

Heritage Lottery Fund Strategic Funding Framework 2019-2024 consultation:

Icon Response

21 March 2018

Icon, The Institute of Conservation, welcomes the opportunity to respond to the [Heritage Lottery Fund's consultation](#) on its Strategic Funding Framework 2019-2024. We hope the HLF will support collections management and research needs, address the sector's need for a strong workforce and promote the benefit of professional skills and high standards of practice.

Icon is a membership organisation and charity which brings together those with a passion for the care of cultural heritage. Icon raises awareness of the cultural, social and economic value of caring for heritage and champions high standards of conservation. We represent nearly 3,000 individuals and organizations comprising professional conservators, heritage scientists and many others committed to improving understanding of and access to our cultural heritage.

We have responded to the questions that we consider relevant to our sector and membership. We would like to thank all Icon members who helped to formulate our response.

Do you agree or disagree that HLF's role in future should be to inspire, lead and resource the UK's heritage to create positive and lasting change for people and communities?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree**
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

"Inspire, lead and resource" is more active than the former phrase "distributing money" and reflects HLF's central role within the heritage sector. However, heritage cannot be inspired, led or resourced, whereas the heritage *sector* can be.

HLF's investment and influence naturally places it in a leadership position in the sector but we have reservations regarding the word "lead" when it comes to policy. We urge HLF to participate

in the debate alongside other heritage bodies and to listen to their advice and expertise in influencing policy.

While “positive change” will implicitly be the result of high quality projects, the intrinsic link between the excellency of funded project teams and the potential of heritage to achieve its benefits to society should be made more explicit. As a leading body in the sector, HLF should champion high standards of practice and this should be reflected plainly in its tagline and the more detailed aspects of its role (see next answer).

“Lasting change” in the heritage context can have a negative connotation, for example through its reference to permanent damage to heritage assets. Furthermore, change inherently cannot be lasting. We consider the former phrase “make a difference” less awkward.

We support HLF’s approach to “champion a unified view of the full breadth of heritage – natural, built, tangible and intangible across the UK,” as described in Part 1. However, this description only strengthens the historic environment’s dominance of the heritage field with its absence of a reference to moveable heritage. We urge HLF to include moveable heritage (objects and collections) in its definition of the “full breadth of heritage.”

Thinking about the different aspects of HLF’s role, other than grant-giving, please select and rank up to 5 that you think are most important for HLF to do.

Building strategic partnerships and collaborations

Attracting other public or private financial support for heritage - 3

Supporting the capacity and resilience of the heritage sector as a whole - 2

Sharing learning - 4

Advocating for the value of heritage - 1

Supporting organisations within and beyond the heritage world to come together, collaborate and network - 5

Inspiring and promoting innovation in business models

Helping people and communities to meet their aspirations

Why do you say that?

We have ranked our top 5 choices with 1 as the most important.

1. Advocating for the value of heritage should be a central element of HLF’s role. HLF is well-positioned to raise awareness of the value of heritage with key decision-makers and significant funders. HLF should use its communications channels with National Lottery players to raise awareness and foster support.

In the context of declining National Lottery players, it is increasingly important for HLF to demonstrate the value that heritage can achieve through National Lottery funding. HLF could develop a more strategic communications plan, building on its existing media campaigns showcasing the benefits that HLF-funded projects have created for people and communities.

2. For heritage to continue to provide the full range of benefits to society, a resilient sector with an appropriately educated, skilled and diverse workforce is needed. HLF should support the sector in addressing critical skills needs and educate organisations to become more financially sustainable.
3. As the sector's most significant funder, the decline in National Lottery funds will inevitably be felt harshly. The decrease in local authority funding will further challenge the already under-resourced sector. Alternative financial support will be increasingly important in the challenging funding environment.
4. We recommend that HLF uses learning from project evaluations to strengthen the advice it gives to applicants and shares learning to encourage applicants to follow best practice. Publishing project and programme evaluations can enable applicants to learn from the successes and failures of others, increasing the quality of applications and the sector's sustainability.

