

For Prospective Panel Members

Information about Joining the Expert Panel

This information sheet is for members of the Heritage Network who are interested in joining the Expert Panel. If you are a community heritage organisation who would like to access the support of our Expert Panel, please see the information sheet 'For Members'.

Use your expertise to support the heritage sector and grow professionally

Are you passionate about supporting community-led heritage projects? Do you enjoy mentoring, problem-solving, or sharing your knowledge to help others succeed? If so, the **Heritage Network Expert Panel** could be a great opportunity for you.

What Is the Expert Panel?

The Expert Panel is a carefully selected pool of trusted professionals with specialist knowledge in the heritage sector – such as our Partner Members, or leaders of more established Heritage Development Trusts – who the Network can call on to:

- Help the Network find resolutions to complex casework.
- Offer short-term mentoring support to members.
- Support the staff team to carry out our new “Organisational Health Checks”.
- Support the delivery of funded projects.

It's a structured way to deliver advice and services we've always provided to Network members, and ensures your contributions are recognised and fairly allocated.

The Expert Panel has been made possible thanks to support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England and Historic Environment Scotland.

Why Join?

By joining the Expert Panel, you'll:

- **Give back** to the heritage sector and get involved in rewarding, impactful work.
- **Enhance your CV** and professional reputation, being listed publicly as an Expert Panel member.
- **Raise your profile** among the grassroots community sector and build new connections.
- **Earn honorarium payments** for your time.
- **Be part of a supportive community** of peers, with access to optional CPD and peer learning.

Who Can Apply?

We welcome applications from individuals who:

- Have strong knowledge and experience in the heritage sector.
- Want to support others, share skills, and make a difference.
- Are willing to engage with assignments when available.

Panel members may come from Network, Network Plus, Partner or Partner Plus membership, or be Supporter Members who are freelance consultants. We aim for diversity in skills, backgrounds, and locations and we will enrol a range of Expert Panel members at any one time to achieve this (we'll ask you about this during the application process and use the information you provide to make allocations of support work).

How It Works

- You'll apply to us to join the Heritage Network's Expert Panel.
- If appointed, you'll agree to some key terms and attend a short online induction.
- You'll be matched to opportunities based on your expertise.
- Assignments may be funded or occasionally pro bono (optional).
- You're not obligated to take every opportunity.
- We'll handle the admin—members don't contact you directly.
- You'll be paid directly by the Heritage Network.
- You'll be able to carry on working with members going forwards (Heritage Network assignments will be clearly defined and we'll set out a roadmap for when members might become your clients).

How is the Expert Panel Different to the Talent Bank?

Talent Bank is there for our Partner Member businesses to promote their services directly to members. Talent Bank is a directory of consultants and suppliers who are part of the Network and recommended by our members.

The Expert Panel is a Network-managed group of individuals delivering services on behalf of the Network. We'll draw on the Expert Panel to respond to complex casework, carry out Organisational Health Checks, or deliver other support services to members.

You can be part of both.

What are "Organisational Health Checks"?

An Organisational Health Check is a support process offered by the Heritage Network to our members, where we'll work together to take a holistic look at your community heritage organisation's set up, ways of working, and goals. We'll help you to reflect on what's working well and what isn't, and identify actionable steps for moving forwards. An organisational health check will usually be focused on a specific challenge you are facing, and sometimes we'll bring in members of the Heritage Network Expert Panel to help us carry out this work.

The staff team at the Heritage Network oversee the Organisational Health Check programme, and we will offer to support members with a Health Check when we think they'll benefit from this.

Can you give me an example of how the Expert Panel could work?

Yes. A Network Member is planning to take on a long-term lease of a listed building from a local authority. The building is at risk and deteriorating quickly, but the trust is seeking funding to carry out urgent repairs and eventually deliver a mixed-use community and enterprise hub. The local authority is offering a 99-year peppercorn lease—but the terms are vague and include restrictive clauses around alterations and use. Potential funders are requesting clarity on tenure and risk, but the trust lacks in-house legal and property expertise.

How the Expert Panel could help:

- The Heritage Network team reviews the Member's case and assigns an Expert Panel member with experience in property law and heritage asset transfer.
- The panel member reviews the draft lease, identifies areas of concern (e.g. repairing obligations, subletting restrictions, clauses around listed building consent), and explains the implications in plain terms.

- They also flag what funders typically look for in terms of security of tenure and risk-sharing with public bodies.
- The panel member suggests possible lease revisions that support both parties' objectives.
- As a result, the trust secures a revised lease with clearer terms on liabilities and more flexibility for future use. This unlocks progress with the funding application and gives their Board of Trustees confidence to proceed, knowing the risks are better understood and managed.

How to Apply

If you're looking for a meaningful way to use your experience, connect with inspiring projects, and contribute to the future of community heritage, we'd love to hear from you. Please complete our Expert Panel Recruitment Form, and then we'll be in touch:

[Expert Panel Recruitment Form](#)

Have any questions? Please get in touch with our Development and Outreach Officers for each nation:

Development and Outreach Officer for England:

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Please note, the Expert Panel and Organisational Health Check are new programmes we are offering to our members, and this guidance is likely to evolve as these initiatives develop.