

Quarterly Report

2025/26 Q3



Q3 2025/26

This document celebrates achievements and summarises key activity from Leeds Museums & Galleries (LMG) over the period October to December 2025.

It is structured in line with our 5-year strategy **Deepening Connections, Widening Impact**, which has been developed with colleagues, partners and Arts Council England's core investment principles in mind. Throughout the document where activity and achievements meet Arts Council England Investment Principles they are referenced under each heading in order to report progress for our National Portfolio Organisation status.

Data comparisons are made with the same period of the previous year unless otherwise stated.

Leeds Museums & Galleries' Strategic Outcomes

- 1 We will be more sustainable and responsible, financially and environmentally
- 2 We will provide higher quality audience engagement and experiences, both physically and digitally
- 3 We will continue to be a leader in collaborative, sustainable, accessible cultural learning and creative skills development
- 4 We will have an audience and workforce that is representative and reflective of the city
- 5 We will have collections and heritage assets that are better known, better understood, and better cared for
- 6 We will have international reputation and reach

In Focus

Leeds City Museum worked with partners Projektil and Fever to bring *Eonarium: Enlightenment* to the museum.

The 30-minute experience used state of the art mapping technology to create perfectly aligned 3D projections which formed a seamless and immersive visual show in the museum's Brodrick Hall. The light projections were accompanied by Vivaldi's Four Seasons, creating a mesmerising experience which brought the stunning architecture of the hall to life.

Shows were held every Thursday to Sunday between 3 July and 21 September and the season encompassed 326 performances drawing 21,284 visitors. This included 40 evening events as well as afternoons to attract a wide range of audiences. The programming generated £35,350 income (£26,643 profit) demonstrating the benefits of innovative collaboration with commercial partners. The events also drew excellent feedback from audiences, including five-star reviews:

"The staff were very welcoming and helpful, the seating arrangements were fantastic and well thought out, the show itself was incredible."

"Went to see a light and music extravaganza here on a wet and miserable day. It was amazing. We lay on bean bags (also chairs) on the floor to watch and it was mesmerising. The staff were welcoming and helpful and the museum has lots of fabulous exhibits and exhibitions."





OUTCOME 2

We will provide higher quality audience engagement and experiences, both physically and digitally

At a glance

The last three months have been jam-packed full of programming, with successful new events trialled in both Halloween and Christmas. It's a huge achievement for the service seeing visitor figures for the calendar year return to above one million for the first time since the pandemic.

Press Highlights

[Leeds venue The Duchess where pre-fame Oasis played is celebrated](#) – BBC News

[Cauldron hidden in wall to deter evil goes on show](#) – BBC News and BBC Radio Leeds

[Silver Saxon cross found in field goes on show](#) – BBC News

[The wartime Christmas greetings sent by biscuit](#) – BBC News Christmas Eve and BBC Radio Leeds

[The poignant messages to First World War soldiers inscribed on biscuits](#) – Yorkshire Post

Venue Visitors
1,046,372
2025

903,574
2024

+15.8%
Year to date visitors



Visitors

256,231
2025/26

242,298
2024/25

+5.75%
Venue visitors



Socials

362,417
2025/26

351,269
2024/25

+3%
Social media followers



Website

256,940
2025/26

193,572
2024/25

32.7%
Website visitors



Views

2,034,855
2025/26

1,148,453
2024/25

+77%
Webpage views

ACE IP MET
All

Headlines

In October Light Night at Leeds City Museum saw over 10,000 visitors experience the premiere of a mesmerising light and sound installation based on patterns created with a Spirograph. To mark the 60th anniversary of the Spirograph being invented in Leeds by engineer Denys Fisher, artist Lesley Halliwell collaborated with digital artist William Card and sound artist James Bagshaw to create *Spirograph Reimagined*, a unique artwork.

Volunteers at Lotherton decorated the chapel and organised Christmas community events including carol concerts.

Leeds City Museum Community Choir performed at Leeds City Museum and Lotherton.

