A new report shows that independents are in the top 20% for innovative use of undisplayed artefacts.

Dr Suzanne Keene of University College London has analysed her data relating specifically to independents

Using stored collections in independent museums

Top, the proportions of museums in the top and lower user number groups. The chart compares the proportion in the top 20% of museums of each type with that expected if the proportions were the same as in the types of museum overall. Below, means of accessing collections in independent museums related to more or fewer users of collections.
Making the stuff accessible

National Museums at Chatham is a project specifically aimed at utilising stored collections. In a partnership with the National Maritime Museum and the Imperial War Museum the project will house and display the national museum partners’ maritime model collections within No. 1 Smithery, a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

In Brief

Philanthropy aims revised following economic downturn

Key messages on philanthropy drawn up by the Private Giving for the Public Good campaign group (run by the National Museum Directors’ Conference) have been updated in view of the economic downturn. The campaign is committed to the introduction of a lifetime gifts policy, but this is unlikely to be introduced in the current climate. Instead it will take the long view, producing a research paper and conference next year to build the evidence base and case. Meanwhile it will campaign for significantly raising the percentage and cash limits relating to benefits for Gift Aid donors, or simply allowing an uncapped percentage of donation in benefit to the donor. Those who give to arts and culture should be celebrated more publicly, it adds, for example appearing more often in the public honours list.

Heritage and natural environment can help in the economic gloom

National Trust director-general Dame Fiona Reynolds said the economic downturn was an opportunity for society to rethink its priorities and consider a longer-term and greener approach. Speaking at the NT annual meeting in Liverpool, she said heritage and the natural environment could play a key role in meeting these needs, providing a means for improving quality of life. The NT came into being 100 years ago to provide people with the opportunity for spiritual, intellectual and physical refreshment. “Although circumstances have changed dramatically, the need for opportunities to see, feel and have access to places that can touch people’s hearts remains as strong as ever.”

Grassroots money

Smaller museums may be able to take advantage of Grassroots Grants, a £130 million scheme aimed at local community groups, running from 2008-2011. It divides into two parts – an £80 million fund for local funders and community organisations and a £50 million endowments programme to enable local funders to generate additional donations on a matched basis and invest them in endowments. Higher-rate taxpayers could see their net gifts increase by up to 33.3% as the Government adds Gift Aid and then matches every gift-aided donation. Thus, for a donation of £77,000 the local charity could receive £256,000. Further information: Grassroots Grants helpline on 01223 400331, or the Community Development Foundation website, http://cdf.vbnlive.com/bforsystems/xmviewer/default.asp?arg=DS_CDF_TEC/HART_23/.../page.xsl/27&xrlx=3

December 2008 AIM Bulletin