What we fund

Find out what heritage we support, and what you can spend the money on.

We fund a broad range of projects that connect people and communities to the UK's heritage.

What is heritage?

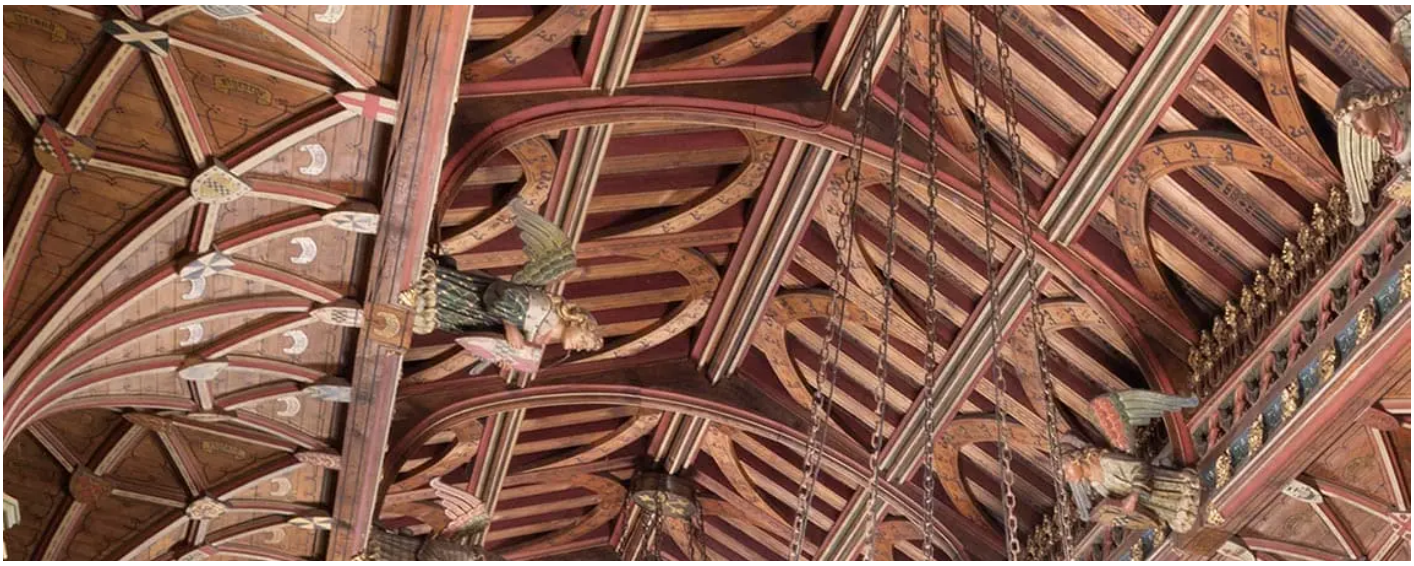
We don’t define heritage. We ask you to tell us what you think is important and should be preserved.

From historic buildings, our industrial legacy and the natural environment, to collections, traditions, stories and more – **heritage can be anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations.**

Your heritage project could include:

- **Nature** – works to improve habitats or conserve species, as well as helping people to connect to nature in their daily lives.
- **Designed landscapes** – improving and conserving historic landscapes such as public parks, historic gardens and botanical gardens.
- **Large-scale rural projects** that help improve landscapes for people and nature by, for example, restoring habitats and celebrating the cultural traditions of the land.
- **Oral history recordings** of people’s stories, memories and songs, as a way of communicating and revealing the past.
- **Cultural traditions** exploring the history of different cultures through storytelling, or things that you do as part of your community. This could be anything from dance and theatre to food or clothing. It could also include the heritage of languages and dialects.
- **Commemorations and celebrations** – telling the stories and histories of people, communities, places or events related to specific times and dates.
- **Historic buildings, monuments and the historic environment** – from houses and mills to caves and gardens. Areas that are connected to history and heritage.
- **Community archaeology** involves the active participation of volunteers in archaeological activities, everything from investigating, photographing, surveying, excavation and finds processing. Sometimes it is called public archaeology.
- **Museums, libraries and archives** – making the collections that museums, libraries and archives hold more accessible through new displays, improving public buildings and galleries, or engaging people with interpreting new and existing collections.
- **Acquiring new objects** – help towards the cost of acquiring one-off objects or collections as part of a collections development policy.
- **Industrial, maritime and transport** – places and objects linked to our industrial, maritime and transport history.

Projects we've funded



Need inspiration?

