HLF Collecting Cultures Programme Evaluation Year Three 2011

Review for the Heritage Lottery Fund

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CULTURAL CONSULTING NETWORK

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Introduction

In March 2009, HLF commissioned a review to assess progress with, and the impact to date, of the Collecting Cultures Grants Programme. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to assess how far it had met its published aims to:

- make a step change in the ability of the funded museums to develop their collections for future public use;
- support the development of collections and their use through strategic acquisition programmes, related research and public programmes;
- enhance the professional knowledge and skills of staff working in museums.

This report represents an evaluation of progress in Year Three of the 21 (out of 22) projects funded by the Programme that reported back for the period covering April 2010 until the end of March 2011. The results are summarised below based on the 5 published outcomes of the Collecting Cultures Programme:

Outcome 1a. Collections: Improvement in quality and range

Acquisitions have strengthened the impact made on the overall quality and range more than acquisitions in Year Two. The most significant changes over the course of this year appear to have been in the areas of comprehensiveness (up from 11 to 15 strongly agreeing), thematic coverage (up from 9 to 14 strongly agreeing) and chronological coverage (up from 7 to 12 strongly agreeing).

The success rate in acquiring material has been improved through the HLF grant (18 out of 21 respondents). Compared to Year Two, evidence suggested that the frequency of acquisitions made not through purchase by through contacts has improved as projects have gathered momentum.

The acquisitions, made within a wider strategic framework and research programme, once again demonstrated an impact on the collections specialist area and the collection as a whole. Emphasising further previous findings that relatively small amounts of flexible funding for purchases can deliver notable change in quality and range, although this is dependent on the type of material collected and its price.

Outcome 1b. Collections: Improved significance and strengthened relationships

Mirroring Year Two, 20 of the projects stated they had undertaken new research into the collection's significance, with 16 stating that the research had had a significant or moderate impact on their understanding of other parts of the collection.

Qualitative comments revealed that museums are now starting to involve their target audiences in core museum areas such as research, interpretation and cataloguing which supports the findings of earlier years that the museums are focussing on engaging their audiences through the medium of their core collections, involving both curatorial and education/learning staff.

Of the 21 projects, 13 reported that the new research had had an impact on the future strategic development and research decisions affecting the rest of the collections (beyond those directly affected by HLF funded acquisitions) while 8 stated that it had not. This response is more strongly positive response than in Year Two.

Comments underlined the key role that research has to play in underpinning a strategic approach to acquisitions, informing future collecting areas and avoiding the unwitting creation of "gaps".

There was no change on previous years in the number of organisations reporting a significant or moderate improvement in understanding of a collection's significance in relation to other collections (15/20) or those stating that their understanding had been significantly enhanced by outside expertise (20). In general, the number and range of external bodies that project museums consulted rose during Year Three.

In terms of changes to collections significance, for some the impact has been profound. For the majority however, the change is less dramatic.

Outcome 2. Development of professional knowledge and skills in relation to specialist subject area and acquisitions

All projects either strongly or slightly agreed that their project had already resulted in a *deeper* and *better* understanding of the collections as well as better contacts and relationships with other subject specialists. The response this year consolidates the excellent position stated in Year Two, with even more museums reporting better external contacts improving staff knowledge and skills.

17 (out of 21 responding) reported that the project had already enabled them to develop new initiatives and ways of working with their collections, and they expected this to continue to develop through the life of the project and after. This represents a further strengthening on Year Two reporting.

In Year Three there has also been a noticeable increase the number of museums stating they have gained new skills in interpretation and learning activity as a result of the Collecting Cultures programme (up from 6 in year 2 to 12 in year 3). This, no doubt, reflects the greater emphasis on public programming in later project timetabling.

It is interesting that only half the projects appear to have incorporated any formal training up to this point on in their lifecycles.

18 respondents stated that they are more interested in the subject area and 19 stating that they are more confident in the subject specialist area, a further strengthening on Year Two.

Confidence levels in relation to subject specialist knowledge also grew this year overall, although in a small minority of cases scores dropped due to curatorial staff changes.

The evidence of the relevance the project to museums' forward planning was more meaningful this year due to the quality of commentry provided. All 21 museums were consistent with Year Two in stating that the project was already affecting their organisations forward planning.

Outcome 3. Development of professional knowledge and skills in relation to the practical aspects of acquisition through purchase

17 out of 21 projects stated that involvement had increased their understanding of the practical aspects of acquisition (compared to 18/20 in Year Two). 115.5 staff across the 21 projects are working in the area of acquisition compared to 107 in Year Two.

The level of understanding of the acquisition process at this point in time has improved from the already strong showing in Year Two. 5 more organisations reported a deep and thorough understanding.

Museums also continue to highlight the benefits of having security of funding and a dedicated acquisition budget that allows them to engage with collectors, specialist networks and auction houses on an ongoing basis.

There was a positive movement towards higher levels of confidence in the acquisition process for the collection as a result of the project, with 6 organisations scoring themselves level 5 this year compared to 2 in Year Two.

The number reporting that HLF funding has not affected prices was the same as in Year Two (11 out of 19). However, there was an increase in the number of organisations reporting that they thought it might have influenced prices detrimentally or weren't sure (up from 3 in Year Two to 8 in Year Three). Opinions seem to be split on this issue.

Outcome 4. Greater Public Participation and Learning based on the Collection
There has been a notable uplift in the total number of new volunteers working across the projects (91 compared to 19 in Year Two) and a mild increase in the total number of existing volunteers too (84 compared to 72).

The number of organisations that stated they are involving new volunteers (8) and existing volunteers (11) is slightly lower than in Year Two. In Year Three, 6 projects reported not actively involving any volunteers.

The volume of new volunteer activity combined for all the projects that provided figures (8) is 1,030 total hours, and for existing volunteer activity is 7,597 total hours reported by 11 projects. This represents a total count of volunteer hours of 8,627 - a really significant increase yet again from the total in Year Two of 4,834 hours, representing an average of 90 hours contributed per project by existing volunteers to date and 11 for new volunteers.

The majority of activities in which volunteers are involved are core museum backroom functions associated with collections management, conservation, documentation and collections research and this bias remains reflected in the emphasis within skills development. That said there is more evidence this year that volunteers are involved in the outward facing functions of the museum that are associated with the public programming activities the projects.

This year 19 museums provided information on the public programming activities that form the core part of how their projects are enabling people to learn from and enjoy the results of acquisition, research, documentation, interpretation and consultation.

More organisations in Year Three were in a position to offer at least some figures for the number of participants attending public programmes (16).

Compared to Year Two, there has been a further acceleration in the delivery of public programmes across the sample of 19 projects that responded. In the past, the balance of activity seemed to lie in favour of changes to permanent and temporary displays within the participating museums (permanent and temporary) and indeed there has been an increase in such activity again this year. However, the most marked change has been in offering targeted work for specific audiences. The number of projects running sessions for primary schools has risen from 4 to 10, secondary from 3 to 9, further and higher education from 4 to 7. There has also been a notable surge in the number of project offering family learning events, workshops, and lectures.

The total number of participants attending public programmes so far is 507,873 but this figure is only a partial indication of true scale of audiences for the Collecting Cultures programme.

Outcome 5. Benefits for the Wider Museum Sector
19 museums (as opposed to 20 in Year two) reported that their project is resulting in the development of new partnerships or the strengthening of existing ones. The numbers

reporting the development of new partnerships rose (from 13 to 18) while those reporting the strengthening of exisiting ones remained constant.

The most common partnership development remains with sister museums with a similar collecting interest or within a certain geographical range and with libraries, archives and academics. The number of museums in partnership with organisations with a direct role in acquisition such as auction houses and creators, makers and manufacturers has been stable since the first year of reporting. The only kinds of partnerships to show a meaningful uplift in reported numbers are those with community group (up to 8 from 4 in Year Two) and with independent expert advisers (up to 13 from 9 in Year Two).

There were no marked changes in the geographical scope of partnerships reported in Year Three.

In Year Three, there was not a noticeable change in the number of projects that were in a position to comment on how they are disseminating lessons learnt from their projects (15 compared to 14 in Year Two). The figures show remarkably little change since Year Two, which might be considered an anomaly given that the projects have generally delivered more of their collections management and public programme outputs.

General Conclusions for Year Three
In Year Three, it continued to the be the case that all the organisations, bar one, made important progress with their projects, and the impact on both audience development and the enrichment of collections and their associated professional management grew. One project, Trainers, Sneakers, Pumps and Daps; Northampton Museums and Art Gallery with Kettering Manor House completed during this year. The public programming elements of the vast majority of projects are now well underway. The results from Year Three corroborate and strengthen the evidence from the previous years that the Collecting Culture projects are successfully meeting the aims and outcomes originally envisaged by the Heritage Lottery Fund for the programme.

1. Introduction

The overall purpose of the evaluation of the Collecting Cultures programme from 2009 to 2013 is to assess the extent to which the Programme has met its published aims to:

- make a step change in the ability of the funded museums to develop their collections for future public use;
- support the development of collections and their use through strategic acquisition programmes, related research and public programmes;
- enhance the professional knowledge and skills of staff working in museums.

This report represents an evaluation of the third year's progress of the 22 projects funded by the Programme (from April 2010 until the end of March 2011). HLF intends to commission further evaluation of progress in the fourth and fifth years of the Programme (from April 2011 to April 2013). Further details on the research aims and methodology can be found in appendix one.

2. Findings: Collections quality and range

The first section of the questionnaire looked at the impact of the programme to date on the improvement, through purchase, in the quality and range of collections.

2.1 Improvement in quality and range

21 respondents reported that they had made progress in acquiring objects using HLF funds and that the project had maintained an improvement in the quality and or range in the following areas:

Table 1: Quality and range of collections

Q1 The project has resulted in a marked improvement in the quality and range of the collection in the following ways:						
	Agree Strongly	Agree Slightly	Neither	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Strongly	DK/ NA
Uniqueness, rarity	14	5	1 1	0	1	0
Comprehensiveness	15	6	0	0	0	0
Geographical coverage	7	8	1 4	0	1	0
Thematic coverage	14	7	0 3	0	0	0
Chronological coverage	12	7	2 4	0	0	0
Better representation of key creators, makers and manufacturers	18	1	1 0	0	0	1
Sample: 21						

Acquisitions made in Year Three of the programme have strengthened the impact made on the overall quality and range more than acquisitions in year 2. The most significant changes over the course of this year appear to have been in the areas of comprehensiveness (up from 11 to 15 strongly agreeing), thematic coverage (up from 9 to 14 strongly agreeing) and

chronological coverage (up from 7 to 12 strongly agreeing). The perceived improvement in the representation of key creators, makers and manufacturers remains the area where the most positive impact is reported. It is also true that the number answering "don't know/not applicable" (although relatively small compared to the sample size) has nonetheless diminished in this year's reporting, suggesting that projects are more competent in making judgments about their collection's relative improvement.

The consolidation of results from Year Two into Year Three can be seen in table 2.

Table 2: Quality and range reported in 2010 and 2011.

Projects reporting improvement in:	No. of projects 'strongly' or 'slightly' agreeing in 2010	No. of projects 'strongly' or 'slightly' agreeing in 2011
Uniqueness	18	19
Comprehensiveness	19	21
Geographical coverage	12	15
Thematic coverage	16	21
Chronological coverage	14	19
Representation by key creators, makers and manufacturers	17	19

Comments provided by the museums indicate that the majority have seen their collections significantly improved as a result of collecting activity over the past year, and over the course of the project.   In particular, the museums highlight that their collections are now more comprehensive and representative of key events and themes; that they have managed to fill gaps in the collection, increase diversity and strengthen those areas previously assessed as weak. The impact of this extends to the wider collections through increased understanding of different collecting areas, and to audiences as it is enabling museums to tell new and different stories about their material.

During Year Three of the project a further thirty-eight photographs relating to the 1984/5 Miners' Strike have been acquired. This year-long industrial dispute is still widely regarded as one of the most significant events in coal mining history. Prior to the project it was one of our weakest areas within the photography collection, but it has now become one of its strongest. (Seeing the Whole Picture: National Coal Mining Museum for England)

…we have now managed to acquire a more diverse range of objects than we previously had and thus the potential stories or themes that we are able to tell in our exhibitions have also expanded. (Sharing Norfolk's Past, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service)

2.2 Difference to success rate

The vast majority of projects (18 out of 21 respondents) agreed that the HLF project had had a positive effect on the museums success rate in acquiring target acquisitions compared to the position prior to the project:

Table 3: Difference in success rate in acquisition

Q2 The HLF funded project has made a difference to the museum's previous success rate in acquiring target acquisitions through purchase					
Agree Strongly	**Agree Slightly**	**Neither**	**Disagree Slightly**	**Disagree Strongly**	**DK/ NA**
15	3	1	0	2	0
Sample: 21					

This assessment of success rate remains markedly consistent with the picture from Year Two (17 out of 20 reported a positive impact). The projects strongly disagreeing with the questionnaire statement were the Macclesfield Silk Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Although neither of these project provided a comment to explain their scoring, the inference in the case of the V&A is that looked at in context of the museum's overall scale of collecting this specific project, although valuable, is a relative drop in the ocean.

2.3 Acquisitions not through purchase

When asked about whether the HLF funded project had made a difference to the museum's success rate in acquiring target acquisitions *not through purchase*, responses were more markedly positive than in Year Two (13 positive responses against 7 negative compared to 11 against 11 in Year 2).

Of the 13 respondents who stated that their acquisition success rate *not through purchase* had improved, the following means of acquisition were identified:

Table 4: Acquisitions not through purchase

Q3b Have you acquired collections not through purchase as a result of any of the following?	Number of responses
Donations of material/archives associated with purchase	10
Raised public awareness of museum collecting project led to offers of donations	10
New contacts resulting from project led to offers from private collectors	8
Others knowledge that museum was building a collection in that area	9
Sample: 13	

These results are broadly comparable with last year's in terms of donations but suggest that, as the projects mature and their reach extends further, acquisitions from contacts made and via others awareness of the museum's collecting interest are more frequent. In some cases, museums have also been able to acquire material at below market price, having establishs a relationships with a gallery or dealer or private collector through other purchases.

Of the 13 museums who made additional comments about acquisitions not through purchase, 8 reported that they had received additional donations on the back of a purchase or as a result of raised awareness of their collecting interests.

We've had some donations from local private collectors of commercial pottery produced 1900-1950 as a result of the raised profile of our collecting interests through Collecting Cultures. These have been great donations as it allows us to tell the story of developments in British ceramics through a mixture of important purchases and local donations that give more local colour. (The Potters Art in the 20th Century: Gallery Oldham, Harris Museum and Art Gallery)

A further ten pieces have been donated by a private collector and it is anticipated that this number may increase, following discussions with other potential donors. The impact of the Collecting Cultures scheme in raising SPRI's profile as a major collection holder should not be underestimated. (Arctic Visions: Scott Polar Research Institute)

Building up long term relationships with private collectors also has the benefit of increasing the likelihood of major gifts in the future in the form of bequests, and can act as an early alert

to material which is likely to come onto the market. Without the Collecting Cultures programme is it unlikely that this sort of contact would have been established.

3. Findings: Collections significance and relationships

3.1 An enhanced understanding of the collection's significance, and its relationship to other collections of the same kind

3.1.1 New research

20 out of the 21 projects that responded stated that they had undertaken new research into the collection's significance. The only project reporting to the contrary was the Oldham Gallery and Harris Museum, where the majority of the ceramics acquired were already "well documented". Table 5 illustrates the kinds of research areas investigated:

Table 5: Types of new research

Q5b Which best describes the type(s) of new research you have undertaken/are undertaking with your collection:	Number of responses
Research into manufacturing/creation	10
Research into collections context and history	18
Research into associated significance and other collections/events	9
Research into new ways of interpreting and explaining collections	11
Research into significance **for** specific target groups/communities	6
Research into significance **with** specific target groups/communities	3
Sample: 20	

Research remains concentrated on context and history (18 responses compared to 17 in year 2). The results for research into manufacturing/creation and associated significance are also broadly comparable with Year Two, but the number of projects reporting research to *aid interpretation and explanation* is higher (11 as opposed to 6 in year 2) and that with *target groups/communities* has risen from 0 to 3, which implies that more research is being focussed by the imperatives of the public programming elements of projects than in earlier years, and more museums are involving potential audiences in this work.

From the comments provided, for example Northampton Museums and Art Gallery, it can be seen that museums are now starting to involve their target audiences in core museum areas such as research, interpretation and cataloguing. This allows for different voices to be heard and acknowledges the specialist expertise and interests of those outside of the museum service. It reinforces the findings of earlier Collecting Cultures Evaluation reports that the museums are focussing on engaging their audiences through the medium of their core collections, involving both curatorial and education/learning staff; a model which would seem more sustainable in the long term than some outreach programmes which may be more thematically led and often externally funded.

Young people's responses to a selection of the trainers exhibited in our second exhibition Sneaker Peak were added to the database record as part of a revisiting collection exercise. (Trainers, Sneakers, Pumps and Dabs: Northampton Museums and Art Gallery)

Working with the project community panel and the temporary exhibition of works has involved research and an exploration of new ways of interpreting collections in relation to our audiences. (Peace and Reconciliation: The Herbert, Coventry and Wolverhampton Art Gallery)
As in previous years, the projects were asked if the research had had an impact on their understanding of other parts of the collection.

Table 6: Impact of research on other parts of collection

Q6a Research has had an impact on our understanding of other parts of our collection			
Significant	Moderate	No change	DK/ NA
6	10	4	0
Sample: 20			

Table 6 shows that 16 museums reported moderate or significant impact on other parts of the collection as a result of their research. Those reporting that research has made a significant impact on understanding within Year Three is slightly lower than in Year Two (down from 8 in year 2 to 6) and those reporting no change is higher, which may imply that some have completed the research component of their projects by this stage in the Collecting Cultures five year programme.

The comments that accompanied this question provide more insight, with museums reporting that research has had a positive impact on their understanding of other parts of the collections and the broader histories associated with those collections, for example through highlighting new themes, or elucidating events of which the museum had been unaware.

It has highlighted themes/events/stories we have previously been unaware of eg Inniskillings participation in the Easter Rising. It was previously thought that they had not participated. (Connection and Division: Fermanagh County Museum, Derry Heirtage and Museum Service, Inniskillings Museum)

Research into the Inuit art collection has resulted in an improved understanding of other parts of the collection of indigenous Arctic manufacture, such as clothing, tools and domestic items. (Arctic Visions: Scott Polar Research Institute)

3.1.2 Impact on future strategic development and research

Of the 21 projects, 13 reported that the new research had had an impact on the future strategic development and research decisions affecting the rest of the collections (beyond those directly affected by HLF funded acquisitions) while 8 stated that it had not. This response represents a more strongly positive response than in Year Two, which may reflect again the stage that projects have reached, such that the grantees are now looking beyond the end of HLF funded work and towards what effects the project may have on future practice.

Common themes for strategic impact included:

- Providing a model approach on which to build in the future;

- The importance of *research* in identifying key priorities for future collecting, and in ensuring collection 'gaps' do no develop in the future;

- Development of new strategies to address identified collection gaps;

- Supporting a more focussed approach to the possible use of acquisitions, particularly in relation to different audiences;

- Using the collection research results to inform future exhibitions programming;

- Stimulating national research into focussed collecting areas, such as Derbyshire ephemera, Inuit Art;

- Making connections across different collections and building closer links between different department specialists.

The research into our collection has made us much more sharply aware of the dangers of failing to collect contemporary works. (The Potters Art in the 20th Century: Gallery Oldham, The Harris Museum and Art Gallery)

All future acquisitions to the Art and Photography collections are carefully considered alongside the rest of the Museum's collections. In some cases this has helped to highlight where any significant gaps currently lie in other collection areas and enabled us to consider strategies for addressing them. Our Curator of Social and Oral History has, for example, identified that we hold no oral history recordings featuring photographers who hold coal mining portfolios…... This has been selected as a potential priority for the Oral History collection. (Seeing the Whole Picture: National Coal Mining Museum for England)

Exactly the same as in Year Two, 12 projects reported that they have researched the significance of the acquired objects in relation to collections in other organisations (such as museums, archives, libraries, historic sites and specialist societies) covering the same or related subject area; 7 reported that they had not and 1 reported that they intended to do so in the future within the lifecycle of the project.

Improvement in understanding of a collection's significance in relation to other collections in other organisations was also investigated, with 15 out of 20 noting a significant or moderate improvement. This represents no marked change from Year Two.

Table 7: Significance in relation to other collections

Q7b Our understanding of the significance of the acquired objects in relation to collections in other organisations has improved			
Significant	**Moderate**	**No change**	**DK/ NA**
8	7	4	1
Sample: 20			

Of the sample of 20 projects that completed this question, it remained the case, as in Year Two, that the majority had looked at other museum collections for their research and that the other kinds of collection holding organisations have not been researched as systematically:

Table 8: Examples of other collections researched

Q7c Please indicate where the other collections you looked at are held:	Number of responses
museums	17
archives	7
libraries	4
historic sites	4
specialist societies	4
university	5
private	10
Sample: 20	

Much the same as last year practically all projects (20) stated that their museum's understanding of the collection's significance had been enhanced by experts from outside their organisation (such as academics, specialist societies and volunteers), with 15 stating

this was significant, and 5 moderate. The projects cited the following types of outside bodies consulted:

Table 9: Range of experts consulted

Q8c Our understanding of the collections significance has been enhanced by experts from outside our organisation	Number of responses
Please indicate the specialists you consulted:	
academics	19
volunteers	7
community groups	4
auction houses	11
specialist societies	8
private collectors	14
Sample: 20	

These figures show that projects have generally consulted more outside bodies in Year Three than in Year Two, especially academics (up from 14 to 19), auction houses (up from 6 to 11), specialist societies (up from 4 to 8) and private collectors. The number of projects consulting with community groups remains relatively low, although there has been a slight increase from Year Two (from 2 to 4).

There has been no notable change in the number of project museums adequately documenting the new acquisitions made as a result of the HLF grant, which is steady at 15 (of which 2 stated that some recent acquisitions were still to be done). 7 reported that documentation was outstanding but planned during the lifecycle of the project.

3.2 Changes to collections significance and anticipated changes

Responding to the question on collections significance, the museums categorised the collections across the following areas at this point in time:

Table 10: Assessment of collections significance

Significance	Number of responses
Local	12
Regional	12
National	17
International	11
Designated	3
Sample: 20	

This compares to results lin Year Two (2010) of:

Significance	Number of responses
Local	8
Regional	8
National	11
International	5
Designated	2
Sample: 12	

The sample size is smaller this year as 8 museums reported no change from last year so did not complete the question.

Of the 12 projects providing comments on changes this year, 2 stated that there had been no change; 5 noted that their collections were of international significance and 1 reported that part of the collection had now been Designated (Wrights of Derby Collection). Another noted that, rather than just enhancing the collection, they had added another dimension to it

"we have added another dimension to it with the introduction of a significant number of wallpapers by artists, making it wider ranging than that held by the V&A and therefore internationally significant." (Cultural Reflections: Whitworth Art Gallery).

For some the impact has been profound, with the Scott Polar Research Institute reporting that the collection *"is now recognised as one of the most significant public collections outside North America",* and the Jurassic Life project having acquired *"one of the most important fossils in the world"*. For the majority however, the change is less dramatic though still significant, strengthening the significance of the collections locally, regionally and nationally through enhancing their quality, scope and depth.

4. Findings: Development of professional knowledge and skills in relation to specialist subject area and acquisitions

4.1 Subject Specialist areas

All projects either strongly or slightly agreed that their project had already resulted in a deeper and better understanding of the collections as well as better contacts and relationships with other subject specialists.

Table 11: Subject area knowledge and skills

Q10 The HLF funded project has resulted in a marked improvement in the development of professional knowledge and skills in relation to the special subject area concerned						
Staff/volunteers have gained:	**Agree Strongly**	**Agree Slightly**	**Neither**	**Disagree Slightly**	**Disagree Strongly**	**DK/ NA**
a deeper knowledge of the collection	15	6	0	0	0	0
a better understanding of the collection's significance	14	7	0	0	0	0
better contacts and/or built relationships with other subject specialists	16	5	0	0	0	0
Sample: 21						

The response this year consolidates the excellent position stated in Year Two, with even more museums reporting better external contacts improving staff knowledge and skills.

This area continues to be a strength of the Collecting Cultures programme, with 14 museums providing further comments:

We have made many new and valuable contacts through this project …. This event put us in contact with a very hard to contact group of people including private dealers and collectors. It has opened up a new world of subject specialists. (Trainers, Sneakers, Pumps and Dabs: Northampton Museums and Art Gallery, Kettering Manor House Museum)

Undoubtedly as a result of this project our collections knowledge and significance has improved. We have also built excellent relationships with experts in the field, as well as working with more visitors, volunteers and community groups. (The Potters Art in the 20th Century: Gallery Oldham and The Harris Museum and Art Gallery)

Commenting generally on changes in ways of working and on their increased knowledge and skills, the projects reported that they benefited from:

- Greater collaborative working across curatorial and learning/outreach departments;

- New skills development in social media, blogging and negotiating with private sellers

- Enhancing the skills of education and access staff in subject specialist areas, leading to new education and interpretation initiatives.

4.1.1 New initiatives and ways of working

17 (out of 21 responding museums) reported that the project had already enabled them to develop new initiatives and ways of working with their collections, and they expected this to continue to develop through the life of the project and after. 4 museums commented that the project had not yet enabled the museum to do this. This represents a further strengthening on Year Two reporting.

16 museums provided additional comments on how they had developed new initiatives or ways of working with the collection. Common themes emerging include:

- Opportunities for expanding collections knowledge and reach created through contact with different organisations and involvement in new networks;

- The development of a pool of subject specialists, academics and other collaborators to support research into the collections, including research placements;

- The development of new storylines and interpretative methods for exploring the collections and engaging audiences;

- Development of contacts and partnerships for loans and joint exhibitions;

- The development of new and innovative access, learning and outreach initiatives to provide greater physical and intellectual access to the collections, for example for schools, visually impaired visitors and children with special needs;

One project is now mainstreaming this work, which will see the benefits spread to all visitors in the future:

We are much more focused on providing physical access to the ceramics collection – through handling sessions etc – than previously. This is as a direct result of this project. Initially this was through our work with visually impaired users, but now we recognise how important touch is to understanding ceramics with all visitors and it is a standard part of our offer. (The Potters Art in the 20th Century: Gallery Oldham and The Harris Museum and Art Gallery)

Given the extent of engagement work with different audiences it is recommended that HLF consider undertaking additional detailed research into the scope and impact of the audience development work with a sample of the projects in order to provide good examples of how new acquisitions and collecting programmes can be used to stimulate new audience development and learning activities.

4.1.2 Development of skills

More projects this year than in Year Two (12) reported on the development of a range of new and existing skills as a result of work to date, with research, collections management and conservation remaining the skills recorded most frequently. However, in Year Three there has also been a noticeable increase the number of museums stating new skills in interpretation and learning activity as a result of the Collecting Cultures programme (up from

6 in Year Two to 12 in Year Three). This, no doubt, reflects the greater emphasis on public programming in later project timetabling.

Table 12: Development of new and existing skills

Q11a The project helped develop new skills in:	
Type of new skills	Number of responses
Documentation	3
Conservation	7
Research	9
Collections management	3
Interpretation/ learning activity	12
Archiving	0
Local history	4
Managing groups	3
Information management	5
Communication skills	5
Sample: 16	

Q11b The project helped develop existing skills in:	
Type of existing skills	Number of responses
Documentation	14
Conservation	8
Research	13
Collections management	14
Interpretation/ learning activity	8
Archiving	4
Local history	4
Managing groups	7
Information management	10
Communication skills	11
Sample: 17	

Those projects reporting the most widespread development of both new and existing skills in Year Three were: Fermanagh County Museum, Derry Heritage and Museum Service, Inniskillings Museum; Groam House Museum; Herbert, Coventry and Wolverhampton Art Gallery; and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Table 13: Training offered

Q12 The project offers formal training in:	
Type of training	Number of responses
Documentation	6
Conservation	2
Research	4
Collections management	7
Interpretation/ learning activity	5
Archiving	2
Local history	2
Managing groups	0
Information management	3
Communication skills	2
Sample: 10	

The response to the types of training offered is remarkably consistent with the picture painted in Year Two, with the sample size being the same. It is interesting that only half the projects appear to have incorporated any formal training up to this point on in their lifecycles. The museums reporting the most types of training given are Fermanagh County Museum, Derry Heritage and Museum Service, Inniskillings Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

4.1.3 Impact of involvement on confidence and interest

The finding from Year Two that the project has had a major impact on the interest and confidence of those involved has embedded further this year, with slightly more museums stating that they "agree strongly" or "agree slightly" that interests and skills have increased. 18 stated that they are more interested in the subject area for Year Three compared to 17 in total for Year Two; and 19 stated that they are more confident in the subject specialist area for Year Three compared to 18 in Year Two.

Table 14: Impact on interests and skills

Q13 Involvement in the project has:						
	Agree Strongly	Agree Slightly	Neither	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Strongly	DK/ NA
made you more interested in the collections subject area	16	4	0	0	1	0
more confident in your subject specialist area?	17	2	2	0	0	0
Sample: 21						

12 museums chose to provide extra comments on their increased interest and confidence in working with the collections. Comments mainly relate to:

- An increased confidence around working with, and better and deeper understanding of, the subject area and related collections;

- A better understanding of developments in the collecting area (such as British pottery 1900-1950) or historical events associated with the collections;

- Being more confident in identifying future purchases and acquisition areas;

- Being more confident, and feeling better equipped, to communicate the significance of the collections to others.

