



Museum Development London
Museums Recharge Grant & Support Programme
2024-2025

Guidance Notes

[Museum Development London \(MDL\)](#) is pleased to continue to support London Museums to respond to challenges through its Dynamism Programme's [Recharge Grant and Support Programme](#), which are generously supported by the Art Fund. Please see below for further information, grant guidance and eligibility.

After reading this document, we recommend you [contact Yvette Shepherd](#), Museum Development Officer Organisational Health, to discuss your proposal before submitting your application to the grants scheme.

Closing date for applications: by 5:00pm on Monday 08 July 2024.

Please note applications submitted after this deadline will not be accepted.

Introduction

The MDL Recharge Programme is aimed at London Museums that are responding to increasing challenges, such as changes to visitor behaviour post pandemic, rising costs and addressing increasing effects of climate change, without any increase in their budgets.

Over the past four years we've successfully used the MD Museums' Organisational Health Check in our Recharge (previously titled 'Reset') programme to help museums to carry out an organisational self-assessment to identify priorities for improvement. When evaluating the effectiveness of the overall national pilot, London's participating museums had this to say of the programme:

This process was one of the most useful exercises we've undertaken. It was a simple process, yet at the same time very thorough.

The self-assessment health check was a hugely helpful process to allow us the time and space to really understand the challenges that we face as an organisation and focus on what we need to do to start addressing them.

We all felt that it was very useful to work with colleagues to look at where we are as a museum service and to take time to think about the areas that need improving.

This process was very beneficial to us as a small museum within a larger organisation. It created a very positive space and structure for communication within the organisation.

Many museums have a need to re-assess their positions and revise business plans in the light of changed visitor behaviour and medium to long term challenges. The [MDE Museums Organisational Health Check](#) is a national tool to help museums across England to assess and analyse all aspects of their operations in order to identify what they are doing well and where there are areas for improvement.

The Health Check is quick and easy to use and working with a small internal assessment team from your museum it should take no more than 3.5 hours to complete with facilitation from MDL. If you have previous experience of carrying out a self-assessment you can carry out your own self-assessment, without MD facilitation if that works better for you.

MDL will use the information you have provided to create a short Advisory Report for your museum. This will highlight your self-identified priority areas over the next 12 months and will provide signposting to potential areas of Museum Development support and external resources which may be useful.

Based on the findings from the Advisory Report, museums in the programme will then be invited to submit a short application for one of the Recharge grants to address priorities identified by the self-assessment process.

The Recharge Grant (to March 2025) Priorities

The Recharge grants supporting this programme are generously funded by Art Fund, working in partnership with Museum Development. The grants will be used to fund projects that will address priorities related to three key themes:

- 1. Developing the use of collections in new ways**
- 2. Audience development**
- 3. Volunteer and workforce development**

A total grant fund of **£10,000** is available to provide **4 grants of £2,500** to support projects identified by museums through the MD Organisational Health Check process.

Applications are invited from museums that are looking at strategic approaches towards developing strong and flexible organisations that are able to adapt and respond to the challenges, both expected and unexpected and to the changing needs of the communities they serve.

What will the successful museums need to do?

Successful applicants will be asked to work with the MDL team to complete the [MD Organisational Health Check](#). They will then receive, within 2 weeks, a short Advisory Report from the Museum Development Officer which will summarise the findings, set out the priorities and signpost useful references & resources to help you with each priority.

Applicants can use the Advisory Report to prepare their project proposal setting out how they will use the grant of up to £2,500 towards making improvements.

What sort of projects will be supported?

- Developing the use of collections in new ways (this means new ways for your museum):
 - Co-creation with local communities
 - Enhanced use of digital resources
 - Developing contemporary collecting projects
- Developing your audience/community engagement capabilities:
 - Exploring new partnerships and/or working with new audiences or existing audiences in a new way
 - Developing an evaluation framework, which could involve creating new audience surveys and/or running focus groups for users/non-users to find out more about what people want
 - Making reasonable adjustments to ensure your building, stories and offer to audiences is as accessible as possible
 - Developing either a Marketing or Audience Development Plan
 - Develop an Advocacy/Impact Report framework so you are able to better showcase the impact of your service as well as advocate and influence your funders and stakeholders
- Training for the workforce, paid and volunteer, to address skills gaps within the organisation:
 - Staff and volunteer retention and training
 - Support for in-house training
 - Wellbeing offers for staff and volunteers
 - Bespoke personal development opportunities to upskill collection and curatorial staff.

We are willing to consider any suggestions, within these broad parameters. If you are unsure about the programme, any potential expenditure, please do get in touch with the Museum Development Officer Organisational Health, to discuss the programme in more detail.

What we can't fund

- Costs incurred prior to the project start date
- Major building work

- Ongoing capital or maintenance costs for existing equipment (e.g. boilers and technology)
- Development or build of new websites or platforms
- Recharge of venue hire or overheads relating to the applicant museum
- Recharges for volunteers of the applicant museum
- Any expenditure for which the museum cannot provide evidence (e.g. receipts).