Discover some of the projects we have funded already

Explore projects

What you can spend the money on

The money you get for your project can be used for:

- **Activities:** to engage the wider community in your heritage. They might include guided heritage walks, sharing oral histories or workshops. Your activities should link to the heritage focus of your project and be tailored to the needs of the people you want to work with, including any reasonable adjustments that need to be made.
- **Repairs and conservation.**
- **Digital outputs**: this could be digital images, sound files or data, a website with heritage material, an app, or a film made using digital technology.
- **New staff posts:** this could include part of a current employee's role, if they were dedicating a specific amount of time to the project.
- **Paid training placements:** this could also include training for existing staff, to support the aims of the project.
- **Professional fees:** includes anyone related to your project in a professional capacity, from architects and heritage professionals to teaching staff.

What you can’t spend the money on

- **Existing staff posts or organisational costs:** unless calculated through **full cost recovery** which means securing funding for all costs involved in running a project. So you can request funding for direct project costs and also for part of your organisation's overheads.
- **Repairs to your own home.**
- **Legal and/or statutory responsibilities:** includes anything that would be paid for regardless, whether the project went ahead or not. For example, rent, utilities, building maintenance, unless you have a heritage enterprise grant.
- **Promoting the causes or beliefs of political or faith organisations.**
- **Recoverable VAT.**
- **Costs for any activity that has taken place before a grant is awarded.**
- **Costs for installing artificial grass or plants.**

Explore available funding

Find the right funding programme for you

Do you require further help with your application?

We want to make sure our funding is open and accessible to all. We have set out a plan to meet people's access needs, from translation services to digital application support.

Read more about the types of assistance we can provide

How to apply

This step-by-step guide outlines our National Lottery Heritage Grants application process, from understanding what we support to applying for and receiving a grant.

This guide **only applies to our National Lottery Heritage Grants programme.**

From time to time we distribute **other funding programmes**, including for governments across the UK. Refer to each programme's guidance page to discover who these are for, what their aims are and how to apply.

1. Understand what we fund

We fund projects of all sizes that care for the UK's heritage. Before you get started, find out more about what we fund.

2. Develop a project idea

Our National Lottery Heritage Grants programme offers funding at two levels:

- £10,000 to £250,000
- £250,000 to £10million

Carefully read the guidance page for each range to understand:

- what the programme offers
- who it is for
- the difference your project needs to make

Find out how to understand and explain your heritage to support your funding application. You can also see projects we've previously funded for inspiration.

3. Get feedback on your project idea

- **£10,000 to £250,000**: you can use our optional Project Enquiry to get feedback within 10 working days.
- **£250,000 to £10m**: you must submit an Expression of Interest before starting a full funding application. You should receive feedback within 20 working days.

4. Submit a funding application

Use our Get funding for a heritage project service when you are ready to submit your application. The service will guide you through the different steps.

Applying for more than £250,000?

1. If you want to apply for more than £250,000, you must first submit an Expression of Interest.
2. If your Expression of Interest is successful, you will then submit a **development phase** application.
3. If your development phase application is successful, you will receive funding and have up to two years to develop a detailed project proposal for your **delivery phase** application.
4. When ready, you will then submit your **delivery phase** application.

Our application deadlines

- **£10,000 to £250,000:** open all year round
- **£250,000 to £10m (both development and delivery phases):** quarterly application deadlines

5. Getting a decision on your application

- Once received, your application is checked to make sure your organisation is eligible and that all the required documentation has been attached.

- **£10,000 to £250,000**: After application checks are complete, you should receive a decision within eight weeks. Decisions are made at monthly local meetings.
- **£250,000 to £5m (both development and delivery phases)**: We will take up to 12 weeks to assess your application. It will then be presented at one of our quarterly committee meetings. You will receive a decision as soon as possible after a meeting.
- **Over £5m (both development and delivery phases)**: We will take up to 12 weeks to assess your application. It will then be presented at one of our quarterly committee meetings and then presented at one of our Board meetings. You will receive a decision as soon as possible after a Board meeting.

If you are successful

You will use our Get funding for a heritage project service to receive and manage your grant. Find out more about what happens if you are awarded a grant:

- Receiving your grant: £10,000 to £250,000
- Receiving your grant: £250,000 to £10m

If you are not successful

We will provide feedback on your application as soon as possible after the decision meeting. You may then choose to reapply with a revised application but you must first speak to us about this.

Investment principles

02/10/2023
02/10/2023
See all updates
Explore the difference we want our funding to make for heritage.

Our four investment principles will guide all our grant decision making under our new 10-year strategy, Heritage 2033.

You must take all four principles into account in your application. The strength of focus, and emphasis on each principle, is for you to decide and demonstrate.

Consider: How does your project reflect what we want to do for heritage? How will it help us achieve our ambitions for heritage?

