Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund Projects

The Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund has awarded grants twice a year since Spring 2011 with the 2020 rounds amalgamated into one due to Covid 19. Below are summaries of the grants awarded to date.

Innovation and Engagement Fund 2020

Successful projects awarded December 2020

David Livingstone Birthplace
£84,800 for “Power Play: Exploring narratives of privilege and power through people, places and objects”.
A project to work with local young people and members of the African diaspora in Scotland to explore the stories that make up the Livingstone narrative through a lens of 21st century issues.

Fitzwilliam Museum
£89,431 for “Working together to confront the legacies of empire”.
A programme of work to confront the legacies of empire and enslavement within collections.

Mansfield Museum & Art Gallery
£89,680 for “Creative Women Together”.
This project empowers Women at Risk to take positive control of their lives through a programme of engagement with the painting, jewellery and ceramics collections.

Museum of Free Derry
£75,432 for “Museums and Conflict Legacy”.
A project to develop a network of heritage and legacy institutions in the north of Ireland, and to help build capacity in those involved to look after and develop their own collections.

National Museums Liverpool
£88,000 for “House of Memories: Connecting with Yemeni Elders Heritage”. A digital community collections project, enabling young participants to capture, preserve and digitise familiar and untold community stories, traditions and culture linked to museum collections.

**Waterside Arts**
£56,600 for “Engaging With Animation”.

This project shares the Cosgrove Hall Films Archive with communities across Greater Manchester and beyond, to increase wellbeing, learn about heritage and develop animation skills through the collection.

**Round 18: Successful projects awarded December 2019**

**Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales**
£120,000 over 36 months for “The Valleys re-told”. A project to re-frame collections inspired by south-east Wales in partnership with museums and communities from the area challenging stereotypes around the landscape and people.

**Fife Cultural Trust**
£114,896 over 24 months for “Flooring the World – the Fife Linoleum Industry”. A project to review an internationally significant linoleum collection, engaging, involving and inspiring the people of Fife.

**Museums Northumberland**
£117,523 over 30 months for “From Femmer to Firmer”. This project works with communities to collect the stories of Northumberland supporting future collections work, community cohesion and placemaking.

**National Justice Museum**
£120,000 over 36 months for “Ingenuity, creativity and hope”. A project to share historic objects crafted by people in prison as a creative stimulus for rehabilitative activity and response.

**Sunderland Culture**
£114,516 over 24 months for “The People’s Pyrex: A celebration of glass to mark the 100th anniversary of Pyrex in Sunderland”. A project to unite the city’s glass collections and raise awareness of the importance of glassmaking in the city.
Round 17: Successful projects awarded June 2019

Hampshire Cultural Trust
£61,799 over 36 months for “On the Move!”
Making new connections through Hampshire’s industrial collections to improve collections knowledge and storage and providing hands on volunteering opportunities for men affected by mental health issues.

Leeds Museums and Galleries
£115,799 over 36 months for “Dead Inspiring”.
A project to promote a women-in-science agenda using and developing the Designated entomology collections.

Museum of London
£119,995 over 36 months for “Listening to London: using oral histories to attract and involve different audiences in our new museum.”
Exploring the oral history collection to find ways to involve and represent Londoners in the new West Smithfield site.

National Holocaust Centre
£70,117 over 12 months for “Stories of Survival”.
To create a unique Holocaust survivor testimony resource to inspire engagement and reflection amongst diverse audiences by fostering debate around prejudice and hatred and encouraging personal responsibility.

Rotherham Heritage Service
£93,370 over 18 months for “Our World: discover objects, explore stories and make connections”.
To use the World Cultures collection to diversify audiences, improve understanding of different cultures and develop a greater sense of belonging amongst local communities.

Royal Museums Greenwich
£119,999 over 24 months for “Migration, Heritage and Belonging: new collections perspectives”.
Exploring the migration-related collections of Bristol Culture, Royal Museums Greenwich and Time and Tide Museum, Norfolk to better represent the diversity of migrant experiences.

University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge
£119,963 over 24 months for “Butterflies through time: Using wildlife of the past to guide conservation of the future”.