Audience Development delivered an awareness campaign for Abbey House Museum through October and November, with the support of additional funds from the Community Committee Fund.

Leeds Industrial Museum developed a new Christmas trail, led by the front of house team.

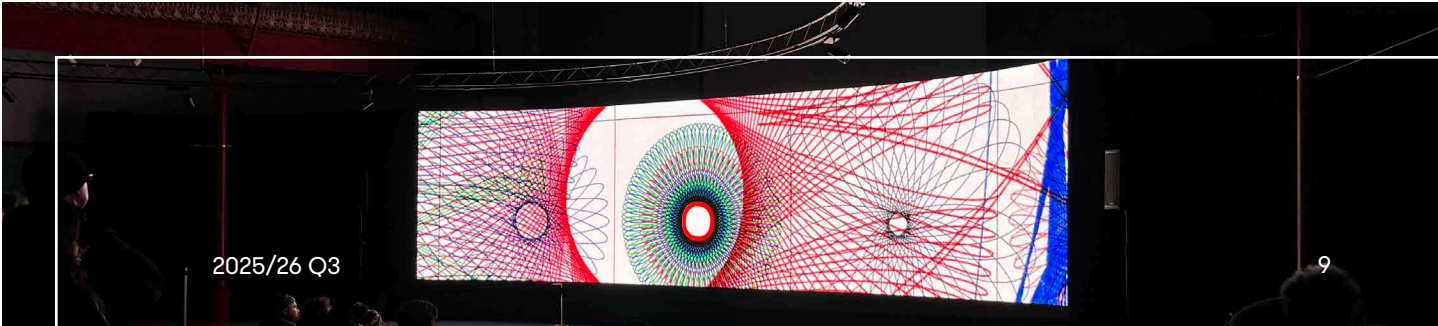
Leeds Discovery Centre showcased the collection in new light – helping visitors face their fears in a new phobias workshop over Halloween.

Temple Newsam launched three new events over the Christmas period: Christmas Evenings to tie in with the Northern Lights event happening in the Estate, Leeds Philharmonic Concert in the Picture Gallery, and the Christmas Tree Trail around the House.

Festive Lino Printing and Foraged Festive Wreaths workshops sold out at Abbey House Museum over the festive period.

82 respondents to the Community Programme wellbeing survey, where once again average scores out of 5 against eight wellbeing metrics were all over 4. 'I feel welcome' was 4.88 and 'I feel safe' 4.91.

Another successful Mindfulness Festival at Abbey House Museum with a programme of activities including the first Sound Bath was delivered with excellent wellbeing feedback.



2025/26 Q3

9

In Focus

Since launching in November 2024, LMG's new website (powered by Peppered) has gone from strength to strength and aiding online growth, Search Engine Optimisation development and increased event ticketing across the service.

Website views have increased by 58% since 24-25, and we've seen an increase in average page views per user from 5.5 to 8.5 - a direct result of our website being more effective at delivering a high standard of visitor experience. Visitors can find what they're looking for and now explore further into our venues and events with cross-promotion being easier than ever.

The Audience Development team have streamlined their internal processes to promote a growing number of events on the website, with August and October 2025 being our highest engagement on the website in our history. We're seeing trends of increased engagement over school holiday periods like Easter, summer holidays and Halloween, with Christmas coming not far behind. One third of online views have been for events and What's On pages, with approximately one in eight views planning a visit on our visit pages, checking opening times, admissions, transport options etc. Both Lotherton and Temple Newsam achieved over one million views on their websites, with Leeds City Museum coming very close to this too.





OUTCOME 3

We will continue to be a leader in collaborative, sustainable, accessible cultural learning and creative skills development

ACE IP MET
Dynamism
Environmental
Responsibility
Inclusion &
Relevance

At a glance

We supported families at Leeds Children's Hospital, helped young adults into the workplace through careers fairs, hosted Project Placements and participated in academic networks, and mentored other museum learning professionals. The autumn is always busy with school visits, October half term and accessible Christmas activities.