Saving heritage

Conserving and valuing heritage, for now and the future.

What we mean

Our support will ensure heritage remains accessible, relevant, sustainable and valued.

What we will do

Heritage at risk: We will commit funding to protect, conserve and revitalise heritage of all kinds that is in poor condition or at risk of loss, decline, damage, neglect or of being forgotten – ensuring it is valued and better understood.

Invest in places: Heritage has a unique role in bringing people together where they live, work and visit. We will increase people's connection with the heritage of their local places through targeted investment in our historic and natural environment.

Revitalise and maintain: We will invite proposals to work with us to develop the skills, capacity and innovation to sustain and manage heritage. We will identify opportunities for revitalising diverse types of heritage.

What we want to achieve

By 2033 we will have:

- Improved the condition, viability and public understanding of thousands of heritage sites, collections, habitats, species and intangible cultural heritage.
- Measurably reduced the amount of heritage identified as 'at risk', whether through loss, facing extinction, assessed as being in poor or unfavourable condition or at risk of being forgotten.
- Delivered long-term projects to transform local areas, towns, cities and landscapes by taking a targeted approach to improving the condition of heritage and the pride people take in their local environment.
- Ensured that the digital heritage resources we support are open, accessible and discoverable by future generations.

Protecting the environment

Supporting nature recovery and environmental sustainability.

What we mean

We will support natural heritage and environmentally sustainable projects that help the UK meet its nature recovery targets and mitigate the impact of climate change on heritage.

What we will do

Landscape: We will increase our support for strategic and landscape-scale projects – both rural and urban – that help habitats and species thrive, reducing and mitigating the impacts of climate change, while helping people connect to our unique natural heritage.

Nature: We will invest through partnerships to help halt and reverse the loss and decline of habitats and species.

Environmental footprint: We will support heritage projects that reduce adverse environmental impacts and help heritage to adapt to our changing climate. If projects involve construction, we will encourage restoration, conservation and reuse, rather than new build.

Mitigation: We will collaborate to bring natural, built and cultural heritage stakeholders together to identify and mitigate climate risks to heritage and involve people in bringing about positive behaviour change.

What we want to achieve

By 2033 we will have:

- Put landscapes and habitats in both urban and rural places into recovery, so they support abundant natural heritage and healthy natural systems.
- Increased people's understanding and connection with nature across towns, cities and the countryside.
- Reduced the negative environmental impact and carbon footprint of our funding portfolio.
- Improved the ability of natural and cultural heritage to plan for and adapt to a changing climate and helped projects take action for the environment.

Inclusion, access and participation

Supporting greater inclusion, diversity, access and participation in heritage.

What we mean

We will support organisations to ensure everyone has opportunities to learn, develop new skills and explore heritage, regardless of background or personal circumstances.

What we will do

Involve a more diverse range of people in heritage, investing in volunteering, heritage careers, co-creating projects, leadership, governance and developing knowledge and skills.

Enable organisations to remove barriers to access and participation, particularly for people who are under-served by heritage.

Support all communities to explore and share their heritage, with a focus on making the stories of our four nations more inclusive of everyone's heritage.

Accessible digital heritage resources: Support greater use of digital technology to make heritage more accessible and enjoyable, and promote better access to heritage information, enabling projects to increase impact and reach.

What we want to achieve

By 2033 we will have:

- Increased the diversity of heritage workforces, leadership and audiences.
- Addressed the barriers to access for people under-served by heritage, providing more equitable opportunities for active involvement and participation.
- Enriched people's lives through our investment, enabling everyone's heritage to be recognised.
- Supported people to creatively use digital technology in heritage to promote access and reach.

Organisational sustainability

Strengthening heritage to be adaptive and financially resilient, contributing to communities and economies.

What we mean

We will support organisations to develop the skills and capacity to ensure a sound long-term future and encourage new heritage investment that benefits communities and economies.

What we will do

Support financial sustainability: We will continue to offer funding to build resilience, providing organisations with capacity and expertise to develop their long-term organisational and financial plans.

Support heritage skills development: We will collaborate with partners to identify opportunities to build capacity, skills and expertise in heritage, to contribute to thriving communities and economies.

Provide flexible funding: We will offer flexible financial support in the early planning stages of projects for preparatory analysis and activities. We will also make available follow-on funding for time-limited periods on completion of significant capital projects to help embed operational stability.

New finance and investment: We will champion the use of more diverse income sources such as green finance and commercial approaches and help build the capacity and skills needed to deliver this.