We endorse DCMS's recommendation that HLF makes its data available as Open Data and its research as Open Access and that it clarifies its research strategy. The wide use of HLF research can support the sector in making the case for heritage in a unified voice. Awareness of HLF research can also enable organisations to consider their own research objectives and plans against those of HLF. This will facilitate identifying potential areas of collaboration and avoiding duplication of research efforts.

5. Partnership working is key to pooling limited resources for maximum impact. HLF should use its networks and knowledge of organisations to foster and promote opportunities for collaboration. Cross-sector collaboration should be encouraged in recognition of the impact that diverse policies and initiatives have on heritage and of other sector organisations' potential to attract new and alternative funding.

In addition to those discussed above, we consider an important aspect of HLF's role to be championing professional standards in the conservation, management, stewardship and interpretation of heritage. This will be crucial to enabling HLF's proposed outcome of heritage being in "better condition."

HLF's Policy Directions for Wales and Scotland include "the need to encourage the use of appropriate professional standards in projects" while the Policy Directions for England include the "need to encourage excellence" as a condition for HLF distributed funds. We consider these important policy directions for all UK heritage but find that HLF has not addressed how it plans to respond to them in the current proposed strategic framework.

What do you think are the most important heritage needs or opportunities that investment from the National Lottery should address in the UK?

HLF investment should support collections management and research needs, address the sector's need for a strong workforce and promote the benefit of professional skills and high standards of practice.

Moveable heritage collections are only accessible if they are managed by organisations and individuals that can catalogue, conserve, display, limit the rate of deterioration and interpret them. As recommended by The Mendoza Review, we urge HLF to support projects in collections management, storage, digitisation and responding to collections at risk. This support is crucial to maximising the public engagement and research value of collections. Investment in projects that enable staff to carry out collections management operations could also underpin other activities such as skills development, education and increasing diversity.

Access and support for research and science will be key to enabling the conservation, presentation, long-term management and interpretation of heritage, contributing to HLF's priorities of heritage being left in "better condition" and it being "identified and better explained."

HLF's Skills for the Future programme was a welcome strategic initiative to tackle critical skills needs. However, funding for heritage skills training remains in high demand. The recent closure of higher education conservation courses, coupled with an aging workforce and the uncertainties of Brexit have placed the future of specialist conservation skills at risk. Furthermore, expanded work descriptions have led to new skills demands with greater emphasis on business, digital, commercial and fundraising competencies.

HLF should prioritise investment to address these serious skills needs by supporting paid training placements, vocational learning programmes and skills development for employees and volunteers. Supporting workforce research will help to better understand the sector's needs and to focus investment.

Support for mid-career skills development will be important to raising the potential for cross domain working across the heritage sector and for maintaining a skilled workforce. However, investment should also aim to broaden entry routes into the professions and increase the number of those who consider a career in heritage. Support could take the form of funding apprenticeships, internships, T level work placements and helping organisations to promote the sector as an attractive place to work. Educational and youth outreach programs or targeted campaigns could be used to showcase career success stories.

Informing young people of career opportunities in heritage will be important to inspiring future professionals and falls in line with HLF's Policy Directions, which identify the need to "inspire children and young people, awakening their interest and involvement" in heritage. This has become increasingly important considering current education policy, which has side-lined creative disciplines in the curriculum, for example through the EBacc, and led to a decline in the study of arts subjects.

We believe that HLF should also support the promotion of professional standards and skills in the conservation of heritage. Research by the Historic Environment Forum's Client Demand Task Group revealed a lack of knowledge amongst clients of the range of specialist heritage skills and services available to care for heritage (<https://archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Market%20conditions%20for%20expert%20and%20specialist%20heritage%20skills%20and%20services%202015%20-16.pdf>). It discovered that while clients appreciate their heritage assets, their level of understanding of help available could be improved through education and the provision of unbiased advice.

The sector would benefit from funding for research on how best to educate heritage owners and clients on the importance of using appropriately skilled professionals and support for educational campaigns communicating this important message.

And what do you think are the most important heritage needs or opportunities that investment from the National Lottery should address in your region or country?