Certainly, confidence has grown in regard to our understanding of the depth and uses of collections. (Titanic Built in Belfast: National Museums Northern Ireland)

The museums were asked to rate their confidence levels, from 1 to 5, in regard to their subject specialist area at the beginning of the project, and in Year Three. All 21 organisations with active projects scored themselves this year.

Table 15: Confidence levels

Q14 How would you rate your confidence level in regard to subject specialist knowledge at this point in the project?				
1 – not very confident	2	3	4	5 – very confident

0	1	1	15	4

Sample: 21

Compared to last year's result there has been a marked shift in the number of organisations reporting a change from a confidence level of 3 to 4, implying a steady improvement where there has been continuity of staff.

One organisation (the Museum of Garden History) reported a drop of confidence from 5 to 2 due curatorial change. The Museum of English Rural Life also reported a drop, stating *"It would be difficult to match the very confident score of the previous curator and project lead who had worked with this museum's collections for 30 years and had been the instigator of this particular project. We are seeking to develop the subject specialist knowledge more widely across the curatorial team now".*

Those taking over from long standing curators stress the importance of sharing collections and project knowledge across different staff, a theme which reoccurs in many of the project comments, and which is clearly important for embedding the benefits of the project across an organisation – giving it greater impact overall as well as making it more sustainable.

4.1.4 Impact on future planning

As in Year Two, all 21 responding museums continued to state they could already see where and how the experience and knowledge they had gained from the project would be used in future planning.

Table 16: Impact on future planning areas

Q16 The knowledge and experience will be used in future planning in the following areas:	
Area of planning	**Number of responses**
Staff recruitment and workforce development	8
Strategic planning	9
Exhibition and interpretation	20
Collecting policies	14
Learning programmes	17
Working with new audiences	14
Developing relationships and future collaborations	20
Future research direction and strategies	17
Sample: 21	

Although it remains the case that the greatest impact to date has been on exhibitions and interpretation planning and on future collaborations, there has also been an evidenced increase in the numbers reporting an impact on staff recruitment and workforce development (up from 4 in Year Two to 8 in Year Three) and on future research direction and strategies (up from 13 in Year Two to 17 Year Three). This perhaps suggests that the projects as a group are starting to consider the implications of what has been learnt from Collecting Cultures for the wider processes of the museum's planning.

15 museums commented extensively on this area of the programme. The comments reveal:

- The benefits for staff development across a range of skills including project management, evaluation and social media;

- Plans for working with new audiences and extending work with existing audiences, through new workshops, adult courses, youth programmes, schools work and exhibitions, often in partnership with other organisations;
- The development of new partnerships and loans agreements between the national museums and regional partners;
- Plans for sharing expertise with other organisations, including the offer of formal training in both curatorial and non-curatorial skills;
- Plans for reviewing acquisition and disposal polices as well as for future strategic collecting programmes;
- Consideration of how the lessons learnt from strategic collecting, such as bidding, can be applied to future work and projects;
- How to ensure that new ways of collaborative working across curatorial and education departments, and with volunteers, can be sustained in the future.

On a strategic level, museums also highlighted the value of focussing closely on the development and interpretation of certain elements of the collections *"which has increased the drive and motivation to develop specific areas of the collection" (Seeing the Whole Picture. National Coal Mining Museum for England)* and reinforced the benefits of collections driven interpretation and education.

The impact of developing a better understanding of a discrete part of the collection has encouraged staff to see the possibilities inherent in the process and to implement a range of research, display and learning activities. (Arctic Visions: Scott Polar Research Institute)

4.2 Development of professional knowledge and skills in relation to the practical aspects of acquisition through purchase

17 out of all 21 projects responding to question 18 stated that involvement had increased their understanding of the practical aspects of acquisition (compared to 18 out of 20 in Year Two). Within those 21 projects, the number of staff working on the practical aspects of acquisition associated with the projects is relatively stable compared to that reported in year 2 (115.5 staff in Year Three compared to 107 in Year Two).

The self-assessment rating of the level of understanding of the acquisition process at this point in time has improved from the already strong showing last year. Put simply, 5 more organisations are reporting a score of 5 (deep and thorough understanding) – up from 2 in Year Two to 7 in Year Three.

Table 17: Understanding of acquisition process

Q19 Please indicate how you would rate your current level of understanding of the acquisitions process at this point in the project:				
1 – not much understanding	2	3	4	5 – deep and thorough understanding
0	0	3	11	7
Sample: 21				

17 out of 21 respondents (compared to 16 out of 19 in Year Two) stated that the project had made a difference to the way the museum approaches acquisitions. So there has been no marked change in Year Three.

As in Year 2, museums have commented on getting to grips with practical issues such as purchase via auction houses, private dealers and Ebay which might involve telephone and internet bidding, as well as issues around the identification of suitable material and having the capacity to see the process through. Museums also continue to highlight the benefits of having security of funding and a dedicated acquisition budget that allows them to engage with collectors, specialist networks and auction houses on an ongoing basis. This continues to open up new possibilities not available for one off purchases. In one case, Scott Polar Research Institute, it has also enabled them to identify future loans from private collectors, which might be converted to future bequests.

The organisations are also acquiring new skills in acquisition with object identification, authentication and valuation and bidding process the top four skills developed in Year Three, which builds on similar findings in Year Two.

Table 18: Development of skills in acquisition

Q21 Involvement in the project has helped to develop new skills in acquisition:						
	Agree Strongly	Agree Slightly	Neither	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Strongly	DK/ NA
Identifying objects for potential acquisition	17	3	1	0	0	0
Identifying objects for potential acquisition through a finder service	1	6	6	0	0	7
Authentication and establishing provenance of objects	7	7	3	2	0	2
Valuation process	9	6	6	0	0	0
Bidding process	9	5	5	0	0	2
Negotiation with owners	7	6	5	0	0	3
Negotiation with creators/ manufacturers	3	5	4	0	0	8
Working with auction houses	8	5	5	0	0	3
Acquisition contracts and conditions	4	5	6	1	1	4
Knowledge of acceptance in lieu procedures	1	0	7	0	1	12
Knowledge of private treaty sales	2	2	5	0	0	11
Security, packing, transport and insurance	7	6	4	0	1	2
Sample: 21 or 20 for finder service, creators, contracts and conditions, AIL, private treaty and security.						

These results are broadly consistent with the pattern reported in 2010, which indicates that acquisition activity has been roughly the same over the two years, after the slow start reported in Year One.

Commenting on the development of new skills, museums particularly emphasised the development of different bidding skills; negotiating skills and working with auction houses.

A number also commented on the formalisation of processes and documentation for security, packing, transport and insurance (Buxton, Derby and Belper North Mill, Scott Polar Research Institute). This standardised information might usefully be shared with the rest of the museum's sector, for example through the Collections Trust website or HLF case studies.

When asked if the project had changed the way the museum approaches acquisition, museums 16 answered yes, and 4 answered no. Commenting on changes to acquisition practice, museums highlighted:

- Increased contact with makers/artists as a result of the project;
- More active research into auction sales and private dealers, and more proactive collecting;
- The involvement of a wider range of staff and volunteers in the acquisition process
- The longer-term benefits of taking a strategic approach.

When asked again this year to rate whether they were more confident about the acquisition process for the collection as a result of the project, the vast majority of respondents answered positively (17 organisations out of the 21 responding). There was a positive movement towards higher levels of confidence, with 6 organisations scoring themselves level 5 this year compared to 2 in Year Two.

Table 20: Acquisition confidence levels

Q23b Please rate your current confidence levels with regards to the acquisition process on a scale of 1-5 below.				
1 – not confident	2	3	4	5 – very confident
0	0	4	11	6
Sample: 21				

When asked to comment on the *difference* involvement in the acquistion process to had made to them, the museums highlighted:
- (Again), the benefits of a collaborative approach across departments;
- The development of a more outward-looking and pro active approach to collections development overall;
- How it has enabled them to do more with the collections overall, with a renewed sense of purpose;
- Raised awareness of the different potential sources of acquisitions.

It has made auctioneers and dealers less mysterious; they also see us as viable purchasers and will now approach us with potential acquisitions. (To Develop our Art and Design Collection: Museum of Garden History)

The new sense of purpose to our collecting still prevails. (Collecting Rural Cultures: Museum of English Rural Life)

4.3 Impact of HLF funding on the price of objects

Once again grantees were asked if they thought that knowledge of HLF grant had affected the prices of objects they were seeking to purchase. The number reporting that HLF funding

has not affected prices was the same as in Year Two (11 out of 19). However, there was an increase in the number reporting that they thought it might have influenced prices detrimentally or weren't sure (up from 3 in Year Two to 8 in Year Three).

Opinions seem to be split across the comments given in response to this question. Many make the point that they do not advertise the HLF funding or take care to ensure that vendors have not inflated prices as a result – in some cases avoiding certain sellers or using an agent at auction. Others make the point that they have received discounts on the purchase price from some makers or private dealers when they have explained the whole Collecting Cultures project to them. Those who think the prices might have gone up tend to deal in local or specialist, or closely defined collecting areas, where the market is more competitive either because of its size or mass appeal, for example Inuit art; fossils from the Jurassic Coast; Titanic related material; local archaeological material. Overall, the potential inflationary affect of HLF funding also seems to have diminished as the original publicity about the grant has faded and as museums have worked to manage expectations around the grant aid for purchase.

5. Findings: Greater public participation and learning based on the collection

5.1 Involvement of Volunteers

Since Year Two, there has been a notable uplift in the total number of new volunteers working across the projects (91 compared to 19 a year ago) and a mild increase in the total number of existing volunteers too (84 compared to 72 a year ago).

The number of organisations that stated they are involving new volunteers (8) and existing volunteers (11) within Year Three is slightly lower than in Year Two whilst the numbers that stated they are not using new volunteers (12) and not using existing ones (9) is correspondingly higher. In Year Three, 6 projects reported not actively involving any volunteers, namely: Crafts Study Centre; Herbert, Coventry and Wolverhampton Art Gallery; National Coal Mining Museum for England; National Museums of Northern Ireland; Tyne and Wear Museums; and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Chepstow and Monmouth did not answer that question so it can be presumed they do not involve volunteers.