What we want to achieve

By 2033 we will have:

- Supported organisations to increase their financial and organisational sustainability by developing their commercial and digital skills and strengthening governance and leadership.
- Supported the development of skills and capacity in the heritage sector.
- Used our flexible funding model to embed resilience in the projects we fund.

- Enabled the heritage sector to strengthen its contribution to economies and local communities.

Strategic initiatives

We support and invest in heritage in multiple ways. Find out more about some of our planned interventions and how we'll deliver them.

We want to create the greatest impact and benefit from our funding for the UK's heritage.

Our strategic initiatives are a way for us to address long-standing heritage issues at scale, support coordinated cross-territory approaches and accelerate new ideas and innovations.

Over the life of our 10-year strategy, Heritage 2033, we expect to deliver various initiatives. The ones we're working on right now include:

Expand All accordions

Heritage Places

We want to boost pride in place and connection to heritage across whole places rather than individual projects. Our aim is to make heritage integral to plans and approaches that are making local areas better places to live, work and visit.

In October 2023 we announced the first nine of up to 20 places across the UK where we'll invest £200million:

- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council Area
- County Durham
- Glasgow
- Leicester
- Medway
- Neath Port Talbot
- North-East Lincolnshire
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Torbay

Considerations for a Heritage Place application:

- core project activities must be located in one of our heritage places
- projects should be part of a wider ambition to improve or transform the area, supported by local partners and organisations

- projects should be collaborative and will need to demonstrate evidence of support from local partner(s)

If you are applying from one of our identified Heritage Places:

- contact your local team to get advice on your heritage project before applying
- Submit a Project Enquiry (for applications up to £250,000) for additional advice. For applications over £250,000 you must submit an Expression of Interest before applying.
- follow our National Lottery Heritage Grants guidance to prepare and submit your application
- start your project title with the hashtag '#HP' so we can identify it's a Heritage Places application

Branding and acknowledgement

Projects should use our acknowledgement guidance for Heritage Places.

Find out more about our Heritage Places strategic initiative and explore our Thriving Places hub for place-based case studies, stories and blogs.

Expand All accordions

Landscape Connections

We want to help designated Protected Landscapes and other world-class landscapes across the UK to become better for nature and more able to welcome people from all backgrounds, including those who rarely visit them now.

We will invest £150millon in around 20 long-term projects in:

- National Parks and National Landscapes in England and Wales
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Northern Ireland
- National Parks and other equally important world-class landscapes in Scotland

Our aim is to support those who care for these places to strengthen them as working landscapes, which are alive with nature and provide space for people to relax and connect with the environment. We'll support whole landscapes to bring about significant and enduring improvement.

Read more about the ambitions of this strategic initiative.

Considerations for a Landscape Connections application

Your project delivery phase can last for up to eight years (increased from our usual five years), and as such, we will support flexibility in confirming partnership funding during the delivery phase.

In addition to the standard requirements of our National Lottery Heritage Grants, including responding to all four investment principles, your project application should:

- have an area of designated Protected Landscape at its core although flexibility will apply in Scotland
- explain why a particular boundary has been chosen, ensuring the size of the area is compatible with the grant request so that delivery, engagement and impact is consistent across the whole project area
- follow our guidance for producing an Area Action Plan during the development phase, with the main focus to produce a project vision and blueprint for project delivery, within the context of any broader statutory management plan and nature recovery strategy
- allocate resources to join quarterly cohort working sessions, contribute to cohort working and attend in-person visits to learn from other projects
- Allocate resources to measuring the impact of your project for both nature recovery and engaging people so the contribution of this investment in meeting UK nature recovery targets can be assessed. Where they exist, government outcomes frameworks should be used. We may also ask grantees to report additional data through online data collection tools.

We are updating our guidance on using agri-environment scheme funding as partnership funding for projects and it will be available soon.

Large land acquisitions are unlikely to be supported by Landscape Connections.

Our ambition by 2033 is to have supported around 20 projects that:

- enable everyone in the UK?to?have access to landscapes rich in nature, clean water and fresh air, places that are inspiring in their beauty and cultural heritage
- help these landscapes to become better for nature and more able to welcome people from all backgrounds, including those who rarely visit them now
- deliver?longer-term projects?that are bold in ambition and create measurable outcomes for?Protected Landscapes and equivalent outstanding landscapes in Scotland
- support those who?live in and?care for these places to strengthen them as working landscapes?based on a clear diagnosis of why the landscape is currently failing to deliver for nature and people and how that will be addressed
- accelerate systemic and lasting nature recovery across whole landscapes, creating and sharing exemplars for how landscape conservation and nature recovery can be delivered with, by and for people who live and work there
- create innovative frameworks for ways in which communities, landowners, organisations and those that manage the land can work equitably together to agree how to influence and drive change to ensure a lasting legacy

We recommend reading our good practice guidance on Land, Sea and Nature when preparing your application.