Icon is a UK-wide organisation and therefore cannot speak on behalf of regions or home nations. However, some of our answers reflect different regional agendas, such as our responses discussing professional standards.

Should HLF give priority to heritage considered to be 'at risk'?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

And how would you define heritage that is 'at risk'? Please give as much detail as possible in your answer.

We believe the criterion for support should be based on a number of factors including: a project's ability to allow heritage to deliver the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people, historical significance and risk of loss. "At risk" heritage should be protected through statutory measures and the NHMF's Memorial Fund. However, prioritisation is essential in the current economic climate. In some areas, resources are so scarce that it has become increasingly difficult for places and projects to make good – or any – applications to HLF. As a result, funding is increasingly awarded to better-resourced areas and projects, creating further imbalances.

Do you agree or disagree that HLF should address under-representation in our funding of geographical areas that have received least funding in the past?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

We believe the criterion for support should be based on a number of factors including: a project's ability to allow heritage to deliver the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people, historical significance, geographical context and risk of loss. Prioritisation is essential in the current economic climate. In some areas, resources are so scarce that it has become increasingly difficult for places and projects to make good – or any – applications to HLF. As a result, funding is increasingly awarded to better-resourced areas and projects, creating further imbalances.

Do you agree or disagree that HLF should address under-representation in our funding of geographical areas that experience deprivation?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Tend to disagree

- Strongly disagree
 Don't know

Why do you say that?

We believe the criterion for support should be based on a number of factors including: a project's ability to allow heritage to deliver the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people, historical significance, geographical context and risk of loss. Prioritisation is essential in the current economic climate. In some areas, resources are so scarce that it has become increasingly difficult for places and projects to make good – or any – applications to HLF. As a result, funding is increasingly awarded to better-resourced areas and projects, creating further imbalances.

The social groups in the list below are ones that we focus on, in line with our policy directions and the public sector Equality Duty. Are there groups you think we ought to prioritise in our Strategic Funding Framework? Please select all that apply.

- Children (under 11)**
 Young people (aged 11-25)
 Older people (over 65)
 Disabled people
 People from Black, Asian or minority ethnic communities
 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender

people

- People on low incomes/benefits**
 Other: or
 HLF should not prioritise social groups in it its

next Strategic Funding Framework

How could HLF respond to any specific barriers you know these groups face in applying for funding to support their community's heritage?

On a general level we suggest that HLF promotes funding opportunities to these groups and shares knowledge about possible projects. We also recommend HLF shares learning with the sector of creating opportunities for these groups.

How could HLF respond to any specific barriers you know these groups face accessing heritage opportunities?

There is a lack of socio-economically diverse applicants applying for conservation jobs. Socio-economic barriers are difficult to tackle at recruitment stages as barriers are often formed in early life. Socio-economic diversity is not something HLF can solve purely through its funding. We consequently recommend HLF works with DCMS across government to address educational barriers and policies contributing to the sector's lack of socio-economic diversity. Barriers should be considered using an intersectional approach that recognises the interrelated nature of under-represented groups' identity categories.

HLF should encourage projects that involve under-represented people in the heritage sector generally, focusing on engaging young people and minority groups. They should also support multi-agency projects working with communities, education, social landlords, careers advice and statutory agencies.

How could HLF most effectively support all organisations to reach a wider range of beneficiaries?

HLF could support and broker partnerships between heritage and community-based organisations.

How could HLF most effectively support organisations to collect better data on who is benefiting from heritage projects?

HLF could fund the development of best practice models for measuring the impact of heritage projects.

Why do you say that?

Collecting evidence, including both quantitative and qualitative data, on the benefit of heritage to people and society is crucial to fostering support. In comparison to other sectors, the heritage sector is not particularly strong at demonstrating impact.

Below is the list of outcomes we propose to cover in our new Strategic Funding Framework – these will be used to prioritise funding and measure impact.

1. **Heritage will be in better condition**
2. **Heritage will be identified and better explained**
3. **People will have developed skills**
4. **People will have learnt about heritage**
5. **People will have greater well-being**
6. **A wider range of people will be involved in heritage**
7. **The funded organisation will be more resilient**
8. **The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit**
9. **The local economy will be boosted**

Do you agree or disagree that HLF should focus on these nine outcomes?

- Strongly agree**
- Tend to agree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

We agree that heritage being in “better condition” should be an important outcome of HLF’s strategic funding. However, the framework does not detail how HLF intends to ensure that funded projects are delivered by competent teams that include the appropriate skills and experience to enhance heritage, nor how improvement in condition will be measured.

HLF's Policy Directions for Wales and Scotland include "the need to encourage the use of appropriate professional standards in projects," while the Policy Directions for England include the "need to encourage excellence" as a condition for HLF distributed funds. These directions should be addressed in plans on how HLF intends to achieve quality.

We strongly believe that excellence and professional standards are best sourced and regulated through professional accreditation. Professional accreditation schemes guarantee high standards of practice, skills and ethics through rigorous assessment and continuous development. The various pan-professional peer-reviewed conservation accreditation schemes (e.g. Icon, IHBC, RICS, RIAS, AABC, CIAT, CARE, CIOB) are ideally placed to be incorporated into HLF application and assessment processes.

Research by the Historic Environment Forum's Client Demand Task Group revealed a lack of knowledge amongst clients of the range of specialist heritage skills and services available to care for heritage

(<https://archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Market%20conditions%20for%20expert%20and%20specialist%20heritage%20skills%20and%20services%202015%20-16.pdf>). It discovered that while clients appreciated their heritage assets, their level of understanding of help available could be improved through education and unbiased advice.

We urge HLF to inform applicants of the benefits of using professional skills and to signpost applicants to places where they can find a selection of appropriate skills, for example through the above-mentioned professional accreditation registers. HLF could collaborate with the Historic Environment Forum's Capacity Building Group to explore further ways to educate applicants on the importance of using professional skills.

HLF monitors and mentors should also be required to demonstrate an adequate understanding of professional standards and best practice. Continued skills training and development for HLF staff will be central to this. We would welcome transparency on the standards and policies that guide monitors and mentors in their work.

Do you have any comments on how people might gain greater well-being through heritage projects?

Heritage has the potential to increase social cohesion, health and well-being, community engagement and quality of life. Historic England's *Heritage Counts 2017: Heritage and Society* (<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2017/heritage-and-society-2017.pdf>) and the Arts, Health and Wellbeing All-Party Parliamentary Group's inquiry report *Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing – Second Edition* (<http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry/>) contain detailed information of this benefit.

Icon's Conservation in the Community Award marks the valuable efforts and excellence achieved by volunteers on conservation projects. It is presented to a project involving a professional conservator who has increased the learning of new skills by volunteers and benefited communities in accessing cultural heritage.

In 2015, the award was given to 'Resurrecting the Coffin Works', the Birmingham Conservation Trust's rescue of a Victorian factory building along with its contents in a very

deprived area of Birmingham. The project combined high conservation standards with excellent community engagement and public access where none previously existed.

The project provided volunteers with an opportunity to gain new skills, greater confidence and to learn about conservation. It increased social cohesion and inclusion by allowing the community to contribute to the conservation of an aspect of their heritage that had been previously inaccessible through its semi-derelict state. The factory now offers a range of community events, ensuring the site's continued contribution to wellbeing and education in the community. The restored building adds to the character of its setting, improving quality of life in the area.

The project demonstrates the positive impact of conservation projects on community engagement and education. Further, it showcases how conservation can enable heritage to maximise its social impact now and in the future.

Do you agree or disagree that HLF should focus on putting heritage at the heart of placemaking across the UK?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree**
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

Place-making offers an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the contribution of heritage to social and economic growth. Integration with place-making can also help heritage find its place in the government's Industrial Strategy.

However, a focus on place-making could lead to an over-emphasis on sites and buildings, risking the loss of support for moveable heritage projects. Funding for historic environment and moveable heritage projects should be balanced.

Should HLF fund more commercially focused approaches to support projects with a focus on enterprise and skills?

- Yes**
- No
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

As long as the benefit of heritage is achieved and maximised, we consider the approach to delivering the project irrelevant.