Pupils

10,524
Q3 2025/6

10,693
Q3 2024/5

-2%
Engaged through workshops, self led and outreach



Family

24,569
Q3 2025/26

34,634
Q3 2024/25

-29%
People engaged in family activities



SEND

19
2025/6

40
2024/5

-53%
Workshops differentiated for pupils with SEND needs

MyLearning
94,853

Unique Users
Q3 2025/26

155,388
Page Views

1117
Downloads

977
Watched Videos

*MyLearning analytics: The apparent drop in user numbers is due to a shift in how we report analytics, moving from total event counts to meaningful metrics like active users and page views. This change avoids inflated figures caused by tracking minor interactions such as scrolling or clicking.

Headlines

Proud to be finalists in the national Kids in Museums Awards for family engagement at Abbey House Museum, and the social care Children and Young People Now Awards for our Careers for All programme.

Advocated to elected members within Leeds City Council through a Scrutiny Board paper in November focused on Evaluating the impact of inclusive, place based cultural learning from Early Years to adulthood. LMG was commended for its commitment to cultural learning, and took recommendations for research into attachment, and an ongoing review of school programmes.

Primary School Membership - completed initial teacher training for all staff at the 21 member schools and began four curriculum planning contracts.

Completed the fourth cohort of families for Mini Wonders (Nesta and Art Fund Early Years parenting research) at Leeds Industrial Museum, and onboarded our partner, Barnsley Museums to the programme.

Leeds City Museum held a SEND Careers fair as part of the national Discover Creative Careers month for 200 students from nine different educational settings.

Joined British Council Early Career Researcher Network to share practice across social sciences and humanities and support local universities and researchers.

Ran family activities across LMG for October half term and Christmas, including Halloween events and Relaxed Santa at Abbey House Museum and Temple Newsam House.

We formally mentored six individual museum professionals and supported National Lottery Heritage Fund with national guidance on working with children and young people and Kirklees Museums with their learning programmes.



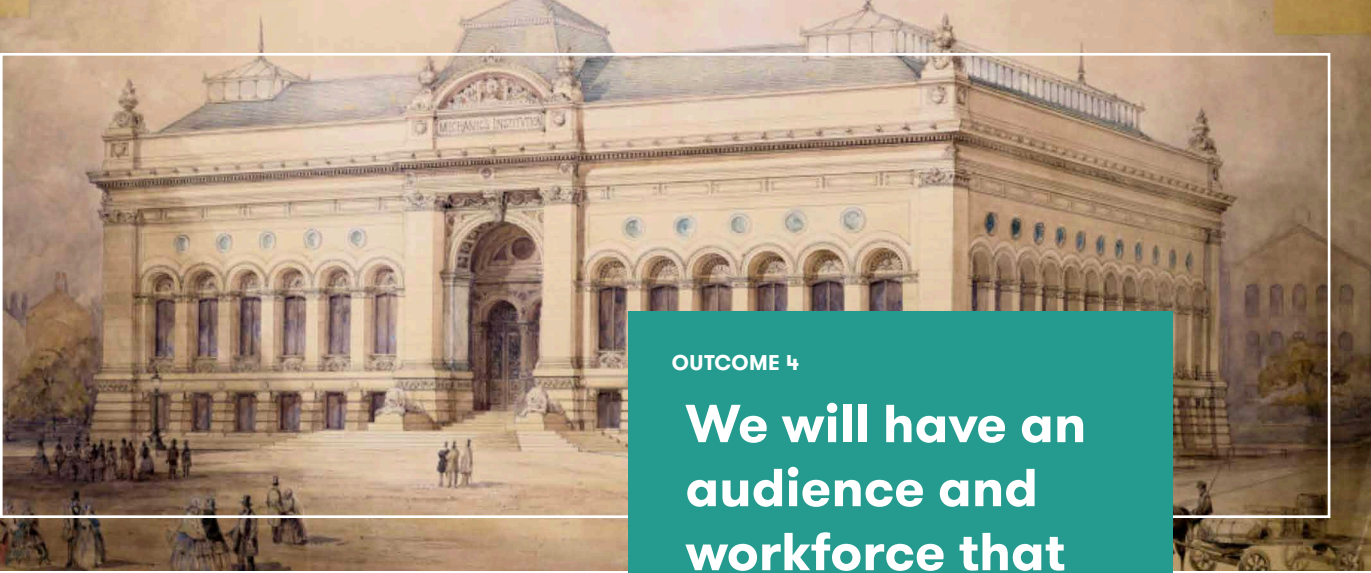
In Focus

We are working with the Learning Zone of Leeds Children's Hospital, supporting families with children who are under long term medical care. We visit Leeds General Infirmary (LGI) every two months aiming to bring joy and spark conversations using objects from the collections.

We work with between four and eight young people and their families at each session, either at the bedside, or as small groups of children in the Learning Zone classroom space. Themes for conversations this autumn have included the Tudors and Under the Sea.

The pandemic interrupted our previous long-term partnership with the Learning Zone (2008-2020), as collection objects couldn't be medically sanitised to protect the children. We began piloting work again during July 2025, and in December 2025 signed a partnership agreement for delivery throughout 2026. This is an important strand of work for reaching, engaging and supporting some of our most vulnerable children within Leeds for whom cultural experiences can be challenging.





OUTCOME 4

We will have an audience and workforce that is representative and reflective of the city

ACE IP MET
Ambition & Quality
Inclusion & Relevance

At a glance

It was a busy quarter for volunteering and co-curated events including a hugely successful multi-faith *Light for Leeds* festival at Kirkstall Abbey. We also got a first glimpse of research carried out earlier in the year into what visitors thought of our venues immediately after they visited. The multi-sensory *Another Way of Seeing* display at Leeds Art Gallery attracted over one thousand visitors in just two weeks.

9 -25%
Co-curated displays

201 -3%
Community creative sessions

41 -55%
Generous hostings



Volunteers

115
2025/6

96
2024/5

+20%
Volunteers



Hours

2428
2025/26

2286
2024/25

+6%
Hours contributed by volunteers

50 (+117%) co-produced events with our community partners



Headlines

First ever Meet Your Muslim Neighbour community event hosted at Leeds City Museum in November.

Hip Hop Who's Who Wall opened for Hip Hop History Month at Leeds City Museum, showcasing members of Leeds' hip hop community, co-curated by Leeds Hip Hop Historian Society.

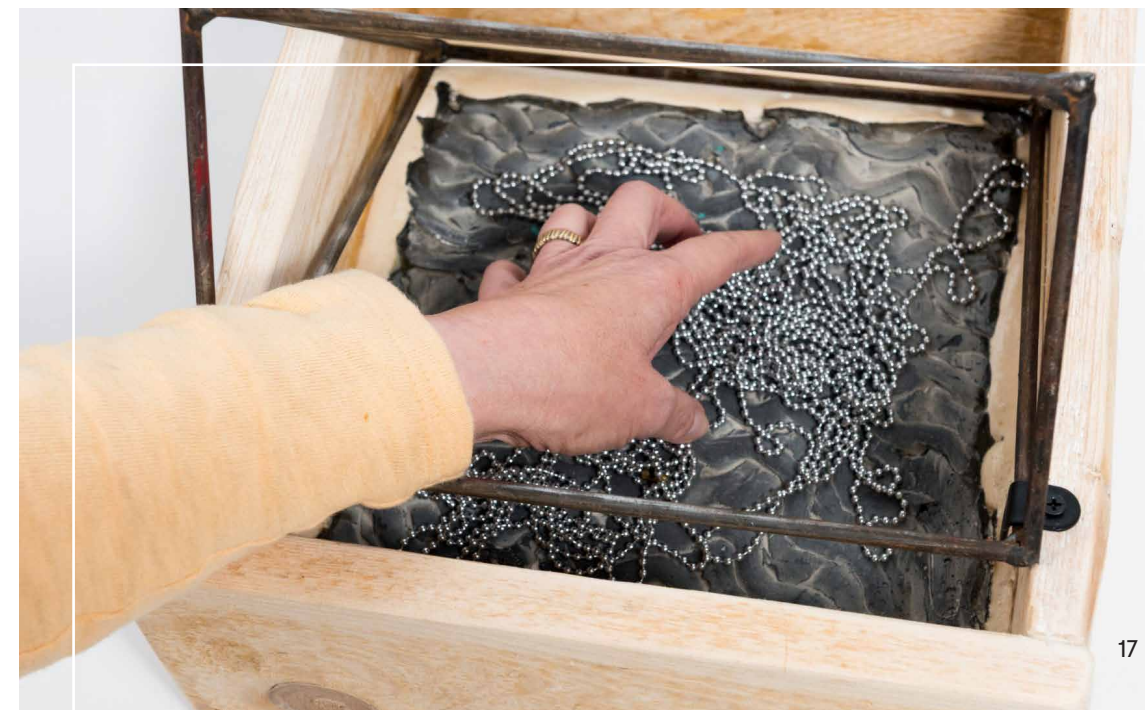
The Audience Development team issued a survey about the development of the Railway Gallery at Leeds Industrial Museum in October, where 96% of respondents said they'd like to see more railway displays at the museum.

Another Way of Seeing at Leeds Art Gallery featured artworks by nine contemporary artists that encouraged visitors to touch, listen, smell and discover layers of meaning through their senses, and is curated by Gill Crawshaw. The display had 1113 visitors over two weeks.

Audience Development have been working with research consultants over the past few months to conduct post visit surveys across all venues, and in December we got to see the initial results of this in a presentation from the agency.

Project placement recruited to develop the brand and visuals for the upcoming opening of a community cafe at Leeds Industrial Museum in partnership with West SILC.

Leeds City Museum is working with Leeds Beckett University second year Architecture students on a live brief as part of their Interior Architecture module connected to the museum's current spatial and feasibility study.



In Focus

The 10th annual *Light For Leeds* event ran on Sunday 17 November in the Gatehouse at Abbey House Museum and was a great success, very well attended and with very positive feedback.

We had Christian women's choirs, South Asian music performed by children from the local Hindu Mandir, an explanation of the importance of light in Judaism, Islamic recitations, and a contemplative moment at dusk when all attendees lit a candle and held a moment of silence. Other highlights included the provision of community food, the opportunity to write messages of peace and hope and place them on our Tree of Hope, a flute recital and a meditative walk with Brahma Kumaris.

The event was opened by Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Barry Anderson and Deputy Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire Dr

Kuldip Bharj OBE, who lit the World Peace Flame and made speeches on the importance of togetherness. Dr Bharj had this to say following the event, which as ever was generously funded by LCC's Religion and Belief Hub:

"May I extend my heartfelt thanks for hosting such a wonderful *Lights of Leeds* event as part of Interfaith Week.

It was truly inspiring to see so many communities come together in a spirit of unity, respect, and celebration. The atmosphere was warm and welcoming, and the event beautifully highlighted the importance of dialogue and understanding between different faiths and cultures. I left feeling uplifted and grateful to be part of such an inclusive initiative..."



OUTCOME 5

We will have collections and heritage assets that are better known, better understood, and better cared for



97 -34%
Objects conserved

380 -33%
Objects condition checked

386 -8%
Enquiries answered

8329 +178%
TMS records updated

77 -61%
Records amended as a result of community input

199 -70%
New records created

63 -9%
Researchers accessing collections

ACE IP MET
All

At a glance

This quarter has been busy with new exhibitions featuring both LMG collections and loans, alongside strong community partnerships. The Picture Library continues to grow with new members joining to enjoy artworks.