Branding and acknowledgement

Projects should use our acknowledgement guidance for Landscape Connections.

Who can apply

Applications are open to not-for-profit organisations, and partnerships led by not-for-profit organisations, from across the UK.

Protected Landscape management bodies must be a key partner within any application relating to the landscape where they operate and where the works will be taking place, though they do not need to be the applicant or lead partner of an application.

If private owners or for-profit organisations are involved in the project, we expect public benefit to be demonstrably greater than private gain.

We are unlikely to fund more than one project from a single Protected Landscape.

How to apply

You can apply for a grant up to £10m through our National Lottery Heritage Grants £250,000 to £10m. Start your project title with '#LC' and include 'Landscape Connections' in the title, for example [area name] Landscape Connections.

If you are interested in developing a Landscape Connections project but are not yet ready to apply for a large-scale grant, you should consider undertaking preparatory work using our National Lottery Heritage Grants £10,000 to £250,000.

This funding could be used to help you prepare for a larger application by, for example:

- bringing in additional expertise and resources
- supporting the creation of a new partnership
- undertaking initial feasibility work
- supporting engagement with local communities and organisations
- helping to articulate the initial project vision

For grants up to £250,000, you can submit an optional?Project Enquiry?to get feedback?on your project idea.

For grants over £250,000 you must first submit an Expression of Interest.

How we make decisions

In addition to our processes under the National Lottery Heritage Grants programme, we will assess how your project addresses the ambitions of the strategic initiative.

We may also consider issues such as achieving a geographical spread of our funding.

For this strategic initiative, for grants of less than £250,000 decisions will be made on a monthly basis by the senior investment or engagement staff of your nation or area. For grants above £250,000, recommendations will be made by nation/area committees, with final decisions made on a quarterly basis by our Board of Trustees.

Expand All accordions

Heritage in Need: Places of Worship

We want to help places of worship across the UK tackle heritage challenges systemically. We want to see them become more sustainable, share their heritage and welcome people from all backgrounds, including those who rarely visit.

We will invest a minimum of £15million in projects that have a strategic impact at a regional or national level for places of worship over the next three years.

Rich in culture and collections, places of worship tell the story of the religious, social and economic changes of the people of the UK. We recognise the scale of the challenges facing places of worship and those who care for them, and we are committed to supporting them through that change.

The needs and funding gaps we have identified and want to address through this initiative are:

- repair listed buildings, particularly those in more rural areas
- workforce and volunteer capability to manage heritage
- heritage in places of worship that is currently inaccessible, at risk or under used

Find out more about other ways we support places of worship.

Considerations for a Heritage in Need: Places of Worship application

Our aim is to support strategic projects in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland that have the potential to make an impact at a regional or national sector level and will:

- proactively tackle long-standing heritage issues at a large scale
- enable a coordinated cross-territory approach that will strengthen delivery
- address gaps where proposals are not coming through our National Lottery Heritage Grants programme

- accelerate new ideas and interventions where a deliberate approach is needed

Our ambition for this strategic initiative is to address some of the identified aims and needs of places of worship by investing in work such as:

- strategic projects at scale that develop the processes, systems, guidance and infrastructure needed through a change in use, management or ownership?

- strategic projects at scale based on an understanding of the needs of heritage and owners of heritage schemes that build capacity among smaller denominations and faith groups to develop large projects

- strategic projects that establish the cultural and heritage significance of places of worship where that may be at risk of loss?

- capacity-building projects that can provide broader support, advice and guidance for owners and managers of historic religious buildings and sites across geographies and types such as funding for support officers?

- initiatives that bring together many organisations, faith groups and funders to collaborate and find solutions to issues facing places of worship and heritage?

- schemes that provide funding for exploring feasibility for more sustainable options for existing or new uses for places of worship

- developing schemes that share learning and support for volunteers managing and caring for heritage and to make that more accessible to wider audiences?

- strategic projects that trial different approaches to managing places of worship at an area scale

- projects that explore the heritage of places of worship to support and contribute to the local and visitor economy at a national or regional level?

- thematic projects that might use innovative technologies to open access to heritage and collections

Who can apply

Not-for-profit organisations and partnerships led by not-for-profit organisations from across the UK can apply.

Individual places of worship are not eligible for funding through this strategic initiative, nor single site applications for capital works-only projects. We will continue to award funding for these through our National Lottery Heritage Grants programme.

How to apply

If you have an idea for a Heritage in Need: Places of Worship project, start by contacting your local Heritage Fund office.

