bite* from a set of 60 linocut prints by Willie Rodger acquired with a grant from the National Fund for Acquisitions by East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture Trust for the collection at Lillie Art Gallery. © Reproduced by permission of the Artist.
2. A grant from the National Fund for Acquisitions enabled Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums to acquire this silver and enamel *Four Seasons Box* made in 1974 by local silversmith Norman Grant. © The Artist's Estate. Photograph courtesy of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections.
3. The National Fund for Acquisitions supported the purchase by Glasgow Museums of a collection of photographs by Oscar Marzaroli, including this 1963 photograph *Toffee Apples, Carnival at Glasgow Green*. © The Marzaroli Estate.



1.



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## Engaging and Inspiring People

### **Powering Up**

Funded by the ScottishPower Foundation, our science engagement programme *Powering Up* (pictured left) is focusing on renewable energy, part of our initiative to engage young people in STEM learning. A Science Engagement Manager and Science Engagement and Outreach Officer were appointed to build partnerships with researchers, scientists, engineers and schools. In partnership with the National Mining Museum, Scottish Maritime Museum and New Lanark World Heritage Site, workshops on wind, solar and wave energy were delivered to pupils from eleven primary schools in Midlothian, West Dunbartonshire and South Lanarkshire. The project delivered community activities in Midlothian and West Dunbartonshire with 1,623 people participating in 60 renewable energy workshops. New handling kits have been dispersed to local partners to support legacy STEM programmes and events.

### **Fife Young Carers**

National Museums Scotland helped Fife Young Carers Trust to secure funding from Curiosity, a new partnership between BBC Children In Need and the Wellcome Trust, to deliver engaging science activities to young carers across Fife. National Museums Scotland Learning & Programmes staff supported visits to the National Museum of Scotland by young carers and the results of their work will be showcased at the museum in 2018.

### **Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites online**

In 2017 we launched our third MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) in partnership with the University of Edinburgh. These free online courses have brought our collections to a significant number of learners beyond the walls of our museums. Over 7,000 people accessed *Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites* which explored the complex story of the Stuart dynasty over a period of two hundred years.



## Strengthening Skills and Expertise

Our popular National Training Programme offers free collections knowledge and skills training for staff in museums across Scotland. In 2017/18 we delivered 17 workshops and other events, providing 377 learning experiences for 310 museum staff from 75 organisations in 21 local authority areas. Subjects explored in our workshop series included the display and interpretation of natural history collections, an introduction to archaeology collections, how to tackle pest management in museums and best practice in object labelling and couriering objects for loan.

### **Display and Interpretation of Natural History Collections**

On 19 April 2017 participants from museums across Scotland were inspired by ideas and approaches to the display and interpretation of natural history collections. The workshop looked at the themes and stories which can be communicated through these collections, explored ethical and environmental issues and undertook practical exercises in writing engaging text and using interactives. One of the attendees wrote:

*I always find the National Training Programme workshops extremely useful as they make me view our collections from a different perspective. Meeting fellow colleagues from the sector provides opportunities for networking and collaboration.*



© Ruth Armstrong

### **Introduction to Archaeology Collections in Scotland**

We aim to target priority collections needs where we have strengths in collections expertise and skills that can provide the most benefit to Scottish museums. In 2016 we undertook a consultation which highlighted archaeology as a priority area for support. In 2017/18 we offered four workshops on different aspects of caring for and curating archaeology collections including prehistoric, Roman and Iron Age and early medieval collections. The workshops received very positive feedback:

*The workshop was pitched at the perfect level for beginners and covered different angles of archaeology. It was informative and practical.*

*I came away feeling as if I could approach a part of our collection that had filled me with dread before!*

### **Caring for collections**

Workshops on integrated pest management and object labelling helped participants recognise and respond to insect problems and quarantine objects effectively as well as developing the knowledge and practical skills necessary to label their own collections. Staff from our Collections Services department also travelled to conduct the workshops with museums in Stornoway and Benbecula.

