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Multi-million pound funding to bring new galleries and exhibition space to Manchester Museum

Images: <https://bit.ly/2FEfoeh>

Manchester Museum, part of The University of Manchester has received a confirmed grant of £4,215,800 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for a major capital project, it was announced today.

Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, the project will develop and transform the museum by providing new exhibition space, the North's first South Asian gallery and an extended and more ambitious programme of activities.

Through 'The Courtyard project', Manchester Museum will become the UK's most imaginative, inclusive and caring museum. As the UK's leading university museum, the museum is committed to becoming an ever more powerful source of inspiration for learning for more people. This transformation, driven by social purpose, will make the museum more relevant and welcoming to all ages and communities.

Work will start in August 2018 and the finished building will reopen in late 2020. The transformation will include;

- A major new Temporary Exhibitions Gallery enabling the museum to become the North of England's leading venue for producing and hosting international-quality exhibitions on human cultures and the natural world. The 451 m² space will be a new home for blockbuster and international shows, drawing visitors from across the North of England who previously would have had to travel to London to see shows of such scale.
- The North of England's first large-scale gallery of South Asian history and culture, created in partnership with the British Museum, bringing together the very best of Manchester Museum's own South Asian collections and world-class sculpture, textiles and artefacts from the British Museum. It will be the UK's first permanent gallery to explore the stories, experiences and contributions of diaspora communities. At the heart of the gallery will be a unique performance space, dedicated to showing the very best live music, dance and performance from and inspired by South Asia.

- A new Oxford Road-facing entrance, welcome area and shop, to create a more visible and welcoming first impression. Throughout, particular emphasis will be placed on accessible design for older visitors and people with a disability.
- Underpinning the transformation, there will be a dynamic co-created participatory programme to imaginatively address some of the key issues of our time; climate change, ageing, migration and belonging. This will extend the museum's award-winning volunteering work and be pivotal to changing how we work with and reach new audiences.

News of HLF support marks the second major commitment towards this £12.7 million scheme, following a Treasury announcement of £5million towards the South Asia Gallery in November 2015.

The museum predicts hundreds of thousands of new visitors, including an additional 11,000 school children each year.

Esme Ward, Director of Manchester Museum said: "With new world-class spaces for extraordinary objects and stories, more volunteering opportunities and imaginative partnerships, Manchester Museum will reflect and explore the needs, interests and opportunities of the diverse communities we serve. The project will develop and transform the museum to bring more wonder and inspiration from around the world to the people of Greater Manchester and beyond."

Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham said: "As Mayor I've pledged to support our thriving cultural institutions across Greater Manchester. We must continue to invest in our cultural facilities, not only to attract new visitors from the UK and beyond, but for the benefit of people across our city-region. Manchester Museum holds a special place in my affection, having spent many a long Sunday there when my kids were young. I am thrilled to see them expanding and improving their facilities. Manchester Museum acts as a community hub and through this Heritage Lottery funding this inclusive museum is able to continue to provide opportunities for all communities across Greater Manchester."

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, President and Vice-Chancellor of The University of Manchester, said: “The Museum brings hundreds of thousands of people to our campus each year for both education and enjoyment. I am very pleased that this funding will now allow the Museum to build on this excellent work and create new spaces which will help attract new audiences and offer an even greater range of thought -provoking exhibitions.”

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund said: “The Courtyard Project will provide a fantastic resource for the people of Greater Manchester, and further afield. Manchester Museum is so much more than a university facility, being open and accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds. The opportunity to showcase world-class heritage and culture outside of London is brilliant news for the region, and is something Heritage Lottery Fund is proud to be able to support.”

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Notes to Editors

Images are available via the following link: <https://bit.ly/2FEfoeh>

For further information, images and interviews please contact Alia Ullah at Manchester Museum on 07342 063066 or alia.ullah@manchester.ac.uk

About Manchester Museum

Manchester Museum hosts a collection which includes archaeology, anthropology and natural history and is owned by The University of Manchester. Sited on Oxford Road at the heart of the university's group of neo-Gothic buildings, it provides access to about 4.5 million items from every continent. It is the UK's largest university museum and serves both as a major visitor attraction and as a resource for academic research and teaching. It has around 530,000 visitors each year.

About The British Museum

Founded in 1753, the British Museum was the first national public museum in the world. From the outset it was a museum of the world, for the world, and this idea

still lies at the heart of the Museum's mission today. The collection tells the stories of cultures across the world, from the dawn of human history, over two million years ago, to the present. Objects range from the earliest tools made by humans and treasures from the ancient world to more recent acquisitions from Africa, Oceania and the Americas, the Middle East, Asia and Europe, as well as the national collections of prints and drawings, and coins and medals. In addition to work in London, the Museum takes part in an extensive programme of loans and tours, both across the UK and throughout the world.

<http://www.britishmuseum.org/>

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Heritage Grants applications are assessed in two rounds. A first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. A first-round pass may also include an immediate award to fund the development of the project. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk
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