For grants up to £250,000, you can submit an optional?Project Enquiry?to get feedback?on your project idea.

For grants over £250,000 you must first submit an Expression of Interest?before applying. Start your project title with #PW.

Follow our?National Lottery Heritage Grants?guidance to prepare and submit your application for a grant of up to £10m.

How we make decisions

In addition to our processes under the National Lottery Heritage Grants programme, we will assess how your project addresses the needs and funding gaps identified, and the aims and ambitions of this strategic initiative. We may also consider other factors such as achieving a geographical spread of our funding.

Expand All accordions

Nature Towns and Cities

Important

This initiative is now closed to applications. Find out more on the Nature Towns and Cities website.

Everyone should have access to public parks and urban green spaces which are full of natural and cultural heritage close to where they live. Evidence shows that we all feel the benefit when nature is part of our daily lives.

Nature Towns and Cities will bring organisations together across the UK to focus on improving the quality of, and access to, historic parks and urban green spaces in whole towns and cities while supporting new ways to engage local communities and generate greater investment.

Through a package of support including £15million of funding to build capacity and partnerships, peer networks to share learning and practical solutions, and schemes to attract investment, we will inspire, resource and incentivise organisations to realise nature's benefits in creating greener, healthier and thriving communities.

Nature Towns and Cities is a partnership initiative between Natural England, the National Trust and the Heritage Fund. In addition, we are working closely with NatureScot, Natural Resources Wales and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

Our ambition

Nature Towns and Cities aims to support local authorities, their partners and communities with capacity and resources to put public green and blue spaces at the heart of their thinking. Visit the Nature Towns and Cities website to find out more about our plans and wider ambitions.

By 2028 we want to have supported places across the UK with grant investment, together with expertise and resources from our partners, to:

- place access to nature and nature recovery at the heart of local placemaking so that its benefits can be realised for health, prosperity, nature, heritage and local pride
- co-create with communities and partners ambitious green space strategies and improvement plans
- create strong and diverse partnerships between the local communities, businesses and local authorities that focus on the role of urban green and blue space in delivering better outcomes for health, wellbeing, heritage, transport, planning and nature
- Develop implementation plans that will transform the way public green spaces are utilised, managed and funded for the benefit of people and nature. This should include developing costed project plans and exploring how to unlock new investment from a wide range of investors and funders beyond just the National Lottery.

Considerations for a Nature Towns and Cities application

There will be one round of funding with grants available from £250,000 up to £1m. Your project can last for up to three years and will require a full application to be submitted.

The deadline for applications has now passed.

Funding decisions will be made in early July 2025 and we will aim to contact applicants by 11 July 2025.

In addition to the standard requirements of our National Lottery Heritage Grants programme, including responding to all four investment principles, your project application should:

- Focus on all the public urban green and blue spaces across an entire place. It is for you to determine the boundary of the place – it might be a local or combined authority administrative area, a town, a city, a city region or several towns or boroughs working together.
- Set out how you will lead for ambitious change that will deliver against our desired outcomes and ensure green space provides more for people and places.
- Show how a cross-disciplinary team and partnership working will ensure breadth in your thinking and active working across heritage, planning, transport, health, community and nature sectors.
- Identify what resources or support you will need. This might include for example investing in additional expertise and capacity to: engage local communities, develop new strategic partnerships, establish new bodies such as a foundation or trust, design new financial models, incentivise and unlock new investment, develop a project pipeline and replicate learning from the Future Parks Accelerator initiative.
- Allocate resources and capacity to join regular online network events and cohort learning sessions, to contribute to cohort working and to attend in-person visits to learn from other projects. We recommend allocating a day a month for network activities including cohort learning, events, training and site visits.

Please refer to the Nature Towns and Cities application help notes for more information on how to ensure you include the above considerations in your application.

All funded projects will receive free expert support from partners on topics such as green infrastructure planning, community engagement and green finance.

This initiative will not fund capital works. If you wish to apply for funds to regenerate a historic park or improve an existing site for nature, please apply through our National Lottery Heritage Grants programme.

Branding and acknowledgement

Projects will be expected to use the branding and acknowledgement guidance for Nature Towns and Cities. This will be shared with successful applicants in 2025.

Who can apply

Applications are open to not-for-profit organisations, and partnerships led by not-for-profit organisations, from across the UK.

We encourage you to work with other people to develop and carry out your project.

If you plan to work with any other organisations to carry out a significant proportion of your project, you must formalise your relationship with a partnership agreement.

If you are making a joint application, you will need to decide which organisation will be the lead applicant. The lead applicant will complete the application, and if successful, receive the grant and provide project updates.