How can HLF best support heritage organisations across the UK to become more enterprising and financially sustainable? Please select and rank the top three ways in which you think HLF could do this. [Selections highlighted in blue]

Provide funding to individual organisations to achieve strategic organisational change – 2

Provide early-stage funding to support new organisations and enterprises in setting their direction

Provide small-scale funding to help organisations build their fundraising capacity and skills – 3

Provide funding for testing new ideas, such as the viability of new commercial activity – 1

Fund business support training and capacity building programmes, including in investment readiness

Other, please specify

Or

HLF should not support heritage organisations to become more enterprising and financially sustainable

Why have you chosen these as your top three?

We have ranked our top 3 choices with 1 as the most important.

1. A reduced funding environment is requiring organisations to identify new income streams. The ability to test new commercial activities to attract unrestricted and restricted income will be important to building organisational sustainability.
2. A strong strategic structure is the foundation of an organisation's ability to effectively deliver its goals and mission.
3. A reduced funding environment is increasingly requiring sector professionals to combine specialist expertise with broader commercial skills such as in fundraising and marketing. Research on the sector's skills needs has identified commercial competencies as a key area of development.

What is your organisation's experience of non-grant finance (e.g. loans, equity investments, crowdfunding)? Please choose the description that best reflects your current position.

- We already use non-grant finance as part of our funding mix
- We plan to take on non-grant finance in the near future
- We are in the early stages of exploring non-grant finance
- We have no experience of non-grant finance, but are interested in exploring it**
- We have no experience of non-grant finance, and are not interested in exploring it
- We wanted to explore non-grant finance but were unable to identify ways of repaying
- We have explored non-grant finance but decided not to take it on

What, if anything, would make your organisation more likely to take up non-grant finance such as loans or equity investment? Please select all that apply.

- Increased knowledge or skills in financial management and business planning
- Increased knowledge or skills in impact measurement**

- Having an income source that we could use to repay a loan
- Increased confidence among trustees about levels of risk**
- Greater flexibility on what sorts of projects we can get funding for**
- Access to funds designed for heritage and/or cultural organisations**
- Preferable rates
- Other, please specify
- Or
- We have no current need to use non-grant finance

Why do you say that?

We would need as much information as possible about options and risks before committing to non-grant finance.

What support, if any, would be most useful for your organisation in helping you to access non-grant finance? Please select and rank your top 3. [Selections highlighted in blue]

Capacity building support in impact measurement - 3

Capacity building support in income generation – 1

Capacity building support for governance reviews – 2

Greater flexibility in what sorts of projects HLF will fund

Providing funding for projects as part grant/part loan or equity investment Attracting partners to invest in funds designed for heritage and/or cultural organisations

Other, please specify

Or:

None of these

Why do you say that?

We have ranked our top 3 choices with 1 as the most important.

However, we consider all three choices critical. We do not have enough knowledge of the other options to assess their importance but are interested in exploring them further.

Should HLF provide match funding for organisations who use crowd-funding to win support for their heritage projects?

- Yes**
- No
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

We consider this a fantastic idea. Match funding is a simple way to maximise fundraising efforts and demonstrates the value for heritage held by the HLF's target audience.

How could HLF better support organisations to use digital technology to...

a) **Create and make available high quality digital content**

To ensure quality content, HLF could champion high standards of practice in digital projects, for example through support for the development of standards of digital documentation. There is currently a lack of consistency in sector documentation despite digital systems and technology offering great potential to support and facilitate integrated working practices. Icon's Documentation Network aims to develop guidelines on best practice in documentation, taking full advantage of new technologies in the field. HLF could support initiatives aiming to set benchmarks for best practice in this field, as there is little point in creating and making accessible content that is not of high quality.

Don't know

b) **Increase engagement with heritage**

We support the Culture Is Digital report's recommendation for HLF to support organisations to get better at collecting, using and sharing audience data to understand the impact of digital work and to drive audience engagement strategies. The heritage sector's lack of diversity is frequently highlighted as a longstanding problem and any support in targeting and tailoring digital communications to improve this is warmly welcomed.

