



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP  
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture,  
Media and Sport  
4th Floor  
100 Parliament Street  
London SW1A 2BQ

[www.gov.uk/dcms](http://www.gov.uk/dcms)  
[enquiries@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@dcms.gov.uk)

## To All MPs

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Dear Colleague,

### **Emergency Culture Rescue Package**

I am writing to draw your attention to our [£1.57 billion emergency rescue package](#) for cultural, arts and heritage institutions, which I announced earlier this week.

Our performing arts, live music venues, heritage sites and museums and galleries make our lives richer in every sense. They contribute approximately £32.3 billion to the UK's economy, and employ approximately 680,000 people. World-famous and world-renowned, they wield a huge amount of soft power across the globe. But they also play a huge role in bringing the country together, in enlightening and entertaining, and in strengthening communities across the UK.

The coronavirus pandemic has forced thousands of these institutions to close their doors, and with social distancing likely to remain in place for the foreseeable future, they desperately need our help to weather the storm.

Many of Britain's cultural and heritage institutions have already received unprecedented financial assistance to see them through the crisis, including loans, business rates holidays, and the furlough scheme.

This unprecedented package, which represents the biggest ever one-off investment in UK culture, will provide a lifeline to the performing arts and theatres, heritage, museums, galleries, live music and independent cinema - who will now be able to access emergency grants and loans.

It will focus on both cultural crown jewels like the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, and the National Theatre, along with cultural and heritage institutions in regions across the country that are the anchors of your local communities.

The emergency package includes:

- £1.15 billion support pot for cultural organisations delivered through a mix of grants and loans. This will be made up of £270 million of repayable finance and £880 million grants.
- £100 million of targeted support for the national cultural institutions in England and the English Heritage Trust.
- £120 million capital investment to restart construction on cultural infrastructure and for heritage construction projects in England which was paused due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- The new funding will also mean an extra £188 million for the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland (£33 million), Scotland (£97 million) and Wales (£59 million).

We have had a very positive reaction from across the sector and the UK, including from Alex Beard, Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the Royal Academy's Axel Riger, playwright James Graham, and Sir Simon Rattle.

Decisions on awards will be made working alongside expert independent figures from the sector, including the Arts Council England, Historic England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the British Film Institute. Further details will be set out when the scheme opens for applications in the coming weeks.

This package complements the announcement made last week by the Arts Council to reopen their project grants competition and make £59m funding available to support creativity, in particular from freelancers, creative practitioners and independent organisations.

The government is also finalising guidance for a phased return of the performing arts sectors that will be published shortly. The government is working directly with medical experts and the sectors themselves to get them back up and running as soon as it is safe to do so.

Yours sincerely,



**Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP**  
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport