



Digital Technologies Grant Programme

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Application, Project Completion and Evaluation Forms are available at
www.nimc.co.uk

Please email completed applications to info@nimc.co.uk by 12pm on Friday 30 October 2026.

Notification: 3 December 2026

Please note that all grants must be completed by Friday 30 July 2027. If you are unable to meet these conditions, you should NOT apply to this scheme as NIMC will not meet any costs incurred beyond this period.

Guidelines for Applicants

The Northern Ireland Museums Council's (NIMC) **Digital Technologies Grant** Programme is funded through Future Screens NI and administered by NIMC. Grant awards are available to support museums in using digital technologies to improve public access to collections.

The grant is intended to encourage practical, innovative and sustainable digital projects that help more people discover and engage with museum collections both on-site and/or online.

Grant Objectives

Projects should contribute to one or more of the following objectives:

- Increase engagement with collections through digital interpretation
- Support lifelong learning and educational use of museum collections
- Improve discoverability of collections through digitisation and online access
- Pilot innovative approaches using digital technology
- Strengthen museums' digital capability and resilience
- Enhance accessibility for disabled visitors and underrepresented audiences

Type of Anticipated Outputs

This list contains but is not limited to the type of outputs the grant could fund:

- Online exhibitions
- Virtual tours
- Interactive gallery experiences
- Accessible digital resources
- Educational digital content
- Mobile apps or web application
- Enhanced collection databases

The entire NIMC Digital Technologies Grants Programme budget will be available for allocation within the first application submission window. Subsequent application submission windows will only be used if budget remains un-committed. Museums may only submit one application per funding round. It is therefore advisable that eligible museums submit their applications by the 30 October 2026.

Deadlines

Complete applications must be submitted by email to info@nimc.co.uk by **12pm on Friday 30 October 2026**.

If a grant offer is made, you must return a signed Offer Acceptance within one calendar month of the date of the offer. NIMC cannot always honour offers where your Acceptance has been received after this date.

All purchases/minor works must be completed, and all paperwork, monitoring and grant drawdown finalised, by **Friday 30 July 2027**. The grant may be withdrawn after this date.

Am I Eligible?

The NIMC Digital Technologies Grant Programme is open to all UK Accreditation Scheme Accredited (Full or Provisional) non-National museums in Northern Ireland.

NIMC supports non-Accredited museums and collections by providing training, advice and guidance. You should be a member to access these services. To join, please visit www.nimc.co.uk.

How Much Can I Apply For?

Eligible museums can apply for **up to £10,000 per application per round of funding**.

Please keep in mind that the amount of money available is limited and demand for funds is likely to be extremely high. It is not usually possible to fund all applications which simply meet the criteria or to fund the entirety of any given request. You should be realistic in your expectations and budgets and bear in mind that NIMC may choose to fund specific elements of your proposal rather than the full request.

Match Funding

10% of your overall cost is required. While it is preferred this funding is financial, other in-kind funding such as partnership funding or other resource contributions such as staff time may be considered if detailed information is provided which shows it is demonstrably relevant to the proposed project.

What You Can Apply For

Funding could be, but is not limited to, the following:

- Equipment and hardware
 - Tablets, touchscreens, digital display screens, audio guides, VR headsets, Augmented reality devices, accessible technologies
- Software and digital development
 - Collections management system enhancements, website development, mobile applications, interactive digital interpretation, virtual exhibitions, videos
- Digitisation
 - Photography equipment, 3D scanners and printers, 3D scanning services, image processing and metadata enrichment
- Specialist support
 - Digital consultants, designers, creators

What You Cannot Apply For

- General operational costs
- Second-hand equipment without a warranty / guarantee
- Equipment service costs
- Subscription costs
- Purchases started or made prior to an NIMC grant offer
- Purchase or acquisition of collections

Please contact NIMC to discuss this or any other questions you may have before you send in your application.

What if I have Questions?

We recommend you speak to NIMC staff before you submit your application. To do so please contact NIMC by emailing info@nimc.co.uk and a member of staff will get back to you.

How will we evaluate your application?

Applications must be

- Deliverable within the required timescale
- Fully and appropriately costed
- Comply with relevant regulations and demonstrate that there are appropriate business planning, procurement, health and safety and workforce procedures in place
- Able to agree to the terms and conditions of the grant award.

There are four questions in your application that will be assessed and scored.

Assessment Scoring	Marks Available
Q2. What outcomes will this funding have for your museum?	20
Q3. How does your project meet one or more of the objectives of the Digital Technologies Grant Programme?	30
Q4. How will you deliver your project?	20
Q5. What impact will this project have on your collections and audience access to them?	20
Q6. Please describe any steps you will take to minimise the environmental impact of your project?	10
TOTAL	100

Addressing the assessment Criteria

Q1. What is your project?
General Description of the project and what the outputs will be (No score applicable to this question).
Q2. What outcomes will this funding have for your museum?
Please tell us how the project will make a difference to your museum. You should provide a clear rationale for the project and its impact. This section is an opportunity to establish the need for the project and provide targets and outcomes. Projects which provide strong supporting evidence and good base line information will be assessed favourably.
Q3. Please outline how your project meets the objectives of the scheme
Please describe and provide details on how your project will meet one or more of the following grant objectives of the Digital Technologies Grants Programme. • Increase engagement with collections through digital interpretation • Support lifelong learning and educational use of museum collections • Improve discoverability of collections through digitisation and online access • Pilot innovative approaches using digital technology • Strengthen museums' digital capability and resilience • Enhance accessibility for disabled visitors and underrepresented audiences
Q4. How will you deliver your project? Who will be responsible for delivering the project and managing the funding? What is the estimated timescale of the funded activity?
This section should provide a plan for delivery. Areas such as how the project will be managed, developed, promoted, and delivered including timescales. It should identify key personnel and outline the resources required. It may be helpful to identify key partners. Organisations should demonstrate that they have an appropriate range of policies and procedures in place to support project delivery and sustainability. This section should provide adequate information to demonstrate that the project can be delivered effectively and within the proposed budget and timescale.
Q5. What impact will this project have on your collections and audience access to them?
This section should outline the proposed increase in engagement to collections, detail your target audiences and outline any desired outcomes from digital access. You should consider how you will evaluate the success of your project with your audiences.
Q6. Please describe any steps you will take to minimise the environmental impact of your project?
This section should outline any steps to minimise environmental impact including responsible procurement, extending the useful life of digital devices, reducing unnecessary resource consumption, and ensuring appropriate reuse or recycling of technology at the end of its life.

Conditions of Funding

- NIMC will not pay VAT on any expenditure incurred by VAT registered organisations with the ability to reclaim VAT costs.
- Remember that the grant will be paid retrospectively on production of project completion form and invoices/receipts. Phased payment is an option but must be agreed with NIMC before the start of the project.
- The maximum amount NIMC will fund will not exceed £10,000. Once awarded, grants cannot be increased.
- Applicants must be in a position to comply with any conditions attached to the grant that may be included in the Letter of Offer. NIMC must be notified immediately if the applicant encounters any problems in complying with the conditions.
- Applicants must be in a position to deliver the project within the agreed timescales. NIMC must be notified immediately of any delay or anticipated delay. Should NIMC consider any delay to be unacceptable, the grant may lapse and any payments made may be recovered in whole or in part.
- Applicants must comply with the expenditure, receipting, evaluation and monitoring conditions stated in the contract for funding.
- Applicants must also comply with their own institutional procurement thresholds and procedures.
- Any person authorised by NIMC including the Department for Community's Internal Audit Unit and the Northern Ireland Audit Office shall have rights of access to asset and accounting records in respect of any assistance provided.

How do I apply?

Complete the NIMC Digital Technologies Grant Application Form in full.

Email the application to info@nimc.co.uk by 12pm on 30 October 2026.

What will happen next?

We will acknowledge your application by e-mail within five working days.

NIMC staff will formally assess the application, based on the Digital Technologies Grants Fund Criteria listed on page 2. We may contact you to discuss the application in more detail during our assessment.

A report on all assessments will go before the NIMC Grants Committee, NIMC Board and Future Screens NI.

We will tell you by email of the decision as soon as possible thereafter.

What information will I need to submit to claim the grant?

The grant will only be paid against actual expenditure that is described and itemised within the approved application, unless a variation has been agreed and approved in writing by the Funder in advance.

The grant will only be paid partially or in full once we have received:

- Project completion form. See below.
- Invoice from your governing body to NIMC for the correct amount. The figure on this should be 100% of the actual expenditure or the total amount NIMC has offered, whichever is the lower amount.
- Receipts for expenditure from the vendor.
- Proof that you have paid for the item(s). Acceptable proof of payment will be bank or credit card statements, proof of online banking transfer, BACS payment records, and copies of cheques.
- Monitoring and Acknowledgement information – see below.

The financial paperwork should be sent to info@nimc.co.uk

Project Completion Form

Submitting project completion information is a condition to the offer of a grant and is required prior to payment. This will include:

- Completion of the NIMC Digital Technologies Grant Project Completion Form.
- Provision of at least one good quality image of 1MB or above that NIMC can use for publicity purposes and on www.nimc.co.uk. Any images supplied will allow NI Museum Council and Future Screens NI' reuse with credit to museum/owner.

Please send the completed Project Completion Form, by email to info@nimc.co.uk.

Procurement

- Applicants must obtain and retain at least two quotations for each eligible item of expenditure, with additional quotations required for items valued over £5,000. Evidence of quotations should be kept as part of the project records and provided to the Funder if requested.
- Where an application includes more than one identical item of equipment, a single set of quotations will suffice. For example, if funding is sought for three identical VR headsets, each costing £1,000, only two quotations for that item are required. It is not necessary to obtain separate quotations for each individual headset.
- For consultants or outside companies, you will need to provide a schedule of work, together with at least two quotes for each element of the work

Project Evaluation Form

A Project Evaluation Form must be submitted 3 months after the project's completion. Please send the completed project evaluation form, by email to info@nimc.co.uk.

Case Studies

We may use your successful grant as a Case Study on our website or the Future Screens NI website to publicise your museum, NIMC and the sector overall. Any images supplied will allow NI Museum Council and Future Screens NI' reuse with credit to museum/owner.

Acknowledgement

NIMC expects that its support towards the grant purchase is acknowledged through the incorporation of NIMC's and NI Future Screen's logos on promotional material and any social media posts.

VAT and Safeguarding

Successful applicants must provide:

- Written confirmation of your VAT status i.e., whether or not the grant recipient is registered with HMRC and can/cannot reclaim VAT on expenditure relating to this project.
- Written confirmation that the grant recipient has an up-to-date safeguarding policy that has been approved by its governing body.

Environmental Sustainability

As part of NIMC's commitment to sustainable development, we encourage all projects to consider environmental sustainability in their planning and delivery. This may include responsible procurement, extending the useful life of digital devices, reducing unnecessary resource consumption, and ensuring appropriate reuse or recycling of technology at the end of its life. We recognise that the scale and nature of environmental considerations will vary between projects.

Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000

NIMC values the right to personal privacy. We collect and hold personal data in order to successfully deliver our business and in order to comply with our statutory obligations. The personal data you provide on this form may be held by us electronically and in hard copy but will only be used in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and the Data Protection Act 1998.

This information may be subject to release to others in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, certain exemptions from release do exist, including where the information provided is protected under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Reports and summary information from the information you supply and from comments made on your application by staff members are likely to be held on both our paper and electronic systems and will be made available to those deciding upon this and any other grant applications you make.

By submitting your application, you waive any right to raise any type of proceedings against the Northern Ireland Museums Council as a consequence of, or in contemplation of, any disclosure of the contents of your application in response to an information request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We view your signature on your application form as acceptance of the use of your data as outlined above.

Information on NIMC's policy on data protection, its Publication Scheme, and on how to access information held by the Council is available through www.nimc.co.uk, or by contacting us directly.