Don't know

c) **Diversify audiences for heritage**

We support the Culture Is Digital report's recommendation for HLF to support organisations to get better at collecting, using and sharing audience data to understand the impact of digital work and to drive audience engagement strategies. The heritage sector's lack of diversity is frequently highlighted as a longstanding problem and any support in targeting and tailoring digital communications to improve this is warmly welcomed.

Don't know

d) **Make heritage more inclusive**

We support the Culture Is Digital report's recommendation for HLF to support organisations to get better at collecting, using and sharing audience data to understand the impact of digital work and to drive audience engagement strategies. The heritage sector's lack of diversity is frequently highlighted as a longstanding problem and any support in targeting and tailoring digital communications to improve this is warmly welcomed.

Don't know

e) **Increase organisational efficiency and resilience**

HLF could work with the sector to develop standards and to set benchmarks in the use of digital technologies, as described in the Culture Is Digital report. Funding for projects that aim to improve digital skills would also be important.

Don't know

f) **Build the digital literacy of staff, volunteers, and trustees/governors**

HLF could develop and share learning resources explaining the opportunities offered by digital technologies and platforms and providing guidance on their use.

A strategic campaign to address sector skills needs should incorporate building digital competencies as these have been identified as a need for the workforce.

Funding and promoting the value of young people work placements could also contribute to improving organisations' digital literacy. Interns and apprentices can often be at the vanguard of the use of social media and can educate and inspire employers and colleagues in its use.

Don't know

How could HLF help organisations ensure that their digital content is accessible to the public now and safeguarded for the future?

The digital content of organisations is threatened by obsolescence as digital and electronic technology is in a state of constant change. HLF should consequently promote best practice guidance and tools for digital preservation and support research in the field. HLF could also support initiatives to future-proof or maintain existing informational and educational digital content, such as Icon's Conservation Register (<http://www.conservationregister.com/IndexPublic.asp>).

We recommend that HLF investment also addresses skills gaps in the conservation of digital media artworks and content, for example as a part of a strategic campaign to target skills needs in conservation.

How could HLF support innovation in the use of digital technology by organisations that look after heritage and engage the public with it?

HLF could consider supporting safe spaces to experiment with technology and innovation. While the Culture Is Digital report sets out an innovation Lab at the National Gallery for this purpose, similar opportunities across the country would be welcomed to support organisations outside of the London area.

How could HLF support the heritage sector to engage internationally and deliver benefits for the UK? Please select all that apply.

Support for UK heritage organisations to promote themselves internationally

Support for knowledge exchange with organisations overseas

Work strategically with partners to develop heritage-led inbound tourism

Other, please specify

Why do you say that?

Recent government publications (Culture White Paper, Heritage Statement, 25-Year Environment Plan) have highlighted the potential that UK heritage organisations hold to support the government's soft power and international agenda. Heritage organisations promote UK culture, trade and prosperity abroad, fostering international support for the UK.

HLF should work with its government partners to help organisations to maximise this potential by promoting awareness of partnership and funding opportunities, supporting organisations in making applications and sharing advice and best practice approaches to international working. This will be vital to encouraging smaller organisations, with little or no previous international experience, to increase their global reach.

HLF could also support research on the impact of Brexit on heritage and its workforce to enable the sector to prepare and respond to the resulting challenges and opportunities.

Should HLF involve the public in decision-making?

- Yes**
- No
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

Heritage belongs to the public and they should be involved in decisions impacting it. As the public funds HLF grants, they should have a say in what their money is being used for.

What options for involving the public in National Lottery Funding for heritage projects should HLF explore? Please select all that apply.

- Involve communities (geographical or communities of interest) in setting priorities for HLF funding**
- Involve local communities in deciding on funding in a specific geographical area through e.g. a people's panel**
- Partner with community grant-making organisations to deliver grants through them**
- Have beneficiary groups represented on decision making panels for targeted funding e.g. for young people**
- Involve National Lottery players in distributing money in their local area and/or nationally through public voting on projects linked to ticket purchase**
- Public voting linked to a TV programme or online content**
- Other, please specify

And what level of grant should we consider this for? Please tick the level of grant for each option.