Whereas the volume of new volunteer activity combined for all the projects that provided figures (8) is 1,030 total hours, that for existing volunteer activity is 7,597 total hours reported by 11 projects. This represents a total count of volunteer hours of 8,627 - a really significant increase yet again from the total in Year Two of 4,834 hours, representing an average of 90 hours contributed per project by existing volunteers to date and 11 for new volunteers. So we can conclude that the importance of the input of volunteers into the Collecting Cultures projects has grown this year and that the programme is making a contribution to HLF's overall strategic aim to involve more people actively in their heritage.

As a reminder in interpreting these figures note should be taken once again that museums were required to state the total cumulative total of volunteer hours contributed since the start of the project and hence the Year One and Year Two figures are subsumed within the overall Year Three figure of 8,627.

In common with previous years, the evaluation sought to identify the kinds of activities and skills that volunteers are developing and the formal training they may have benefited from. The results are summarised below:

Table 21: Volunteer activities, skills and training

Q30 What activities are volunteers involved in:	Number of responses
Acquisition process and influencing collecting decisions	8
Collections management and conservation	8
Documentation- recording, analysing and cataloguing new material	10
Interpretation	4
Working with schools, developing activities and learning resources	8
Organising and delivering activities for children and young people	7
Organising and delivering activities for the wider public	7
Creating online resources	7
Structured work placements	1

Consultation as part of a focus group or committee	3
Project management	4
Undertaking outreach work	3
Researching and working with existing collections and archives	9
Helping with marketing and publicity	8
Providing administrative or IT support for the project	5
Providing other support to the project (e.g. catering, cleaning)	5
Sample: 13	

Q29a Did the project develop the skills of volunteers in:	Number of responses
Documentation	7
Conservation	4
Research	8
Collections management	9
Interpretation / learning activities	7
Archiving	2
Local history	2
Managing groups	2
Information management	5
Communication skills	7
Sample: 12	

Q29b Did the project offer formal training of volunteers in:	Number of responses
Documentation	5
Conservation	1
Research	5
Collections management	3
Interpretation / learning activities	3
Archiving	3
Local history	1
Managing groups	2
Information management	3
Communication skills	2
Sample: 7	

These responses underline the finding from Year Two that the majority of activities in which volunteers are involved are core museum backroom functions associated with collections management, conservation, documentation and collections research and this bias remains reflected in the emphasis within skills development. It remains the case from previous years that the level of volunteer involvement in making decisions about the Collecting Cultures projects appears to be concentrated on the acquisition and collecting process, although there has been an increase in the level of involvement in project management.

That said there is more evidence this year that volunteers are involved in the outward facing functions of the museum that are associated with the public programming activities of Collecting Cultures projects. Hence the numbers reporting volunteers aiding work with schools, developing activities and learning resources has grown from 3 in Year Two to 8 in Year Three, likewise the numbers organising and delivering activities for young people from

4 to 7, the same for the wider public, and creating online resources from 1 to 7. This shift in focus in the role of volunteers towards working with the public is matched by the way in which skills development has been reported with interpretation/learning activities rising from 4 to 7 this year and communication skills from 2 to 7.

As far as formal training for volunteers in concerned, the sample size remains low (7). A further investigation of the data shows that the vast majority of reported training across the prescribed categories is taking place within 4 projects: Buxton Museum & Art Gallery, Derby Museums & Art Gallery and Belper North Mill; Fermanagh County Museum, Derry Heritage and Museum Service, Inniskillings Museum; Gallery Oldham and Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston; and Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery.

5.2 Public Programmes and Activities

19 museums provided information on the public programming activities that form the core part of how their projects are enabling people to learn from and enjoy the results of acquisition, research, documentation, interpretation and consultation. Tain District Museum and the National Museum of Northern Ireland did not provide any information at this stage as their programming has not begun. That provided by the National Museums of Northern Although Dorset did not complete the actual questionnaire tick boxes they did provide a commentary summarising a range of public activities including family events and temporary exhibitions including joint work with the Jurassic Coast experts and education officers and local groups.

The 19 responses received were a summary of the actual activities, which the project had offered to date, rather than those intended over the life cycle of the project, so a year on year comparison remains not meaningful. It should be noted that 16 organisations were in a position to offer at least some figures for the number of participants attending public programmes.

Table 22: Public programmes and activities 2011

Q31 What types of public programmes/activities has your project offered to date:				
Type of programme/activity	Yes	No	Number	No. of participants
Changes to permanent displays	9	5	23	95,700
Temporary exhibitions	15	1	30	362,152
Touring exhibitions	5	5	10	32,700
Catalogue, guidebook, audioguide	7	5	11	584
Sessions for primary schools	10	4	122	2,161
Sessions for secondary schools	9	4	38	1,465
Session for further/higher education	7	3	18	1,462
Online exhibition, online catalogue, blog	10	5	76	4,802
Family learning events	9	5	157	4,452
Workshops	10	4	52	306
Lectures	14	1	40	1,354
Loans or reminiscence boxes	4	5	1	243
Joint reinterpretation projects with target groups e.g. Youth groups	7	2	12	119
Oral history project	1	7	0	0
Outreach projects	6	4	13	373
Total			603	507,873
Sample: 19 and for number of participants sample: 16 (usually partial)				

Public programmes and activities 2010

Q31 What types of public programmes/activities has your project offered to date:				
Type of programme/activity	Yes	No	Number	No. of participants
Changes to permanent displays	9	3	19	15010
Temporary exhibitions	10	5	18	207901
Touring exhibitions	2	6	4	0
Catalogue, guidebook, audioguide	4	5	4	279
Sessions for primary schools	4	6	274*	7235*
Sessions for secondary schools	3	6	118*	3377*
Session for further/higher education	4	4	8	445
Online exhibition, online catalogue, blog	8	4	90	4
Family learning events	5	4	22	2531
Workshops	3	4	4	326
Lectures	7	4	14	618
Loans or reminiscence boxes	4	6	3	6
Joint reinterpretation projects with target groups e.g. Youth groups	3	5	13	12
Oral history project	0	6	0	0
Outreach projects	1	6	1	80
Total			592	237,824
Sample: 17 and for number of participants sample: 9 * there is an anomaly in these figures which we believe is caused by mistaken reporting by the Whitworth Museum and Art Gallery				

Compared to Year Two, there has been a further acceleration in the delivery of public programmes across the sample of 19 projects that responded. Whereas in Year Two the balance of activity seemed to lie in favour of changes to displays within the participating museums (permanent and temporary) and indeed there has been an increase in such activity again this year, the most marked change has been in offering targeted work. The number of projects running sessions for primary schools has risen from 4 to 10, secondary from 3 to 9, further and higher education from 4 to 7. There has also been a notable surge in the number of project offering family learning events, workshops, and lectures.

The figures once again mask the fact that each project has its own special blend of activities on offer tailored to the target audience and that, of course, not all projects are intending to offer the full range of activities suggested by the categorisation.

The total number of participants attending public programmes so far is 507,873 but this figure is only a partial indication of true scale of audiences for the Collecting Cultures programme because, quite rightly a number of museums were wary of including figures for permanent display where the element of display affected by the programme was a relatively small part of the visitor experience. Similarly, a number of museums stated that they made no count of participants for a range of the activities offered (including work with schools and FE/HE). This was sometimes habitual practice but more often than not due to a change of education staff and some difficulties locating figures.

5.2.1 Evaluation

Although only two museums within the Collecting Cultures Programme have not yet started to really deliver elements of their public programming activity (Tain and District Museum and National Museums of Northern Ireland), there still does remains an issue about the

evaluation mechanisms in places for measuring the impact of their proposed programmes on stated target audiences.

5 projects which have provided some significant evaluation evidence thus far are: Buxton Derby & Belper; Herbert, Coventry and Wolverhampton Art Gallery; National Coal Mining Museum for England; Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery; Gallery Oldham and Harris Museum, Preston. Prima facie, this evaluation material appears to be of high quality and requires analysis from which meaningful conclusions should be able to be drawn about these projects' public programming outcomes for audiences.

A number of projects (5) have stated their intention to submit a full evaluation report once their project has completed (Scott Polar Research Institute, Macclesfield Silk Museum, Groam House Museum, Tain and District Museum, Northampton Museums and Art Gallery and Kettering Manor House)

5 projects have indicated that their evaluation has commenced and is ongoing but have not submitted any results for analysis (Tyne and Wear Museums, Fermanagh, Whitworth Art Gallery, Museum of Garden History, Victoria and Albert Museum).

A further 2 projects stated that their evaluation has not started (Museum of English Rural Life, National Museums of Northern Ireland).

The evaluation plans of a further 4 projects remain unclear (Edinburgh University Collection of Historical Musical Instruments, Dorset County Council, Crafts Study Centre, Chepstow and Monmouth Museums).

6. Findings: Benefits for the Wider Museum Sector

6.1 Development of Partnerships

19 projects responded to the question as to whether their project is resulting in the development of new partnerships and 17 to the question related to he strengthening of existing ones.

Table 23: Assessment of partnerships

	Yes	No
Q35 Has the project involved the development of new partnerships?	18	1
Q36 Has the project involved the strengthening of existing partnerships?	17	0
Sample: 19 for Q35 and 17 for Q36		

Although the response relating to existing partnerships is similar to year 2, the number of museums reporting the development of new partnerships has risen substantially from 13 to 18 this year. Given the evidence from previous areas of the report, this suggests that new partnerships have been formed to help projects deliver their public programming elements successfully as well as to support further specialist research.

As in Year Two, the Museum of Garden History and Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery were consistent in stating that the project was not creating new partnerships, although in both cases the museums were working with a range of existing partners before the project.