To engage people with the natural world and environmental change, both past and present by linking historical collections with contemporary conservation initiatives.

Round 16: Successful projects awarded December 2018

**Bridport Museums Trust**
£101,100 over 36 months for “The Right Stuff - innovative community collections review and rationalisation at Bridport Museum”.
A project to formulate, deliver and share a collections review and disposal programme in partnership with their local communities.

**Derbyshire County Council – Buxton Museum and Art Gallery**
£120,000 over 18 months for “Revisiting 20th century acquisitions – uncovering truths and stories in the search for new audiences”.
A project to undertake a detailed and thoughtful review and rationalisation of the Derbyshire and Derby Schools Library Service collection.

**Dylan Thomas Centre**
£118,850 over 36 months for “Blooming under the tall tales”.
A project to imaginatively interpret the Dylan Thomas collection in order to engage a wider audience of young families through intercultural family learning activities on and off site, a volunteer programme, and training opportunities.

**Glasgow Women’s Library**
£119,868 over 24 months for “Lesbian Lives: Revealing Hidden Herstories”.
A partnership project with Glasgow International (Festival of Visual Arts) to unlock the potential of the Lesbian Archive to improve representation, knowledge and interpretation of the history of Lesbian and Bisexual Women and Women who have Sex with Women (LBWSW).

**Horniman Museum and Gardens**
£120,000 over 36 months for “South London Music”.
Developing new understandings of the Horniman’s Musical Instrument collection and South London’s digital and ephemeral music, with a particular focus on genres including Grime, R&B, Afrobeat and Soca, co-produced with Black and Ethnic Minority (BAME) musicians and communities.

**Museums Worcestershire**
£113,100 over 36 months for “A Glove Affair – Worcester’s hand in the global gloving industry”.
A project to review their glove collection to create a community-based project that
reconnects people to their past, promotes better understanding of the collection’s international significance and leaves a legacy of glove making in the county in which it once thrived.

**Round 15: Successful projects awarded June 2018**

**Canterbury Museums and Galleries**
£46,210
For a project to review the stored Art collection with volunteers who suffer from debilitating anxiety, to rediscover the collection, increase knowledge and make it more relevant and accessible to visitors whilst benefiting the volunteers’ mental health and developing team skills and experience.

**Manchester Art Gallery**
£103,000
For a project using Platt Hall gallery and its collections to test and develop a new sector leading model as the UK’s first fully user-generated museum.

**Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery**
£119,711 for “Exploring Eliot”.
An exploration of George Eliot’s relevance and significance today using internationally important collections. Exploring her radical life and the choices she made with local people, reflecting their concerns and experiences in order to contribute to their wellbeing.

**The Whithorn Trust**
£88,976 for “Questions of Life and Death. Whithorn Archaeological Cold Case”.
Unlocking the potential of Bone Collections for the understanding of Early Mediaeval Scotland.

**Wisbech and Fenland Museum**
£87,000 for “Articles for Change”.
A project widening access to the Thomas Clarkson collection of 18th Century Anti-Slavery documents and artefacts, opening debate about issues of modern slavery in England, and in particular with the extensive migrant communities in the East of England today.

**Round 14: Successful projects awarded November 2017**
**Cardiff Story Museum**
£110,530 for “Cardiff's Communities: Our City, Our Story, Our Museum”.
Working with new and existing community partners to ensure the core collections is representative of Cardiff's cultural diversity and creating a team of ambassadors to link community and museum.

**Cornwall Museums Partnership**
£96,197 for “Citizen Curators”.
To work with Accredited museum partners to deliver a work-based training programme for volunteers from the local community in modern curatorial practice and bringing together object to form a Cornish National Collection.

**National Museums Scotland**
£119,500 for “Revealing Stories”.
Reviewing the Ancient Egypt and China, Japan and Korean collections to widen engagement with young people, BAME and individuals with additional support needs and create a partnership for Scottish Museums.

**Parc Howard Museum**
£103,350
For a project revealing the importance of the Llanelly Pottery collection making connections with new and diverse audiences.

**Scottish Maritime Museum Trust**
£120,000
To restore the Golden Orfe motor yacht and to use her as a floating exhibit, learning resource and oral history collecting point visiting coastal communities.

**The Salisbury Museum**
£115,360
For a project working with young people and the costume collection, rediscovering items hidden in storage and creating links between generations.

**Round 13: Successful projects awarded June 2017**

**Doncaster Museum**
£78,850
For a project building skills and raising aspirations in Doncaster's ex-mining communities using Doncaster Museums' mining collections to inspire intergenerational collaboration and encourage community cohesion.
Groundwork South Tyneside and Newcastle
£99,863 for “A New Sun”.
Illuminating history, national identity and the modern world through the Jarrow-Wearmouth collection and the life and works of Bede, the father of English History.

Museum of East Anglian Life
£119,103
To research and identify items in the collection that tell the story of the spread of news and ideas and to take objects out to rural communities to share this knowledge, strengthen communities, reduce social isolation and build intergenerational relationships.

Pitt Rivers Museum
£119,912
For a project working with forced migrants to create community curators and guides to enhance the understanding and use of the Pitt Rivers and the Museum of the History of Science collections.

The Silk Heritage Trust, Macclesfield Museum
£71,100
For researching, documenting and redisplaying the museums' Jacquard and block printing collection and providing STEM learning opportunities for young people including digital coding and design.

Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums Development Trust
£117,732
For a project engaging diverse groups of girls and women to create a women's collection and festival which explores issues of gender inequality, with health and social care partners.

Round 12: Successful projects awarded December 2016

Cannon Hall Museum, Barnsley
£88,100
To engage new audiences, especially young people from deprived communities, with the ceramics collection, working with local technology companies and exploring its visual and tactile nature to create digital and sensory interpretation.

Blackpool Museum Project
£97,000
To enhance understanding and knowledge of the Blackpool Tower Circus Collection
and develop a variety of engagement opportunities for audiences and professionals in education, health and social care as well as the circus community.

**Essex County Council**
£95,445 for “Snapping the Stiletto”.
Working in partnership with 11 museums in historic Essex to re-examine museum collections relating to the last 100 years from the perspective of women’s history, and to deliver a touring exhibition and themed displays.

**Derby Museums**
£77,637
To work with BAME communities to explore how to use the World Collection to create a more inclusive museum relevant to peoples’ lives today, drawing on the principles of Human-Centred Design.

**Glasgow Museums**
£52,748
To map, revisit and revitalise Glasgow’s migrant community collections, supporting volunteer researchers and community curators from migrant backgrounds.

**Ripon Museums**
£67,500
To engage diverse audiences with the police collections of North and West Yorkshire over contemporary issues of policing and justice, in partnership with Bradford Police Museum.

**Round II: Successful projects awarded in June 2016**

**Coleraine Museum**
£77,150
To work with communities to explore the collection of Sam Henry (1878 – 1952) who chronicled local folk songs and culture and their accompanying stories; and to stimulate contemporary collecting.

**Glenside Hospital Museum**
£29,440, for “Captured on paper: drawings of life in a mental hospital”.
To research and exhibit the works of Denis Reed (1917-1979), artist and patient, and use them to raise the profile of mental health museums, in partnership with The Mental Health Museum in Wakefield and Bethlem Museum of the Mind.
Inverness Museum and Art Gallery
£68,512
To research and promote its Highland decorative arts and Jacobite collection, share it with harder to reach audiences, and support other museums in the region.

Museum of Cambridge
£89,375
To connect Cambridgeshire museums, collections and communities through the folklore and oral history collection of Enid Porter, the museum’s longest serving curator.

National Holocaust Centre and Museum
£64,500
To bring together Holocaust survivors and communities to capture testimony, shape long-term approaches to interpretation, and enrich its Journey exhibition for young visitors onsite and online.

Pontypridd Museum
£56,131 for “Whose history is it anyway”.
To train the community to assess and co-create new interpretation for its social history collections.

Time and Tide Museum of Great Yarmouth Life
£90,500, for “Sea History Differently”.
To conserve and interpret its significant boat collections, involving audiences in consultation, co-curation and work-based skills training, and to deliver exhibitions in Great Yarmouth and other venues in the East of England.

Round 10: Successful projects awarded in November 2015

Hackney Museum and Archives
£94,792
To research, document and share the photographic studio collection of R.A. Gibson 1952-79, working closely with local community members, connecting the memories of those photographed there with the collection, and developing heritage education and reminiscence resources.

Newry and Mourne Museum
£61,400
To enhance public knowledge and long term engagement with the museum’s performing arts collection.
National Museums Liverpool  
£96,910  
To research, understand and share stories from collections relating to transatlantic slavery and its legacy, and black social history, and to test a model for working with community groups in Liverpool, Hull and London to care for and share collections held outside museums, involving a wide partnership of organisations including Bristol Museums Galleries and Archives and Anti-Slavery International.

The Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, University of Leicester  
£86,415  
To use natural heritage collections to support active and successful ageing – working with several museums in the North West Museums Partnership, and a wide range of third sector partners including Age UK, the Eden Project, and The Wildlife Trusts.

Museums Sheffield  
£83,530  
To research and share collections and ideas relating to protest and activism in Sheffield.

Tower Museum, Derry  
£96,462  
To engage audiences with the Peter Moloney and Conflict Textiles Collections and support dialogue about conflict resolution and reconciliation – in partnership with the Museum of Free Derry, Libraries NI and Ulster University.

Round Nine: Successful projects awarded in July 2015

De Morgan Foundation  
£86,575 for a touring exhibition “Sublime Symmetry: The Mathematical Devices Underpinning William De Morgan’s Fantastical Ceramic Designs”.

Gawthorpe Textiles Collection  
£92,540  
To research, share and reinterpret the museum’s collection using the context and beliefs of its collector.

Newman Brothers at the Coffin Works  
£56,700  
To research the industrial and social history of the collection relating to death,
funerary rituals and mourning; and expand and diversify engagement with audiences.

**Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery**
£65,300
To research and conserve the museum’s Leedsichthys fish as a gateway to the museum’s internationally important Jurassic marine collection.

**The Canal and River Trust**
£85,000
To research the historic boat collection, plan for its future and use new technologies to increase meaningful access.

**The Whitworth**
£99,834
To conserve, research and share the Musgrave Kinley Outsider Art collection.

---

**Round Eight: Successful projects awarded in November 2014**

**Bentley Priory Museum**
£37,092
To increase access to the collection of predominately Battle of Britain artefacts, for online and physical visitors who are hearing impaired, deaf, partially sighted or blind. This will include digitisation and research of the collection, audio descriptions for both digital images of the collection online and for visitor tours and to create accessible guided tours.

**Bruce Castle Museum**
£90,000
To research, digitise and develop a public programme using a collection of early topographical and portrait photographs, focusing on collection of glass lantern slides and negatives. Training workshops, volunteering opportunities, ‘guest curators’, together with three artist-led all-day workshops, will be offered to young people in Tottenham and Haringey.

**Cadbury Research Library**
£94,468 for “Spreading the Word”.
To research, document and run activities to share the Mingana Collection of Middle Eastern manuscripts. These include developing new services and resources for schools, community-based projects and pop-up photographic display for community libraries.
Museum of London
£90,000
For a major rationalisation of the museum’s social and working history collection using creative methods of disposal. The project will include seminars and workshops to share learning with other museums.

National Mining Museum Scotland
£21,550
To preserve the museum’s boilers and boiler house and explore options for its future use and interpretation, with community and stakeholder consultation events.

National Museums Liverpool in partnership with Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove
£91,830.50 for “Pride and Prejudice”
To research and reinterpret collections from a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) perspective.

National Museums Northern Ireland in partnership with Derry City Council Museums & Visitor Service
£92,073
To share the Arts Council Northern Ireland collections with local audiences in Derry through community-led initiatives, to include workshops with artists and development of touring exhibitions.

Round Seven: Successful projects awarded in June 2014

The Atkinson
£68,000 for “Rediscovering Our Collections”.
To conserve and share the works on paper collection through courses, study days, workshops, lectures and exhibitions. The museum will work with communities and students from Southport College, volunteers, students and young people through digital engagement, national and international partners.

Birmingham Museums Trust
£84,500 for “Science of the Staffordshire Hoard”
To conserve and share knowledge of the hoard. In-depth analysis of materials to give greater understanding of Anglo-Saxon manufacturing techniques, with findings feeding into public programmes, for example Meet the Expert events, written resources available in galleries, blogs and vlogs.
**Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust**  
£84,600  
To research, conserve, digitise and display the ‘Age of Sail’ Invincible collection, engaging with an inter-generational team of volunteers from the local community and the University of Kent, with a series of conservation workshops and dedicated online resource.

**Leeds Museums and Galleries**  
£98,500 for “Rethinking John Sell Cotman”.  
A research and digitisation project to connect experts with collection of drawings, prints and watercolours. Planned partnership with University of Leeds to develop public study days and student internships, together with schools’ education sessions and work with community groups focusing on those with mental health challenges.

**Royal Institution of Cornwall**  
£95,534  
To develop the access, use and care of the museum’s 60,000 item photographic collection which demonstrate some of the earliest photographic techniques, particularly those relating to underground photography in 19th century mines. Facilitating knowledge share between communities in Cornwall and abroad, training and supporting volunteers and establishing a series of community-based exhibitions.

**Scarborough Museums Trust**  
£94,500 for “Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside”.  
To review and develop use of the seaside heritage collections in partnership with Whitby Museum, Filey Museum, Southend Museum Service and Turner Contemporary. To develop a touring exhibition for participating museums and an events programme to complement the exhibition to engage wider audiences.

**Round Six: Successful projects awarded in November 2013**

**Chetham’s Library**  
£45,000  
To work with local historians, community groups and academics to research and digitise the Belle Vue collection and develop an online virtual exhibition.

**Gainsborough’s House**  
£58,000  
To research the 18th century ‘painting room’ and Gainsborough’s practice.
National Army Museum
£71,292
To research and digitise the Indian Army Collection, developing partnerships with British Indian communities, as part of world war one commemorations in 2014.

The Polar Museum
£99,386
To undertake research of museum’s collection of material relating to the exploration and science of Antarctica and create an online catalogue, to coincide with the centenary of Shackleton’s Endurance expedition in 2014.

Royal Armouries
£72,400
For an archives digitisation project to reveal the personal stories of the First World War.

Southend Museums Service
£50,000
For the sorting, conservation and interpretation of finds relating to the excavation of the HMS London shipwreck.

Round Five: Successful projects in June 2013

Fermanagh County Museum
£46,500 to develop “Fermanagh: a story in a hundred objects”.
To research and share knowledge via a community of practice one hundred key items from Fermanagh’s collection.

Glenside Hospital Museum
£53,000 for “Postcards from a War Hospital 1915-19”.
To research, digitise and display collections relating to the Beaufort War Hospital.

Harris Museum and Art Gallery
£65,000 for “Money Matters”.
A project working with the museum’s coin collection to relate it to contemporary audiences, for example in discussing financial management with young visitors.

The Museum of Hartlepool and three partners
£62,000 for “999: What’s Your Emergency”
To review and share with audiences (online and integrated into displays) collections relating to the emergency services.
Shetland Museum and Archives
£26,800
To conduct in-depth research of a collection of taatit rugs, unique to Shetland. Results will be published online and incorporated into permanent displays.

Vestry House Museum
£80,000
To catalogue, rationalise and increase use of the museum’s collections. Long term plans for the collection will be shaped by community interest as the project develops.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery
£67,000
For a year-long programme to use international partnerships to develop understanding and use of the museum’s pop art collection.

Bristol Museums
£91,839
For conservation and digitisation of the Adela Breton collection of watercolours and tracings of ancient Mexican art.

Carisbrooke Castle Museum
£41,450
For review and plan for future use of the whole museum collection.

Fitzwilliam Museum
£100,000
For conservation science work on the illuminated manuscript collection. The manuscripts and the research resulting from their conservation will underpin the museum’s bicentenary exhibition in 2016.

Monmouthshire Museums Service
£32,560 for “What is Fashion”.
Research into costume collections and their use in pop-up exhibitions and workshops with local social enterprise Vintage Vision.

Royal Air Force Museum
£64,000
To research WWI collections, provide online access and use the research to consult audiences on what to include in a new exhibition about WWI.

**Royal Albert Memorial Museum**  
£36,825  
To pilot a digital ‘Collections Prospectus’ to link priorities for collections research with the research agendas of academic and research institutions.

**Tate Gallery**  
£60,000  
To restore and develop a long-term strategy for the St Ives working studios of British modernist sculptor, Barbara Hepworth, and to share the results of their research across the museum sector.

---

**Round Three: Successful projects in May 2012**

**Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales**  
£100,000 for “Taxonomy and Taxidermy: Linking Natural Science Collections in Wales”.  
A project to increase understanding and use of natural science collections in 20+ museums across Wales.

**National Museums Scotland**  
£58,471 for “Pacific Collections in Scottish Museums – unlocking their knowledge and potential”.  
A collaborative project to share collections knowledge.

**Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service**  
£89,000 for “Shine a Light”.  
A project to research and increase access to large object collections.

**Natural History Museum**  
£31,943 for “Seaweed Collections Online: mobilising data from national and regional museums”.  
A project to gather, analyse and share data on seaweed, with a focus on indicators of environmental change.

**People's History Museum**  
£47,033 for “Uncovering Ideas Worth Fighting For”.  
A partnership project to digitally link collections across the museum, the Labour History Archive and Working Class Movement Library.
Woodhorn Museum and Northumberland Archives
£63,000
For a programme of guest curatorships to research and interpret the collections.

Round Two: Successful projects in October 2011

Abingdon County Hall Museum
£23,346
To conserve, and develop the display and interpretation of, a mid-sixteenth-century tempera on parchment map of the Thames.

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Arts and Museums Service
£62,400
To research and develop use of Barnsley’s archaeological collections to allow research of the collection in partnership with Sheffield University and add to skills sharing across the region for caring for archaeology collections.

Horniman Museum and Gardens
£50,450
To review the museum’s natural history collections. Subject specialists and enthusiast groups will be brought together to identify and find significant specimens during a series of bioblitz workshops.

Kirklees Museums and Galleries
£72,768
Kirklees Museums and Galleries with Calderdale Museums, Wakefield Museums, Bradford Museums and Galleries, and Leeds Museums and Galleries were jointly awarded £72,768 to review and reinterpret the textile collections of the partner museum services and to create the West Yorkshire Textile Heritage Trail.

Museum nan Eilean and Archaeology Service (Western Isles)
£85,000
To research the Udal archaeological collections and investigate potential for an Archaeological Resource Centre on North Uist.

The National Media Museum
£78,800
To research and develop the use of the Ray Harryhausen Collection.
Round One: Successful projects in May 2011

Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading
£81,702 for “A Sense of Place”.
A project to use collections information to build a series of innovative interpretive tools for use in the galleries and online. The aim is to turn the traditional museum catalogue into a more flexible and interactive resource.

Pitt Rivers Museum
£78,212 for “Reel to Real”.
A project to digitise the Museum’s 20th sound collection which ranges from British children’s songs to the sound of earth bows being used in the rainforests of central Africa. The project will work in partnership with the British Library and Oxford e-research centre and will find new uses for the collection to enhance visitor experience of galleries and museum events.

Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima)
£68,912
For a project to put their fine and applied art collection online in order to facilitate loans. The project will recruit a registrar and conservator who will seek to create a business model for corporate loans and a conservation service that could be used by museums and artists in the region.

Paxton House
£56,700 for “Threads of Power”.
A project which will conserve, research and develop the use of a unique 18th century costume collection.

Museum of the Manchester Regiment
£53,031 for “Man behind the medal”.
A project to research the stories behind the medals on display. The stories will be brought to the public through new displays and a series of events.

Creswell Heritage Trust
£49,857
Creswell Crags is an Ice Age site that has been the focus of excavation work since the 1870s with the result that many of the objects excavated are spread across 40 different museum departments worldwide. This project seeks to create a searchable web portal for the Creswell Crags collection and archive.
Social History Curators Group
£26,000
To create a new and improved version of firstBASE, a web-based resource for all staff working with social history collections.