Options	Under £10k	£10k - £250k	£250k - £2m	Over £2m
Involve communities (geographical or communities of interest) in setting priorities for HLF funding	x	x	x	x
Involve local communities in deciding on funding in a specific geographical area through e.g. a people's panel	x	x	x	x
Partner with community grant-making organisations to deliver grants through them	x	x	x	x
Have beneficiary groups represented on decision making panels for targeted funding e.g. for young people	x	x	x	x
Involve National Lottery players in distributing money in their local area and/or nationally through public voting on projects linked to ticket purchase	x	x	x	x
Public voting linked to a TV programme or online content	x	x	x	x

Do you have any comments on our proposal for an open grant programme for all types of heritage project?

Although HLF support for places of worship has continued under its open grant programmes, we are concerned by the HLF's discontinuation of the Grants for Places of Worship (GPOW) scheme.

The conclusion of the GPOW scheme represents the loss of the requirement for accredited conservation practitioners to oversee funded works to places of worship. We consider this a significant threat to our national heritage. Church of England churches represent almost half of England's Grade 1 Listed Buildings and require specific skills and expertise to conserve. We believe these capabilities are best sourced and regulated through professional accreditation. Professional accreditation schemes guarantee high standards of practice and ethics through rigorous assessment and continuous development. The appointment of accredited practitioners gives stakeholders confidence that work will be undertaken with due diligence and competence. These stakeholders include not only funders and funding applicants, but also the public, whose

continued access to and enjoyment of heritage should be the primary driver behind all repair programmes.

The HLF's removal of the requirement for professional accreditation contrasts with recent concerted efforts to ensure common professional standards across the UK. The Home Countries Heritage Bodies require an accredited conservation professional to lead projects that are funded by their grants. The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division recently consulted on guidance for its Quinquennial Inspection System that recommends accreditation as a criterion for its Quinquennial Inspectors. These standards demonstrate the sector's recognition of accreditation as a quality assurance in conservation practice.

We urge the HLF to review its decision to remove the requirement for accredited practitioners to oversee funded works to places of worship.

Do you agree with the proposal that we increase the ceiling for single-round grants from £100,000 to £250,000?

- Yes**
 No
 Don't know

Why do you say that?

We think this will simplify the process and lower the costs for distributing grants.

With a lower annual budget, should HLF set an upper limit on awards?

- Yes
 No

Why do you say that?

The size of an award should be decided according a number of factors, including: a project's ability to achieve the greatest benefit to people now and in the future, historical significance, risk of loss etc.

What needs or opportunities should HLF prioritize for strategic campaigns in the early years of the next Strategic Funding Framework?

We urge HLF to run a strategic campaign to address the sector's critical skills needs.

We applaud the Skills for the Future programme and its work so far in alleviating skills needs. However, funding for heritage skills training remains in high demand. The recent closure of higher education conservation courses, coupled with an aging workforce and the uncertainties of Brexit have placed the future of specialist conservation skills at risk. Furthermore, expanded work descriptions have led to new skills demands with greater emphasis on business, digital, commercial and fundraising competencies.

HLF should continue the Skills for the Future programme's legacy and strategically address serious shortages in heritage skills by supporting paid training placements, vocational learning programmes and skills development for employees and volunteers. An important element of this

strategic support should also include support for sector workforce research to help focus investment.

To contribute to securing the sector's talent pipeline, we recommend a strategic campaign to promote the sector as an attractive place to work. This could take the form of supporting organisations to deliver educational and youth outreach programs or targeted campaigns showcasing career success stories. Informing young people of career opportunities in heritage will be important to inspiring the sector's future professionals and falls in line with HLF's Policy Directions, which identify the need to "inspire children and young people, awakening their interest and involvement" in heritage. This has become increasingly important considering current education policy, which has side-lined creative disciplines in the curriculum, for example through the EBacc, and led to a decline in the study of arts subjects.

We currently require partnership funding (in cash or in kind (e.g. through free use of a venue)) to be contributed by grantees at the following minimum rates:

- **Up to £100K – no minimum contribution (in kind and volunteer contributions encouraged)**
- **Over £100K and up to £1m – 5% cash or in kind**
- **Over £1m – 10% cash or in kind**

Should we make changes to this approach?

