

16 November 2022

Dear

ATISN 16783 - Documents regarding National Museums Wales's preparedness for Brexit.

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 24 October 2022. You asked for:

Documents which were requested by any division of the Welsh Government, regarding National Museums Wales's preparedness for Brexit.

We have interpreted this request as a request for any documents which were requested by the Welsh Government, regarding National Museum Wales's preparedness for Brexit.

Our response

The information you requested is attached in an Annex.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

AMGUEDDFA CYMRU: CURRENT RELATIONSHIPS AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

1. Funding from EU Sources for Cultural Projects

We may lose access to EU funded training grants from which we presently benefit (e.g. ILM Level 3 Coaching and Mentoring).

We were partners with 11 other open air museums and related organisations from 2011-2015 in the EU Culture funded 'OpenArch' project". The grant allocation to AC-NMW was circa 110,000 euros.

We are currently partnered with Jamtli Museum, Östersund, Sweden in an EU-funded ERASMUS 'Sharing and Learning' project (£11,932); as part of this, we have also secured funding for partnership with the Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and Creativity on a 'Lifelong Learning' project (€1,600)

The National Waterfront Museum in Swansea and St Fagans are associate partners in two INTERREG bids (in-kind support) through our partnerships with Swansea University and Cardiff Metropolitan University - 40k euros and 10k euros

We also receive European Science Foundation funding for natural sciences research/dissemination (14,000 Euros).

We have a long term partnership with Szentendre Open Air Museum in Hungary: Benefits include St Fagans running a staff-exchange programme with Szentendre since the 1980s. It is based on an informal agreement and costs are covered from revenue budgets.

2. Involvement with Formal or Informal European Cultural Networks

We are (as noted above) members of the OpenArch project – a partnership with 11 other open-air museums and related organisations (2011-2015): Through this:-

- Around 25 members of staff gained experience of different ways of working through visiting other organisations, leading to tangible changes in working practices.
- We received expert guidance from international professionals on how we could problem solve some of our new projects, notably Bryn Eyr.
- We have been invited into follow-on grant applications.
- We hosted an international conference linked to a large public event which showcased Welsh culture and expertise to around 90 heritage professionals

We are a member of the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO). NEMO is an independent organisation made up of members of the Council of Europe – so we may well be able to stay as an associate member after Brexit as a non-member of the EU – however, the relationships, potential of going

for joint funding in partnership for EU grants that come from being part of this community will be limited and changed. In addition, NEMO's purpose is to connect European museums and their organisations to help to ensure their place in the cultural development of Europe and fostering policy by promoting their importance to European policy makers. This then could impact on joint lobbying for shared cultural policy and also limit our ability to influence or participate in existing European cultural policies other than national ones.

We are also a member of the Learning Museum Network (LEM).

We have long term relationships with museum professionals in the following countries:

- * Austria (Directorate, Collections)
- * Belgium (Collections)
- * Bulgaria (Collections)
- * Croatia (Directorate, Collections)
- * Czech Republic (Collections)
- * Denmark (Directorate, Learning, Collections)
- * Estonia (Collections)
- * Finland (Collections)
- * France (Directorate, Collections)
- * Germany (Collections)
- * Greece (Directorate, Learning, Collections)
- * Hungary (Collections)
- * Ireland (Directorate, Collections)
- * Italy (Directorate, Collections)
- * Luxembourg (Collections)
- * Netherlands (Collections)
- * Poland (Directorate, Collections)
- * Portugal (Directorate, Collections)
- * Romania (Collections)
- * Slovakia (Collections)
- * Slovenia (Collections)
- * Spain (Directorate, Collections)
- * Sweden (Directorate, Learning, Collections)

3. Employment of Other EU Nationals

We employ specialists from the following EU nations:

- * Danish - 1 (Finance)
- * French - 2 (Development, Collections)
- * German - 3 (Collections)
- * Irish - 2 (Director General, Collections)
- * Polish - 1 (Front of House)

4. How and Why Connections with Other EU Countries are Important for our Work

Our collections are rich in European natural sciences specimens and works of art - such as Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings - partnerships with

museums and universities in European countries help us to interpret them and our historical and archaeological collections. Our expertise in museology and cultural learning is recognized beyond the UK and links with us are increasingly sought by European colleagues.

5. An Assessment of the Implications of Brexit

There is some uncertainty over the position of EU nationals currently working for us. We attract applicants from all over Europe to our job adverts, and have filled roles (especially specialist scientific and curatorial positions) with EU nationals. We may not be able to attract the best talent.

We risk increased isolation from best museological and scientific research and practice; we are already detecting a loss of influence and resources as we get fewer invitations to participate in European projects.

The cost of services and products from European suppliers (such as the high quality display cases we purchased from Belgium for St Fagans) could be higher.

6. The importance of Free Movement, and Issues re Travel/Visa/Work Permits

The costs of borrowing are carried by the borrowing institution, so fortuitously any additional costs would fall to them. The only costs we currently cover are visas (eg \$14 for an ESTA for the US valid for two years) and training to become a 'known consigner' which allows crates to be customised-sealed at the Museum. This is an annual cost of c. £900.

7. Loans including Commercial Loans are likely to be affected if UK not members of Customs Union.

As the lists in sections above indicate, restrictions on movement of EU partners would have some effect on our relationships with expert professionals from other EU nations. For example, recently, we and Cardiff University jointly hosted a lecture by a Jette Sandahl, former Director of the World Cultures Museum in Goteborg Sweden.

CURRENT RESPONSES

The future shape of the Brexit negotiations still remains uncertain. We do not know if research and cultural projects and partnerships will, or will not be part of any future Brexit deal. Meanwhile, we have taken a number of steps:-

- We have provided evidence for the Single Market of the Mind Report, and to the Welsh Government
- We are seeking European funding whilst it is still available
- We have developed new relationships with museums in Ireland and in February 2019 signed an MOU with the National Museum of Ireland.

- We are also working with United Kingdom Trade and Industry (UKTI) and other bodies to increase opportunities for staff, travel and exchanges with colleagues overseas.
- We will use the European Museum Forum NEMO and Council of Europe as an alternative route to European partnerships.
- We are hosting the European Museum of the Year Conference and Awards Ceremony in Cardiff from 30th April to 2nd May 2020. There remains uncertainty in terms of the Visa requirements for those attending, and we have alerted both Welsh Government and the Secretary of State for Wales' office that we may require support with this.