Visitors to objects on loan out

258,584

Q3 25/26

159,330

Q3 24/25

+62%

Long Loans (12 months+)

182 out +/-0%

995 in from 69 lenders +0.4%

Short Loans (up to 12 months)

201 out to 26 venues, 5 international +/-0%

2369 in from 215 lenders +176%

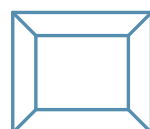
The Picture Library

Members Loans

453 597
2025/26 2025/26

402 509
2024/25 2024/25

+13% +17%
Members Artworks on loan



Headlines

A new display celebrating sport opened in Community Cases at Leeds City Museum co-curated with project volunteers. It marks the culmination of researching sport in the city as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund project *On the Pitch, Off the Pitch* and adding to LMG's holdings representing the breadth and diversity of sporting activity in Leeds.

Three photographs by the renowned Leeds' photographer Peter Mitchell went on display at Leeds City Museum.

They were acquired in 2024 in memory of John Roles (1957-2020), LMG's Head of Service from 2004-2020.

Leeds Art Gallery's terrace room has been undergoing essential repair. While this caused some disruption with scaffolding outside meaning accessible entry was via the adjoining Central Library for a period, the work is now nearing completion and will lead to re-opening of the sculpture galleries once internal repairs from water ingress are undertaken.

In Focus

A new co-curated display opened at Leeds City Museum in October 2025, celebrating 60 years of music in Leeds.

The exhibition *Music Leeds Us*, in partnership with Leeds Conservatoire and with support from Leeds Beckett University, includes stories from more than 100 partners, support from over 50 volunteers and more than 900 loaned items together with objects from LMG's collections, including recent acquisitions. Over 400 people came to the opening, with performances from local musicians and choirs. A full events programme is underway, with local musicians showcasing their music weekly in 'Open Mic' slots, and larger events co-curated with Leeds



Conservatoire and other partners. In November the exhibition hosted Fergus Quill, celebrating Matthew Coe AKA Xero Slingsby on what would have been his 68th birthday; and beat boxers from the Hip Hop community.

In Focus

In December volunteers from Millim and the Leeds Living History Project visited Leeds Industrial Museum to view a collection of Hebrew and Yiddish wooden type for printing.

This collection was donated to the museum by Joseph Porton and Sons, Leeds in 1985 along with other printed materials. Joseph Porton was a notable Russian-born Jewish author and printer whose printing firm had significant ties to the Leeds Jewish community. Important Hebrew, Yiddish and English language works from the Porton collection of books are part of the University of Leeds' collections.

Volunteers from the project are working with Sophia Lambert from the university creating an archive of testimonies and artefacts relating to Leeds Jewish heritage, predominantly by collecting the oral histories of older Jewish people in the city.

It is hoped that by working with the project volunteers our staff at the museum can further understand the cultural significance and historic value of the wooden type and learn more about our Jewish communities' contribution to the printing industry in Leeds.