*Thoroughly enjoyed the workshop. Both facilitators were knowledgeable and engaging. It was also great that the training came to us rather than require a visit to Edinburgh.*

## Collaboration and Capacity Building

Collaboration and strategic capacity building is at the heart of our National Programme. We seek to work in partnership and to ensure wherever possible that our activities add value to the sector.

### **Ancient Egypt and East Asia National Programme**

We will complete the transformation of the National Museum of Scotland in early 2019 with the opening of new galleries displaying our Ancient Egyptian and East Asian collections. In January 2018 we launched a new two-year national programme to support engagement with related collections held in museums across Scotland. *Revealing Cultures*, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and *Revealing Stories*, funded by the Museums Association Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, will deliver a touring exhibition on Ancient Egypt featuring collections from Hawick Museum, Montrose Museum and Art Gallery and the Baird Institute in Cumnock. The project will also create Reveals of collections from China, Japan and Korea held in four other local museums: Perth Museum and Art Gallery, University of Aberdeen Museums, Kirkcudbright Galleries and Fife Cultural Trust. Funding will support two national collections reviews, new digital resources and skills development to enhance interpretation and audience engagement with a focus on young people and individuals with additional support needs.

We have been working with our first Reveal partner, Perth Museum and Art Gallery, to develop *Dress to Impress* (26 May–17 October 2018). Working with local artist Jill Skulina, the learning team at Perth Museum and Art Gallery ran workshops with 9 community and school groups to explore the collections in more detail and provide their own creative response as a contribution to a community robe. The robe (pictured right) was added to the display at a celebration event on 26 June and will tour to community groups after the display ends.

### **Natural Science Collections across Scotland**

In response to our national consultation in 2015, we have focused on developing support in three collection areas: Natural Sciences, Archaeology and Dress and Textiles. Recent funding from the John Ellerman Foundation will support a national Fossil Collections Review and a report on the current status of Natural Sciences collections in Scotland, 2018–2020. This followed consultation and support from around 30 museums across Scotland.





## Supporting our Sector

### Future of Collections

On 14 June 2017 we jointly hosted *Sharing Collections*, a symposium with Museums Galleries Scotland at the National Museum of Scotland. 83 people attended to hear from a wide range of speakers on the theme of lending, borrowing and touring exhibitions. Breakout sessions took place on community curation, ethical considerations, lending and borrowing from national organisations, funding for loans and the Government Indemnity Scheme. We have been working with Museums Galleries Scotland to deliver a follow-up training programme.

### International Working

The UK Committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM UK) and National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC) 6th Working Internationally Conference, *Working Locally, Thinking Globally*, took place at the National Museum of Scotland on 7 March 2018. The conference, supported by the British Council, focused on how museums can respond to the new international context in light of recent world events, while maintaining relevance for both domestic and international audiences. Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, gave the keynote address.

### Contemporary Collecting

As museums across the world place a renewed focus on contemporary collecting, we have been discussing shared opportunities and challenges with curators across Scotland and internationally. On 26 March 2018 we held an event at the National Museum of Scotland with speakers Nancy Bercau of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington DC and Nick Smith of Museum nan Eilean in Stornoway. Each spoke about the way their museums are collecting political, social and cultural change in markedly different contexts. One of the most striking things to come out of the event was the sense that collecting the present is at its most immediate and relevant when it involves conversation and collaboration between museums.

**Image above:** Transport Scotland donated a replica bilingual Gaelic-English road sign from Skye, directing to Caol Loch Aillse / Kyle of Lochalsh / An t-Àth Leathann / Broadford, as part of National Museums Scotland's contemporary collecting programme.

**Image right:** National Training Programme Photography workshop, part of the Ancient Egypt and East Asia National Programme.





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Cover image: Cast of *Westlothiana lizziae*, from East Kirkton Quarry, Bathgate. From the national touring exhibition *Fossil Hunters: Unearthing the Mystery of Life on Land*.