Key Programme Information

Overview:

- Deadline for applications is: **12.00 noon on Monday 8 July 2024**
- Applications should be sent to: mdgrants@museumoflondon.org.uk
- Applications received after the stated closing date will not be considered
- Participating museums will undertake an MD Organisational Health Check by 13 September 2024 (see MD Organisational Health Check)
- Participating museums will submit their project proposals for the £2,500 grant award by **11 October 2024**
- Museums can apply for a maximum initial grant of **£2,500**
- Grant money must be spent, and a final report to be submitted by **Monday 3 March 2025**. Projects must be completed by end of March 2025. Please note that there cannot be any extensions to this timetable
- Grants will be paid in two instalments; the first 90% of the award will be paid on receipt of a signed funding agreement and the final 10% will be paid on completion of the project and receipt of your final report, invoice (with proof of expenditure) and some high quality photographs of the project.¹
- If project costs are lower than those stated in the original application then the value of award will be reduced proportionally
- If you are registered for VAT, your project costs should not include VAT that you can claim back
- If you are not registered for VAT, your project costs should include VAT
- MDL's obligation does not extend to paying any amounts in respect of VAT in addition to the grant
- All report templates will be provided by MDL.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply the museum must be:

- Located within the 32 London Boroughs or the City of London
- Accredited (holding either Full or Provisional status) or hold official working towards Accreditation status
- A non-National Museum and non-National Portfolio Organisations (NPO)
- Able to submit an in-date Forward Plan as part of the application process

¹ If you have not received funding from us before there may be a small delay whilst you are set up on our financial system; please factor this into the timing of the start of your project.

- Committed to share learning and contribute to the evaluation of the grants programme for MDL, and be willing to present at MDL-related events and training programmes as requested.

Key Assessment Requirements

- Applicants to this programme should be willing to make an honest assessment of their current position using the Museum Development Organisational Health Check tool – which will help them to identify priorities for their service
- Applicants should also be able to demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and ongoing self-assessment
- We welcome new applications from previous participants.

What we'll be looking for

Does the **application** demonstrate:

- A clear commitment to review their current operational practice with a view to identifying areas of best practice and those where development is needed
- A clear understanding of key challenges facing the museum
- A willingness to complete an organisational self-assessment using the Museum Development Organisational Health Check
- A willingness to work with Museum Development, post receipt of an Advisory Report, to develop a Recharge project based on priorities identified from the programme.

On completion of the self-assessment and receipt of the Advisory Report, participants will be eligible for one of 4 grants of £2,500 available through this programme.

Grant projects will be expected to demonstrate:

- A direct link to organisational priorities and areas for improvement as identified by the Museums' Organisational Health Check self-assessment
- Clear aims and objectives for the project
- Intended outputs and outcomes linked to the museum's Advisory Report and Forward Plan
- A realistic cost breakdown, which represents good value for money.

Key Reporting dates:

Action	Deadline
Deadline for applications	Monday 8 July 2024
Assessment of applications	09 – 11 July 2024
Successful applicants notified	12 July 2024
Final Deadline for completion of facilitated self-assessment	13 September 2024

Advisory Report sent to participating museums by:	2 weeks after receipt of completed self-assessment (27 September 2024)
Final deadline for submission of Recharge project proposals	11 October 2024
Formal Offer Letter, Memorandum Agreement for grant sent to successful museums by:	18 October 2024
Signed Memorandum Agreement due to MDL by:	Within 2 weeks after date of formal offer from MDL
Template for Project Report and Grant Claim Form, and Purchase Order number for invoice sent to museums by:	Tuesday 4 February 2025
Project completed and project report, invoice and proof of expenditure sent to MDL by:	Monday 3 March 2025

Applying

How to apply?

- After reading this document you can discuss your application in advance with [Yvette Shepherd](#), Museum Development Officer, Organisational Health
- Museums should make their applications on the accompanying [Application Form](#) (no other format will be accepted)
- Only fully completed application forms, with accompanying Forward Plans and other supporting documents/plans will be considered
- Applications and supporting documents must be emailed no later than **5.00pm on Monday 08 July 2024** to: Yvette Shepherd, Museum Development Organisational Health: mdgrants@museumoflondon.org.uk
- Applications submitted/received after this deadline will not be accepted.

What happens after I apply?

- You will receive confirmation by email upon receipt of your application
- If you have not received a confirmation email within 48 hours, do get in touch
- Applications will be assessed by the MDL team
- All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within two weeks of the application deadline
- Your facilitated Health Checks will be completed and your Advisory Report received by 27 September 2024. Your Advisory Report will provide guidance to resources and or appropriate MDO assistance to help you to address your priority areas for improvement
- Once you have had a chance to consider the findings in your Advisory Report and discuss your priority areas with the Museum Development Team we'll ask you to submit a grant proposal, using the Recharge project template, by 11 October 2024

- Once the project details have been agreed you'll receive a confirmation email and will be asked to sign a memorandum of agreement accepting our funding conditions
- All Recharge grants will be paid in two instalments with the final 10% (£250) of the grant payable at the end of the project, unless otherwise arranged with the Museum Development Team at the Museum of London.

Further support/questions

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the criteria, guidelines, eligibility or the Health Check and grant process in more detail, please contact: Yvette Shepherd, Museum Development Officer Organisational Health: Mobile 07841 206864 or Email yshepherd@museumoflondon.org.uk.

This is a small grants project. If your project is bigger in scale, it may be a better fit to Arts Council England's [National Lottery Project Grants](#).



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