We usually expect the owner of the heritage (the public green space) to be the lead applicant. If the lead applicant is not the owner of the heritage, we usually ask them to sign up to the terms of grant.

If private owners or for-profit organisations are involved in the project, we expect public benefit to be demonstrably greater than private gain. We are unlikely to fund more than one project from a single place.

How to apply

The deadline for applications has now passed.

Funding decisions will be made in early July, and we will aim to contact applicants by 11 July 2025.

Any advice provided by National Trust, Natural England, NatureScot, Natural Resources Wales and Northern Ireland Environment Agency should not be construed as an implied approval, acceptance or endorsement of any grant application, or consent or assent to the carrying out of any proposed activities to protected sites. All necessary consents and approvals must be obtained independently from National Trust, Natural England, NatureScot, Natural Resources Wales and Northern Ireland Environment Agency or any other relevant authorities and should be done so in accordance with applicable law.

Receiving a grant guidance

If you are awarded a grant, this guidance sets out what we expect of you before, during and after receiving it.

How we make decisions

In addition to our processes under our standard National Lottery Heritage Grants approach, we will assess how your project addresses the ambitions of this initiative.

We may also consider issues such as achieving a geographical spread of our funding and/or a variety of different organisation type.

For this initiative, funding decisions will be made by a Joint Partnership Board including a Trustee from the Heritage Fund and representatives from the partner organisations.

Contact Us

If you have a question about our funding, please?get in touch with your local investment team.

Heritage in need and other opportunities and emergencies

We remain committed to flexibility and responding swiftly when required. This could mean supporting acquisitions of exceptional heritage, marking significant events or supporting heritage areas and organisations dealing with an unforeseen emergency.

We're also exploring opportunities for targeted funding for heritage that is at risk and in need of conservation. Alongside funding discrete projects, we want to support organisations to build capacity, develop approaches to project planning and diversify income streams.

Decision-making

Our approach to making decisions on strategic initiatives is the same as our processes under the National Lottery Heritage Grants programme.

For grants of less than £250,000, decisions are made on a monthly basis by the senior investment or engagement staff of your nation or area. For grants above £250,000, decisions are made on a quarterly basis by the committee of your nation or area or by our Board of Trustees.

We may vary our decision-making process for specific initiatives, but we will update our website when this happens.

More to come

Our teams are working hard to develop these initiatives and opportunities and we'll share further details as we have them.

Sign up to our newsletter to get our latest news and announcements delivered direct to your inbox.

Understanding your heritage

By exploring different aspects of your project's heritage, you will better understand its importance to place, people and communities, helping you to prepare your application for funding from us.

By fully understanding the heritage that your project is about you will be able to:

- know why people value your heritage so you can make sensitive and appropriate decisions about how to look after it in the future
- identify the potential for creative and sustainable solutions to improve the condition of the heritage
- better engage with your staff, volunteers and visitors
- uncover new information, insights or fresh perspectives of your heritage

How best to understand your heritage

To understand your heritage, you could consider the following three questions.

What is the heritage focus of your project?

Start by describing the heritage.

If your project is about intangible cultural heritage (such as memories or cultural and oral traditions) you should set out information about the subject and the time period it covers. Highlight if the heritage is at risk of being lost in some way. We have some information on intangible heritage that you may find useful.

If your project is about physical heritage (such as a building, ship, historic object or collection, or nature reserve), state factual information about it such as its size, when it dates from, the surviving features, its condition and why it is important to your local area.

Why does the heritage matter?

Having established the facts you should now think about why your heritage is considered to be important or significant.

There are many reasons why people value heritage and want to conserve it or pass traditions onto future generations. Seek views from as wide a range of people as possible.

The following list of questions offer some ways to think about what makes your heritage special to people but it is not exhaustive:

- Why is the heritage important to history? Is it associated with important people or events?
- How does the heritage contribute to our understanding of the past? What does it tell us about people and society?
- What are the artistic or aesthetic qualities of the heritage?
- If it has a physical location, how does it contribute to or complement the wider environment? Is it a landmark?
- Is the heritage of technical importance – does it tell us about innovation? Is it the first of its type?
- Is the heritage of importance to science, for example for its wildlife, geology, biodiversity or ecology?
- Are the materials that it is made from important? Does it display a particular craft skill well?
- How does it compare with other heritage of its kind? Is it a rare or unique example or the best of its type?
- Has the heritage been featured in films, paintings or in literature?
- Is the heritage important for commemorative or spiritual reasons?
- If it is a tradition, custom, skill or knowledge, is it being practiced today? How has it been passed down through generations?
- Has the value of the heritage changed through time? Was it important for different reasons in the past?