The range of organisations with which those museums are strengthening and creating new partnerships is wide and varied:

Table 24: Partnerships developed by museums

Q37 Which of the following kinds of organisations has the museum developed partnerships with:	Number of responses
Other museums with same subject specialist area	15
Museums within an existing specialist subject network	9
Other kinds of collecting organisations such as libraries and archives	6
Academic institutions	12
Specialist societies	11
Creators, makers and manufacturers	12
Community groups	8
Auction houses	8
Independent expert advisers	13
Sample: 18	

The most common partnership development remains with sister museums with a similar collecting interest or within a certain geographical range and with libraries, archives and academics. The number of museums in partnership with organisations with a direct role in acquisition such as auction houses and creators, makers and manufacturers has been stable since the first year of reporting. The only kinds of partnerships to show a meaningful uplift in reported numbers are those with community groups (up from 4 in Year Two) and with independent expert advisers (up from 9 in Year Two).

Other specific partnerships mentioned were: the National Trust, Peak District National Park, an arts centre, BBC Hands on History and a lifelong learning centre.

The geographical scope of these partnerships varies across the different kinds of projects:

Table 25: Scope of partnerships

Q38 Scope of partnerships	Number of responses
Local	10
Regional	9
National	17
International	7
Sample: 17	

As in previous years, the most common response was for partnerships to be local, regional and national in scope (10), with local and regional being cited by 3 respondents and solely regional by 2. There were no marked changes in the scope of partnerships reported in Year Three.

In reviewing the comments made by 18 organisations about the benefits of their *existing and new partnerships*, the following themes were articulated (which reflect those areas cited in Years One and Two):

- Developing the subject specialism of the museum by building internal knowledge of the collection through sharing of expertise by external parties;

- Facilitating greater awareness of the overall contextual importance of the collections in relation to other collections and events;

- Development of closer links with higher education institutions and participating in joint research;

- Integration into wider, often national networks such as the Jurassic Coast or subject specialist networks;

- Access to previously unavailable sources of information or private collections;

- New or strengthened contacts with creators and makers, and with experts from other organisations, particularly the national museums;

- Exploration of future joint working/collaborative projects around collections and audience development activity;

- Development of staff skills and confidence in contacting other specialists about the collections, and in working with new organisations for audience development activities.

- Improved museum profile, including raising the profile of the museum amongst new organisations and local groups, as well as other museums.

It is now possible to initiate engagement with specific communities which have historical associations with Titanic and shipbuilding in Belfast. In regard to collections, our focus on the wider historical and cultural contexts of Titanic has complemented the more generally accepted way of interpreting the ship (i.e. build, journey, loss). This has led to a unique partnership between National Museums Northern Ireland and RMS Titanic Inc, resulting in a

loan of 35 objects from the Titanic wreck site – the first time original Titanic material has been seen in Belfast. (Titanic Built in Belfast: National Museums Northern Ireland)

Commenting on plans to take forward the partnerships developed during the project, 9 museums stated that they will continue to work with established project partners beyond the life of the Collecting Culutres programme whilst others were looking to extend partnerships with a view to developing loans agreements and future research, exhibitions or collections work.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery are currently in discussion with the Imperial War Museum about establishing a formal partnership. We are also in discussion with the IWM and Ulster Museum to jointly tour our Troubles Collections. (Peace and Reconciliation: The Herbert, Coventry and Wolverhampton Art Gallery)

The Jurassic Coast Museums Partnership is now firmly established – and work has commenced to formulate a wider collecting strategy along the coast, (Jurassic Life Initiative: Dorset County Museums Advisory Service)

Comments received from Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery sum up some of the longer-term benefits for museums and partnerships of sustained investment in collections:

In many respects the partnerships are likely to have tangible long-term life and benefits because they are predicated by the establishment of a stronger underlying collection. The enhancement of our local coinage will continue to make Norwich an obvious partner in the numismatic network, while our overall collection is likely to continue attracting attention for loans. This is becoming especially clear at a regional level where we have been increasingly used as a lender for a range of exhibitions. The need for the continuation of these partnerships is likely to become a political imperative as funding sources change, and Renaissance in the Regions is replaced with Core museums. The partnerships that are currently emerging are therefore providing a good proving ground for us to establish relationships with opposite numbers who, in the future, may yet become work colleagues. (Sharing Norfolk's Past: Norfwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery)

6.2 Sharing Expertise and Learning

In Year Three, there was not a noticeable change in the number of projects that were in a position to comment on how they are disseminating lessons learnt from their projects (15 compared to 14 in Year Two). Those organisations not reporting were: Chepstow and Monmouth Museums; National Museums of Northern Ireland; Groam House Museum; Herbert, Coventry and Wolverhampton Art Gallery; Macclesfield Silk Museum; and Museum of Garden History.

Table 26: Dissemination of lessons learnt

Q39 By what means are you disseminating the lessons learnt from the project?	Yes	No	If yes how many
Seminars	7	2	9
Subject specialist network meetings	6	1	17
By hosting placements for external organisation	2	2	0
Conference	4	1	3
Publishing evaluation in hard copy or online	7	2	1
Online discussion forum	4	0	1
Sample: 15			

These reported figures show remarkably little change from Year Two, which might be considered strange given that the projects have generally delivered more of their collections management and public programme outputs. There have been 2 more conferences this year and 3 more projects stating they are publishing evaluation but this is pretty meagre. The reasons for this are hard to speculate upon. There may be a resource issue involved which was not foreseen at the time of the HLF grant and with the current pattern of retrenchment this may be affecting how much effort the projects are and will place on ensuring sister museums learn the lessons from their work. It could be that plans for wider dissemination are being held back until the end of the Collecting Cultures programme. This may be worth monitoring more closely in the final years of the programme.

The importance of subject specialist network meetings as a means of dissemination which table 39 implies needs to be treated with a degree of caution since in fact 16 of the 17 meetings reported are related to just 2 projects: Buxton, Derby and Belper North Mill (11) and Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery (5).

Conclusions remain similar to Year Two for how organisations are intending to ensure that the skills and knowledge captured by the project are shared internally, although more museums responded in Year Three than in Year Two (19 compared to 16):

Table 27: Sharing of expertise and learning

Q40 By which of the following means are you sharing the expertise and learning gained in this project within your own organisation?:	Number of responses
Work shadowing between different departments	3
Internal dissemination meetings	13
Establishing cross-disciplinary teams	8
Internal circulation of progress and evaluation results	11
Sample: 19	

So it appears that project are still using standard means of reporting on their projects within their organisation and, in fact, although the sample size has grown, there has been a slight drop in numbers reporting the use of internal dissemination meeting (down from 15 in Year Two to 13 in Year Three) and in cross-disciplinary teams (down from 11 in Year Two to 8 in Year Three). Given that only one project has completed this year, this may also indicate a retrenchment and reallocation of staff priorities away from opportunities for shared learning.

However, comments reveal that some projects are at pains to stress how they are sharing expertise and learning internally, most commonly through regular staff meetings, Steering group and Project Board meetings as well as through shadowing across project partner organisations and at future strategic planning meetings:

Every quarter we hold an Enlightenment! board meeting where the projects progress is discussed and the minutes of these meetings are circulated to the wider CC group. During the Faces in the Crowd exhibition staff from Buxton Museum shadowed staff from Derby Museum to learn how they packed the pictures, condition checked them etc. (Enlightenment! Derbyshire Setting the Pace in the 18th Century: Buxton Museum and Art Gallery, Derby Museums and Art Gallery and Belper North Mill)

7. General conclusions and considerations

7.1 Conclusions

In Year Three, it continues to the be the case that all the organisations, bar one, made significant progress with their project, and the impact on both audience development and the enrichment of collections and their associated professional management grew. One project, Trainers, Sneakers, Pumps and Daps, completed during this year. The public programming elements of the vast majority of projects are now well underway. The results from Year Three corroborate and strengthen the evidence from the previous years that the Collecting Culture projects are successfully meeting the aims and outcomes originally envisaged by the Heritage Lottery Fund for the programme.

7.1.1 Collections: Quality and Range

Acquisitions made in Year Three of the programme have strengthened the impact made on the overall quality and range more than acquisitions in Year Two. The most significant changes over the course of this year appear to have been in the areas of comprehensiveness (up from 11 to 15 strongly agreeing), thematic coverage (up from 9 to 14 strongly agreeing) and chronological coverage (up from 7 to 12 strongly agreeing). The perceived improvement in the representation of key creators, makers and manufacturers remains the area where the most positive impact is reported.

There remained a consistent view amongst the museum's that their success rate in acquiring material has been improved through the HLF grant (18 out of 21 respondents). Compared to Year Two, evidence suggested that the frequency of acquisitions made *not through purchase* but through other contacts has improved as projects have gathered momentum and raised wider awareness of their collecting initiative.

The acquisitions, made within a wider strategic framework and research programme, once again demonstrated an impact on the collections specialist area and the collection as a whole. Emphasising further previous findings that relatively small amounts of flexible funding for purchases can deliver notable change in quality and range, although this is dependent on the type of material collected and its price.

7.1.2 Collections: Significance and Relationships

Mirroring Year Two, 20 of the projects stated they had undertaken new research into the collection's significance, with 16 stating that the research had had a significant or moderate impact on their understanding of other parts of the collection.

Qualitative comments revealed that museums are now starting to involve their target audiences in core museum areas such as research, interpretation and cataloguing which supports the findings of earlier years that the museums are focussing on engaging their audiences through the medium of their core collections, involving both curatorial and education/learning staff; a model which would seem more sustainable in the long term than some outreach programmes which may be more thematically led and often externally funded. This has an interesting parallel with the philosophy of the Revisiting Collections methodology (which is directly referenced by one museum).

Of the 21 projects, 13 reported that the new research had had an impact on the future strategic development and research decisions affecting the rest of the collections (beyond those directly affected by HLF funded acquisitions) while 8 stated that it had not. This

response is a more strongly positive response than in Year Two, which may reflect the mature stage that projects have reached, implying grantees are now looking beyond the end of HLF funded work and towards what effects the project may have on future practice.

Comments underlined the key role that research has to play in underpinning a strategic approach to acquisitions, informing future collecting areas and avoiding the unwitting creation of "gaps".

There was no change on previous years in the number of organisations reporting a significant or moderate improvement in understanding of a collection's significance in relation to other collections (15/20) or those stating that their understanding had been significantly enhanced by outside expertise (20). In general, the number and range of external bodies that project museums consulted rose during Year Three.

