

OFFICER DECISION RECORD

Decision Title: Selection for funding of United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Small Museums Grants.

Decision reference number: ODN23_0016

Decision date: 1st November 2023 (by email)

Background / reason for decision:

The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is nationally allocated funding to support a range of project types in all parts of the country. In the West of England, our £10.1m of funding is spread across the three available UKSPF theme (Communities and Place, Local Business and Skills) with £196k (capital) of the £3.7m available under Communities and Place allocated to a grant fund for small, independent museums with the aim of improving their financial sustainability into the future.

An application process for the 13 eligible museums in the Mayoral Combined Authority operated during the summer of 2023, closing in September. 9 applications were received and as all are eligible and offer value for money in terms of their outcomes, all are recommended for selection for funding.

Options considered:

Option 1 – Reject all or some of the applications recommended for selection for funding.

Option 2 – Approve all of the applications recommended for selection for funding.

Decision: The decision was made to approve all of the applications recommended for selection for funding. These are listed below by beneficiary name and value of grant to be allocated.

Grant beneficiary and Museum name	Value of grant (£).	Summary of project
Herschel House Trust – Herschel Museum of Astronomy	18,500	Purchase of exhibition equipment, display materials and digital assets.
Beckford Tower Trust – Beckford’s Tower and Museum	18,500	Purchase of new secure display cases enabling a greater and more valuable range of display items to be hosted.
The Museum of East Asian Art	25,000	Museum refurbishment, incl. new flooring, fixtures and fittings, digital display equipment, and the design and development of a new website.

Kingswood Heritage Museum Trust – Kingswood Heritage Museum	22,790	Museum refurbishment, incl. new flooring and accessible washroom facilities. Purchase of new display and interpretation assets, incl. digital equipment.
Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution	20,295	Purchase of new secure display cases enabling a greater and more valuable range of display items to be hosted.
Thornbury and District Heritage Trust – Thornbury and District Museum	8,750	Purchase of new display assets, including cabinets, interpretation boards, digital equipment, and bespoke audio-visual content.
Glenside Hospital Museum	6,000	Design and development of new website to enhance digital engagement and host an online shop.
Bath Industrial Heritage Trust Limited – Museum of Bath at Work	5,761.52	Refurbishment of gallery space, incl. creation of display frames and new lighting.
The Frenchay Tuckett Society -Frenchay Village Museum	21,000	Enabling works in advance of a planned new extension to the current building, incl. demolition, refurbishment and landscaping of surrounding buildings on site and garden space. Purchase of new storage and display cases.

Grants will be awarded as no subsidy to the beneficiaries using the principle of non-substitution; each of the recipients hosts a unique collection of public artefacts and information that is not substitutable by any other offer and therefore means there is no possibility of competition being distorted (meaning Limb D of the test for subsidy is not met).

Consultation: The original UKSPF plan was subject to wide consultation to agree its approach and priorities. Business and Skills Directors of each Unitary Authority were consulted on the recommendations.

Officer making decision: Richard Ennis in consultation with the other Combined Authority constituent authority Chief Executive Officers.

Position: Interim Chief Executive, West of England Mayoral Combined Authority