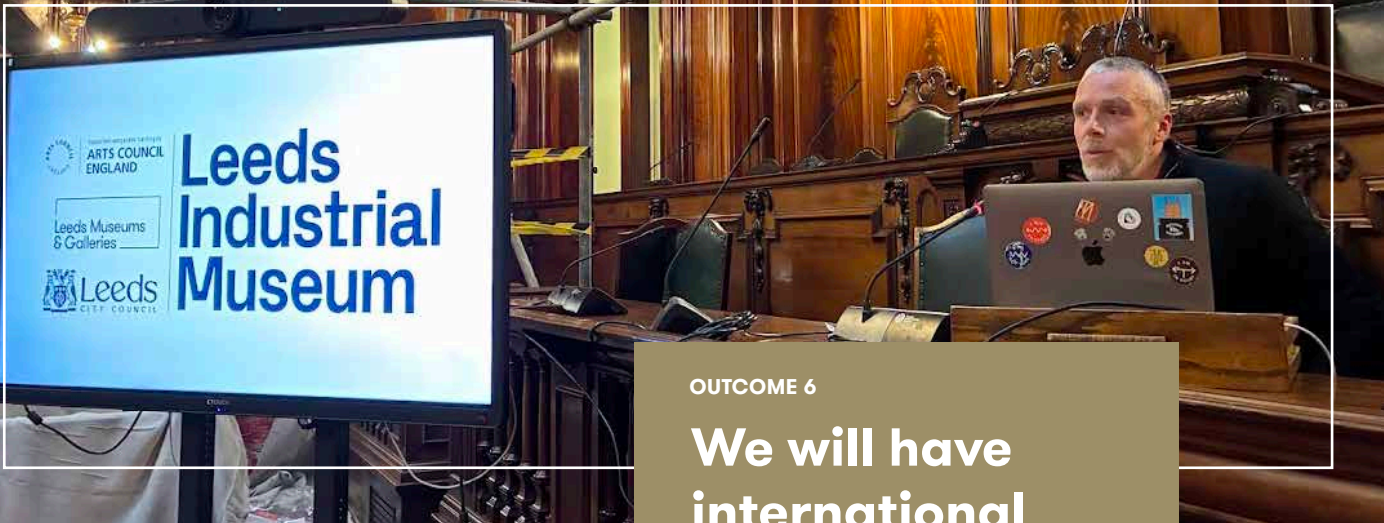
In Focus

A new co-curated display with groups from Pyramid of Arts and Leeds Art Gallery's Youth Collective opened in Artspace.

Pyramid of Arts supports artists who have learning disabilities, autism or both. Together, the groups met in Artspace for seven months prior to the exhibition opening to plan, design and research into the 'moonlight' paintings created by celebrated 19th century Leeds artist, John Atkinson Grimshaw in the art collection. The display includes paintings, a large painted mural, metal pieces, ceramics, collages, a digital animation, photography lightboxes

and three drop-in activities alongside workshops delivered by the Pyramid artists.

We Bathe In Starlight in the Ziff Gallery, sees members of Arts & Minds' display poetic responses and prints, nestled into the collections of Victorian paintings where Grimshaw's artworks have previously hung. The Arts & Minds Network brings together people in Leeds who believe the arts can promote mental wellbeing. Both projects connect to the exhibition 'Don't Let's Ask for the Moon...': *Nocturnes and Atkinson Grimshaw* which opened in November.



OUTCOME 6

We will have international reputation and reach

ACE IP MET
All

At a glance

As well as loans to museums and galleries across the world, this quarter saw several international research visits to LMG venues, and making an important contribution to an international symposium by explaining the role of Leeds Industrial Museum in creating a sense of place.

Headlines

Leeds Discovery Centre welcomed Jack Norris, a researcher from the University of Melbourne’s Indigenous Studies programme who is working with the Wurundjeri people to locate their collections in UK museums. Their country covers most of what is now Melbourne.

Leeds Industrial Museum was featured as a case study in how the museum has created a sense of place at an international symposium in Bradford organised by UCL Arts and Sciences and Bradford Libraries.