In terms of changes to collections significance, for some the impact has been profound, for example the Scott Polar Research Institute and the Jurassic Life project, as well as the Designation of the Wright collection at Derby. For the majority however, the change is less dramatic though still significant, strengthening the significance of the collections locally, regionally and nationally through enhancing their quality, scope and depth.

7.1.3 Development of professional knowledge and skills in relation to specialist subject area and acquisitions

All projects either strongly or slightly agreed that their project had already resulted in a *deeper* and *better* understanding of the collections as well as better contacts and relationships with other subject specialists. The response this year consolidates the excellent position stated in Year Two, with even more museums reporting better external contacts improving staff knowledge and skills.

This area continues to be a real strength of the Collecting Cultures programme which will have benefits for the participating museums long after the programme concludes.

Commenting on their increased knowledge and skills, projects reported they had benefited from:

- Greater collaborative working across curatorial and learning/outreach departments;

- New skills development for example in social media, blogging and negotiating with private sellers;

- Enhancing the skills of education and access staff in subject specialist areas, leading to new education and interpretation initiatives.

17 (out of 21 responding) reported that the project had already enabled them to develop new initiatives and ways of working with their collections, and they expected this to continue to develop through the life of the project and after. This represents a further strengthening on Year Two reporting.

16 museums provided additional comments on how they had developed new initiatives or ways of working with the collection. Common themes emerging include:

- Opportunities for expanding collections knowledge and reach created through contact with different organisations and involvement in new networks;

- The development of a pool of subject specialists, academics and other collaborators to support research into the collections, including research placements;

- The development of new storylines and interpretative methods for exploring the collections and engaging audiences;

- Development of contacts and partnerships for loans and joint exhibitions;

- The development of new and innovative access, learning and outreach initiatives to provide greater physical and intellectual access to the collections, for example for schools, visually impaired visitors and children with special needs;

In Year Three there has also been a noticeable increase the number of museums stating they have gained new skills in interpretation and learning activity as a result of the Collecting Cultures programme (up from 6 in year 2 to 12 in year 3). This, no doubt, reflects the greater emphasis on public programming in later project timetabling.

It is interesting that only half the projects appear to have incorporated any formal training up to this point on in their lifecycles.

The finding from Year Two that projects have had a major impact on the interest and confidence of those involved has embedded further this year with 18 respondents stating that they are more interested in the subject area, and 19 stating that they are more confident in the subject specialist area.

Confidence levels in relation to subject specialist knowledge also grew this year overall, although in a small minority of cases scores dropped due to curatorial staff changes. Comments reflected a greater emphasis on the importance of knowledge management and sharing across staff members.

The evidence of the relevance of the project to museums' forward planning was more meaningful this year due to the quality of commentary provided. All 21 museums were consistent with Year Two in stating that the project was already affecting their organisations forward planning. The comments reveal:

- Staff development across a range of skills including project management, evaluation and social media;

- Plans for working with new audiences and extending work with existing audiences often in partnership with others;

- New partnerships and loans agreements between the national museums and regional partners;

- Sharing expertise with other organisations, including the offer of formal training;

- Reviewing acquisition and disposal polices as well as for future strategic collecting;

- Consideration of how the lessons learnt from strategic collecting, such as bidding, can be applied to future work and projects;

- How to ensure that new ways of collaborative working across curatorial and education departments, and with volunteers, can be sustained in the future.

7.1.4 Development of professional knowledge and skills in relation to the practical aspects of acquisition through purchase

17 out of 21 projects stated that involvement had increased their understanding of the practical aspects of acquisition (compared to 18/20 in Year Two). 115.5 staff across the 21 projects are working in the area of acquisition compared to 107 in Year Two.

The level of understanding of the acquisition process at this point in time has improved from the already strong showing in Year Two. Put simply, 5 more organisations reported a deep and thorough understanding.

Museums also continue to highlight the benefits of having security of funding and a dedicated acquisition budget which allows them to engage with collectors, specialist networks and auction houses on an ongoing basis. This continues to open up new possibilities not available for one off purchases.

The organisations are also acquiring new skills in acquisition with object identification, authentication and valuation and bidding process the top four skills developed in Year Three, which builds on similar findings in Year Two.

There was a positive movement towards higher levels of confidence in the acquisition process for the collection as a result of the project, with 6 organisations scoring themselves level 5 this year compared to 2 in Year Two.

The number reporting that HLF funding has not affected prices was the same as in Year Two (11 out of 19). However, there was an increase in the number of organisations reporting that they thought it might have influenced prices detrimentally or weren't sure (up from 3 in Year Two to 8 in Year Three).

Opinions seem to be split on this issue. Many make the point that they do not advertise the HLF funding or take care to ensure that vendors have not inflated prices as a result – in some cases avoiding certain sellers or using an agent at auction. Others make the point that they have received discounts on the purchase price from some makers or private dealers when they have explained the whole Collecting Cultures project to them. Those who think the prices might have gone up tend to deal in local or specialist, or closely defined collecting areas, where the market is more competitive either because of its size or mass appeal, for example Inuit art; fossils from the Jurassic Coast; Titanic related material; local archaeological material.

Overall, the potential inflationary affect of HLF funding also seems to have diminished as the original publicity about the grant has faded and as museums have worked to manage expectations around the grant aid for purchase. It does not appear therefore that this should be a significant concern for HLF if they choose to extend the principle of the programme in the future - on balance the benefits would appear to outweigh any potential disbenefits of potential price increases in some areas.

7.1.5 Greater Public Participation and Learning based on the Collection

Volunteers
There has been a notable uplift in the total number of new volunteers working across the projects (91 compared to 19 in Year Two) and a slight increase in the total number of existing volunteers too (84 compared to 72).

The number of organisations that stated they are involving new volunteers (8) and existing volunteers (11) is slightly lower than in Year Two. In Year Three, 6 projects reported not actively involving any volunteers.

The volume of new volunteer activity combined for all the projects that provided figures (8) is 1,030 total hours, and for existing volunteer activity is 7,597 total hours reported by 11 projects. This represents a total count of volunteer hours of 8,627 - a really significant increase yet again from the total in Year Two of 4,834 hours, representing an average of 90 hours contributed per project by existing volunteers to date and 11 for new volunteers. So we can conclude that the importance of the input of volunteers into the Collecting Cultures projects has grown this year and that the programme is making a contribution to HLF's overall strategic aim to involve more people actively in their heritage.

The majority of activities in which volunteers are involved are core museum backroom functions associated with collections management, conservation, documentation and collections research and this bias remains reflected in the emphasis within skills development. It remains the case from previous years that the level of volunteer involvement in making decisions about the Collecting Cultures projects appears to be concentrated on the acquisition and collecting process, although there has been an increase in the level of involvement in project management.

That said there is more evidence this year that volunteers are involved in the outward facing functions of the museum that are associated with the public programming activities the projects.

Public programmes
This year 19 museums provided information on the public programming activities that form the core part of how their projects are enabling people to learn from and enjoy the results of acquisition, research, documentation, interpretation and consultation.

More organisations in Year Three were in a position to offer at least some figures for the number of participants attending public programmes (16).

Compared to Year Two, there has been a further acceleration in the delivery of public programmes across the sample of 19 projects that responded. In the past, the balance of activity seemed to lie in favour of changes to permanent and temporary displays within the participating museums (permanent and temporary) and indeed there has been an increase in such activity again this year. However, the most marked change has been in offering targeted work for specific audiences. The number of projects running sessions for primary schools has risen from 4 to 10, secondary from 3 to 9, further and higher education from 4 to 7. There has also been a notable surge in the number of project offering family learning events, workshops, and lectures.

The figures once again mask the fact that each project has its own special blend of activities on offer tailored to the target audience and that, of course, not all projects are intending to offer the full range of activities suggested by the categorisation.

The total number of participants attending public programmes so far is 507,873 but this figure is only a partial indication of true scale of audiences for the Collecting Cultures programme because, quite rightly a number of museums were wary of including figures for permanent display where the element of display affected by the programme was a relatively small part of the visitor experience. Similarly, a number of museums stated that they made no count of participants for a range of the activities offered (including work with schools and FE/HE). This was sometimes habitual practice but more often than not due to a change of education staff and some difficulties locating figures.

7.1.6 Benefits for the Wider Museum Sector

19 museums (as opposed to 20 in Year two) reported that their project is resulting in the development of new partnerships or the strengthening of existing ones. The numbers reporting the development of new partnerships rose (from 13 to 18) while those reporting the strengthening of existing ones remained constant. The implication here may be that as the participating museums have concentrated further on activities for specific audiences so their relationships with external organisations that can act as conduits to those audiences has increased.

The most common partnership development remains with sister museums with a similar collecting interest or within a certain geographical range and with libraries, archives and academics. The number of museums in partnership with organisations with a direct role in acquisition such as auction houses and creators, makers and manufacturers has been stable since the first year of reporting. The only kinds of partnerships to show a meaningful uplift in reported numbers are those with community group (up to 8 from 4 in Year Two) and with independent expert advisers (up to 13 from 9 in Year Two).

There were no marked changes in the geographical scope of partnerships reported in Year Three.

In Year Three, there was not a noticeable change in the number of projects that were in a position to comment on how they are disseminating lessons learnt from their projects (15 compared to 14 in Year Two). The figures show remarkably little change since Year Two, which might be considered an anomaly given that the projects have generally delivered more of their collections management and public programme outputs. There may be a resource issue involved which was not foreseen at the time of the HLF grant and with the current pattern of retrenchment this may be affecting how much effort the projects are and will place on ensuring sister museums learn the lessons from their work. Or it could be that museums are waiting to disseminate findings from their work until the end of their project.

7.2 General comments and conclusions from the grantees

During the evaluation exercise this year, grantees were asked an additional, more open ended question about the impact the grant had had on their organisation and to highlight any lessons learnt or points they thought it would be useful to share with others embarking on a similar exercise.