- Does the heritage help create a sense of belonging, or perhaps instil a sense of pride in the area?

Sometimes heritage is registered, designated or protected in some way because it has particular significance and needs to be protected from harmful changes. Find out whether your heritage is recorded anywhere, for example it might be registered as a protected species, a listed building, a designated landscape or a UNESCO-recognised tradition.

Often the designation record will provide details about what experts believe to be important.

Who does the heritage matter to?

It is good to gather comments and opinions on the value of the heritage from a range of sources. You might need to commission input from experts in the relevant field but you should also make sure you have talked to a representative sample of the people who interact with your heritage. They might also be able to write a letter of support when you come to apply, demonstrating to us there is real interest in your project.

These groups may include:

- the community who live or work nearby, if your heritage has a physical location
- any groups who take an interest in your heritage, such as friends groups or local interest groups
- people who use the heritage site/object now, or practice or perform it if it is a skill or tradition
- acknowledged experts in the relevant field
- statutory nature conservation organisations (SNCOs) and local authority conservation departments
- volunteers who help look after the heritage

Remember to also consider under-served groups who might not currently be interacting with your heritage, but could do in the future if any potential barriers are removed. See our guidance on running inclusive heritage projects.

Once you have identified who you will talk to, you can consider how you might go about doing this. The methods will depend on your project, who you want to talk to and the resources you have available, but they might include activities such as surveys, focus groups or engagement online or through social media.

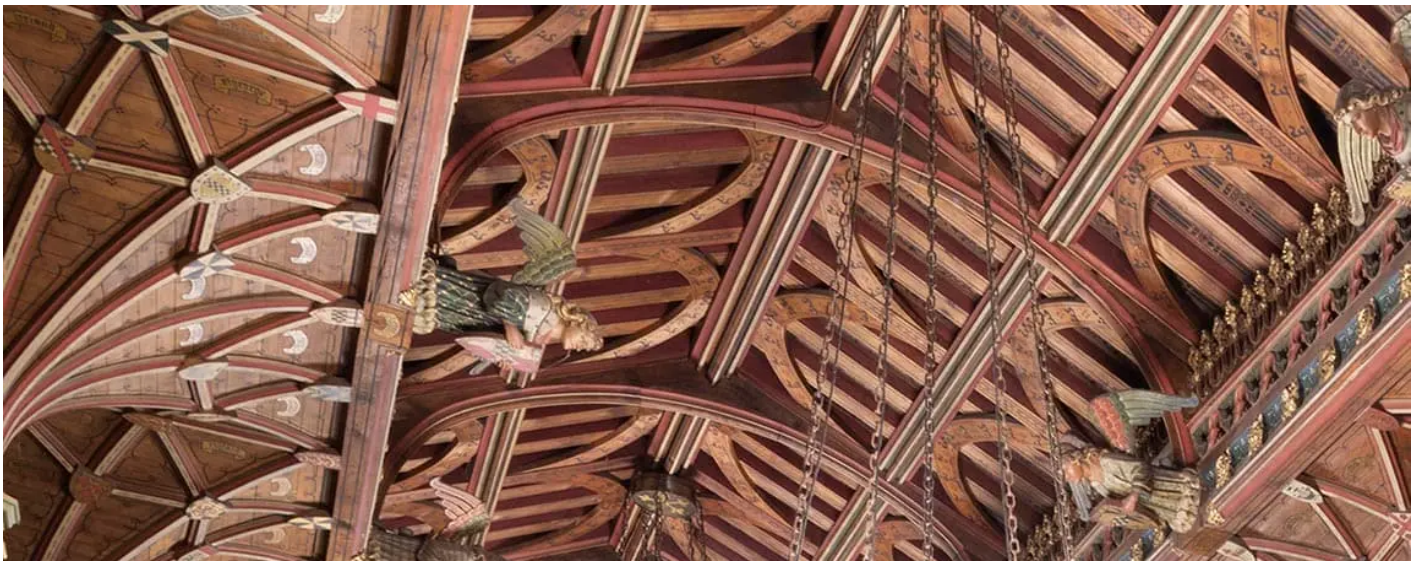
Sharing your understanding

Having gathered information about your heritage and why it is important, the next step is to record your findings so that you can share them with other people and use them to help with your application for funding.

We provide lots of good practice guidance to help develop your idea into a great heritage project.

There's bound to be something relevant to your organisation or project idea, with best practice advice in areas such as: evaluation, oral history, working with volunteers, digital, conservation planning and much more.

If you are planning on carrying out works to a church building, you may also need to prepare documents such as statements of significance and any repair needs. The Church of England has guidance on writing statements of significance and needs.



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