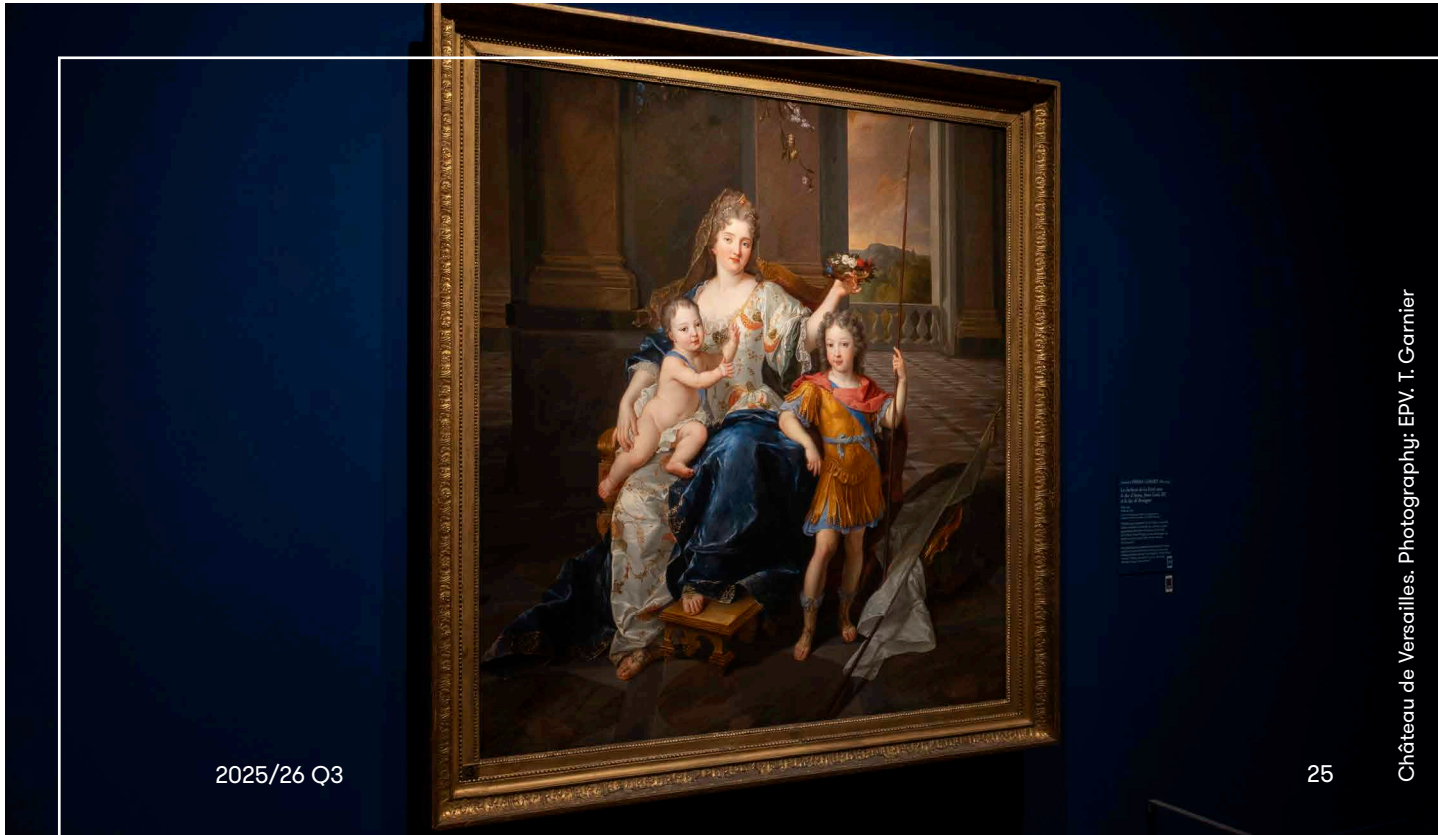
Leeds Industrial Museum hosted 48 students aged 16-17 from a college in Dunkirk, France on 16 December. Their visit to the museum was complemented by an introductory talk and short tour from the Keeper and Visitor Assistant, Barrie. The college students were learning about similarities and differences between our two countries/cities, including the industrial revolution, industries and current political landscape.

International loans from the collection are currently in Lanuvio and Passariano in Italy, Chicago in the United States, Chemnitz in Germany and Versailles, France comprising six paintings, eight marble sculptures and one installation work. Pictured is the loan of Portrait of La Duchesse de la Ferte with the duc de Bretagne and the duc d’Anjou by Francois de Troy to the exhibition Le Grand Dauphin (1661-1711) at the Château de Versailles.

Headlines

A Finnish delegation visited Temple Newsam as part of a trip exploring travel trade options. The group enjoyed a tour of the house and onsite facilities. They were impressed by the depth of the offer, quality of collections and presentation of the house. The reaction of the group highlighted the huge potential of the venue for group markets with the site being primed for package visits to Leeds, Yorkshire and the North.

Musicians featured in Music Leeds Us have travelled to Leeds to see the exhibition from as far as the USA and then posted to their international followers about the show on their social media accounts, including members of Gang of Four and The Wedding Present.



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