Common themes reinforce those already running through the evaluation results, namely:

7.2.1 The importance of a collaborative approach

Collaboration both across different departments and with external partners is important. This encourages a dialogue not just about the potential for public programming, but about the actual assessment made around acquisitions. For example the V&A ***"All are in agreement that the partnership has been difficult at times, with different members of the team looking at the content of the photographs in different ways: V&A curators are looking for the best and most interesting photographs; V&A Learning Department colleagues and BCA (Black Cultural Archive) colleagues are most interested in the photographs with clear narratives that could be used as the starting point for discussions, courses or teaching. Sometimes the narratives are not present in good photographs or they contain relevant narratives but they are not of a high enough quality to be considered by curators".***

Collaboration has also been key to many of the research programmes supporting the projects, in particular with academic institutions, specialist interest groups and individual experts or private collectors. It has also opened up new relationships, for example with artists interested in the subject matter.

7.2.2 Research

Many museums have commented on the timescales for the programme, having underestimated the amount of time it takes to conduct all the research and publish it, and on their reliance in some cases on academic specialists to help them understand the significance of their collections, such as the Jurassic Coast fossils.

Others demonstrate clear progress in deepening understanding and appreciation of their subject specialist area through their research and dissemination programmes, such as specialist seminars and publications (on line and in hard copy). This will leave a lasting legacy beyond the life of the project.

The opportunity for staff to be involved in the publication of a definitive book on the British and European collections of Inuit art (Tuvaq: Inuit art and the modern world, ISBN 978-1-906593-59-9) has raised the museum's research profile within the University. One review described it as 'a highly informative and beautifully illustrated book of photos and essays on Inuit Art … the first to be published in Britain on the subject'. (Arctic Visions: Scott Polar Research Institute)

7.2.3 Benefits of a strategic approach

Most museums have commented on the benefits of taking a strategic and focussed approach to collecting. Not only has it defined the work in house (helping shape research strategies and making links across the collections), but it has also helped to attract additional funding for purchase and donations of material due to increased profile. For most, this was an unexpected and unplanned benefit.

The research into the collections has also established new contacts with HEI and other museums, which in turn has stimulated them to think more about those collection areas – creating a 'ripple effect' of interest outside the museum. It is possible therefore that the benefits from the programme will be felt more widely than originally anticipated.

We are pleased to see that other HEIs and cultural organisations are beginning to plan exhibitions of Inuit art from their collections, perhaps as a direct result of enquiries from project staff stimulating an interest in previously hidden or little known material. A major collaboration with the British Museum on the cultural impacts of early contact in Canada and Greenland is currently under consideration and this can be directly attributed to the higher profile of the SPRI resulting from the project. (Arctic Visions: Scott Polar Research Institute)

The way in which the development of the collections is moving alongside an increased desire to borrow material from Norwich Castle should also be seen as a success, each loan further advertising our place and role as a significant archaeology collection. (Sharing Norfolk's Past: Norwich Museum and Art Gallery)

7.2.4 Public benefits and relationships

The strategic collecting programmes are clearly also making an impact on public programming. As The Herbert, Coventry and Wolverhampton Art Gallery put it ***"The project***

has also allowed an exploration of new approaches to using the collections and engaging our audiences with them".

Many of the museums have commented on their new partnerships and relationships, for example with the national museums like the British Museum, National Galleries of Scotland and V&A, and with organisations such as the National Trust which has *"allowed us to engage with new audiences on a large scale and it is hoped that these connections will be a lasting legacy for the project" (Enlightenment! Derbyshire Setting the Pace in the 18th Century: Buxton Museum and Art Gallery, Derby Museums and Art Gallery and Belper North Mill).*

7.2.5 Management, sustainability and legacy

Many of the museums comment on the importance of systemising and capturing information on the process of acquisition (including strategic decision making and management of complex partnerships), and on ensuring that the projects try to avoid having all the subject and project specialist information vested in one person. Clearly this issue will only become more acute with the current funding cuts and resulting staff losses and any future Collecting Cultures type programme run by HLF should consider how grantees set up their project structures and management, and staffing levels, to protect the programmes against the 'shocks' of one key person leaving. Consideration should also be given to building in flexibility for programmes which are to run over several years, to take account of unexpected organisational changes, such as restructures, which will have an impact on the programme.

The other emerging common issue relates to timescales. Many comment that they underestimated the time it would take to set up the projects and manage the steering groups and partnerships involved, as well as the wider stakeholder management (be it specialist groups, community groups or public consultation). The actual process of identifying, deciding on and purchase of material was also identified as a difficult area to manage, with a resulting impact on staff capacity. It might be useful to explore this further in order to provide clear guidance and advice to any future projects embarking on similar programmes.

7.2.6 Benefits of secure funding

Again, the benefits of secure funding is emphasised, allowing museums to build relationships and trust, and to act quickly when material comes onto the market, *"Having the money available when material comes on the market, allowing us to act quickly, has allowed us to acquire things we would have been unable to otherwise". (Cultural Reflections: Whitworth Art Gallery)*

It also frees up the museum from the continual rounds of fundraising, and allows them to take a long-term view about the development of their collections, enabling them to fill gaps or rectify any emerging gaps.

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Cultural Consulting Network

Appendix One: Notes on research aims and methodology

1. Research Aims and Methodology

1.1 Research Aims

The aims of the research in year three remain the same as years one and two, namely to assess the extent to which the projects have met the overall aims of the Collecting Cultures Programme and HLF's Strategic Priorities under its 3rd Strategic Plan, concentrating on the published key outcomes of the Programme. Further information on the overall research aims can be found in the Year One report, under section 1.1 and so are not repeated here.

1.2 Research Methodology

The principles of the methodology also remained unchanged from years two and one and so are not repeated here again. There were no statistically important changes to the surveying methodology in year three.

Surveying Methodology

The standard survey questionnaire from year one remained divided into 5 sections: each based on one of the prescribed outcomes, which were in turn sub-divided into a series of quantitative questions followed by a more open ended qualitative question or opportunity to comment. A few questions required a straightforward numerical response.

The year two modifications to present a series of range statements that aligned better with HLF's corporate mechanisms for assessing qualitative and subjective responses were retained. The extension of the range statements to questions (6a, 7b, 8b) was similarly retained.

The changes were made to the survey questionnaire at HLF's request to improve alignment with its corporate output data that it seeks from completed projects was also still included although very few projects provided meaningful data for these questions i.e: volunteer profile (28), participation (31b) and visitor profile (32) and the means of data collection for visitor profile. This data has been presented separately to HLF and does not form part of this report.

The sub-categories of activities for question 29a and 29b that referred to volunteer skills development and volunteer formal training were unchanged from year two.

The consistency in the questionnaire from years two to three has allowed for better direct direct comparison between the two sets of results, and as such are referred to in the body of our analysis and findings.

The only notable change to the questionnaire was the introduction, in agreement with HLF, of a final paragraph which was intended to allow respondents space to reflect on, and communicate, any opinions on the overall scheme not covered within other elements of the questionnaire. It read as follows:

"HLF is very interested your views of the grant scheme and the impact of the project overall. In order to benefit from good reflective practice they are particularly keen to hear of any unexpected outcomes for your organisation, or what you see as either the strengths or problems with the scheme. "

Note on survey questionnaire returns and data analysis

The questionnaire and a covering email was issued to all 21 active lead organisations responsible for the projects between 8-10 June 2011.

Responses were received from 21 projects by 21st July. As in previous years, Valence House Museum did not respond as the project is on hold. The Museum of Garden History provided a full return but covering the three month period from Jan – March 2011, as the Curator had changed and the new incumbent was unable to locate relevant information from her precedessor.

Collation of the data took place on an ongoing basis as returns were submitted in June and July and its subsequent analysis took place between 18th June and 22th June.

Appendix Two: Summary of projects funded

HLF Reference	Project title	Applicant & partners
CC-07-01106	Arctic Visions: Inuit Art and Material Culture	Scott Polar Research Institute
CC-07-01094	Collecting Cultures: Sharing Norfolk's Past	Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery
CC-07-01093	Collecting Cultures - Trainers, Sneakers, Pumps and Daps	Northampton Museums and Art Gallery; Kettering Manor House Museum, V&A Museum
CC-07-01083	Enlightenment! Derbyshire Setting the Pace in the Eighteenth Century	Buxton Museum & Art Gallery, Derby Museums & Art Gallery, Belper North Mill
CC-07-01150	Staying Power – The story of Black British Identity 1950 – 1990's	Victoria & Albert Museum
CC-07-01138	The Industries of Barking & Dagenham	Valence House Museum
CC-07-01147	To Develop our Art and Design Collection	Museum of Garden History
CC-07-01158	Collecting Design	Tyne and Wear Museums
CC-07-01123	Connection and Division	Fermanagh County Museum, Derry Heritage and Museum Service, Inniskillings Museum
CC-07-01136	Titanic Built in Belfast	National Museums Northern Ireland (Ulster Folk and Transport Museum)
CC-07-01110	Cultural Reflections: Strategic Acquisition for the Whitworth Art Gallery Wallpaper Collection	The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester
CC-07-01126	The Potters Art in the 20th Century	Gallery Oldham, The Harris Museum and Art Gallery
CC-07-01079	Changes & Exploration in Silk	Macclesfield Museums Trust
CC-07-01078	Developing the George Bain Collection	Groam House Museum
CC-07-01129	Tain Silver – The Collection	Tain & District Museum
CC-07-01135	Enriching our musical heritage	Edinburgh University Collection of Musical Instruments
CC-07-01184	Developing a National Collection of Modern Crafts	Crafts Study Centre, Farnham
CC-07-01169	Collecting Rural Cultures	Museum of English Rural Life, Reading
CC-07-01115	Jurassic Life Initiative	Dorset County Museums Advisory Service Dorset County Museum Portland Museum Sidmouth Museum Lyme Regis Museum Wareham Museum Swanage Museum Langton Matravers Museum Allhallows Museum Fairlynch Museum Royal Albert Memorial Museum Exeter
CC-07-01153	The Wye Tour	Chepstow Museum Monmouth Museum
CC-07-01132	Peace and Reconciliation Project	The Herbert, Coventry Wolverhampton Art Gallery
CC-07-01206	Seeing the whole picture	National Coal Mining Museum for England