- Yes - require more partnership funding
- Yes - require less partnership funding
- No - retain the current approach**

Why do you say that?

We believe the current model encourages commitment on the part of organisations and reduces complacency and reliance on HLF funds.

How should HLF achieve a balance between offering open funding opportunities and strategic interventions through campaigns, partnership programmes or innovation funds?

- HLF should prioritise investment in the open grant programme
- HLF should give equal weight to investment in open funding and strategic interventions**
- HLF should prioritise investment in strategic interventions

Why do you say that?

The sector has the ability to identify individual and potentially region-specific project needs on an ad hoc basis. However, strategic interventions will be necessary to address sector-wide issues, such as skills needs.

Do you agree or disagree that all projects should embed environmental sustainability and that this should be part of our standard criteria for the assessment of applications?

- Strongly agree**

- Tend to agree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Why do you say that?

Heritage cannot be removed from its environmental context. The future of heritage (and people) depends on environmental sustainability.

How should HLF ensure applicants follow best practice on environmental sustainability and address the potential negative impacts of climate change?

HLF could offer guidance and signposting on best practice in environmental sustainability and its mentors and monitors could encourage and enforce compliance to guidelines.

We believe the appointment of skilled practitioners who abide by professional standards would also ensure environmental issues are taken into consideration. For example, an Icon-Accredited conservator can demonstrate that they understand the “wider contexts in which conservation is carried out,” and appreciates their responsibilities “to cultural heritage and to wider society.”

Which of the following resources do you think would be most helpful to applicants preparing project proposals and applications? Please rank the top three most helpful, placing the numbers 1-3 in the corresponding box. [Selections highlighted in blue]**Application guidance documents and help notes – 2**

Video guides to navigating the online application process

‘Top tips’ short videos from successful grantees

Digital peer to peer support (from current/recent grantees) through an online community

Online toolkits and guidance on specialist topics e.g. evaluation, working with young people

Webinars on specialist topics e.g. on project planning and management

Self-assessment tools and/or checklists to identify ‘project readiness’ - 3**Tailored advice, such as a telephone helpline and/or online chat facility – 1**

Other, please specify

Why do you give these rankings?

Our experience of applying for grants has shown that applications give rise to questions that cannot be answered by guidance. Tailored advice is incredibly valued in these situations. Tailored support would also benefit those who are less familiar with the grant application process (for example community groups) and contribute to removing access barriers.

Do you agree or disagree that HLF should introduce an Expression of Interest screening stage for larger grants?

- Strongly agree**
 Tend to agree
 Tend to disagree
 Strongly disagree
 Don't know

Why do you say that?

Any processes reducing time and resources spent preparing applications would be warmly welcomed.

In your opinion was the work involved in preparing an application proportionate to the size of grant you applied for?

- Yes**
 No
 Don't know

Why do you say that?

We have always applied for large grants that have been worth more than the time and resource investment.

How could HLF simplify its application processes to ensure they are as accessible as possible (for example by accepting applications by video or other online media, or using face-to-face, telephone or online interviews as part of the assessment process)?

Video applications could be considered for smaller community grants. The application process should provide a level playing field.

How could HLF use digital technology to improve the customer experience for applicants and grantees?

HLF could offer an online chat service and record their briefing sessions and make these accessible online. Online questions could be linked to specific guidance notes.

How could HLF make its processes for managing your grant post-award more efficient?

HLF's relationship management has been excellent. However, receiving payments has been challenging.

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Icon thanks the HLF for consulting the sector on its strategic funding framework and look forward to the opportunity to comment on future major changes.

We agree with DCMS's recommendation that HLF should "develop a detailed stakeholder engagement plan to ensure clear communications and consultation on any significant changes to HLF or its funding streams." We consider this recommendation particularly important considering

the decision to end the Grants for Places of Worship Scheme without consultation, which contrasted with the HLF's usual high level of transparency.

We would also welcome more explicit recognition of professional standards and accreditation schemes in HLF's future approach.