

"Some businesses understand how they can get the most out of their relationships with museums and archives. Some museums and archives have thought through and developed a coherent offer to their business partners... However, these cases tend to be the exception and not the rule."

MLA London Knowledge Transfer Report 2008

An invitation to join the
MLA London Exchange Programme
for Businesses, Museums & Archives
April to October 2009

**Real
Knowledge
Transfer**

In July 2007, with support from the LDA, MLA London began a ground-breaking programme of work in its Knowledge Transfer Programme to examine and support relationships between museums, libraries and archives and businesses. The research has found **great hidden promise in the collections, spaces, knowledge and expertise in museums and archives** that London has to offer.

In 2009 we're building on the research and running an exchange programme for 6 people from the world of business and 6 from the world of museums and archives. Over a series of half-day events running from April to October 2009, we'll be exploring questions with a direct bearing on strategies for product development, brand, marketing and employee engagement. **The programme will look for the chemistry between the worlds of business, museums and archives in London.**

You'll want to join us if you're a business leader or manager looking for innovative solutions to problems, rethinking the role of your organisation in a wider network, needing to effect an organisational transformation, or seeking new ways of engaging employees and keeping them committed. From the museum and archive side you'll be interested in developing new audiences, working more effectively with businesses and looking at stakeholder management in your organisational context.

We'll be accepting a mix of business, archive, museum and other professionals to deepen a multi-disciplinary approach. In all cases, you'll need support from within your organisation that will help you to put your learning from the programme into action.

The MLA London Exchange Programme for businesses, museums & archives will engage participants with key questions that emerged from the Knowledge Transfer Programme:

- How can businesses benefit from better relationships with museums and archives?
- How can an archive help in business innovation and communication?
- How can cultural assets support human capital, learning and professional development and employee engagement?
- How can the past be used to develop future strategies and visions?
- How can history inform today's business values and principles?
- What role can museums and archives play in change and restructuring programmes?
- How and why can museums and archives make themselves an inviting and useful extension of the workplace?
- How and why can a museum play a role in developing the capacity of a business network?
- What technical expertise do curators and archivists contribute to effective and innovative business practice?

Curriculum

At the heart of the programme are 6 half day events convened by MLA London at different museums, archives, collections and businesses around London. Expert speakers, case studies, source materials, and the collections and places are all brought together in a structured way to generate vigorous conversation and deep learning. By the end of this shared experience participants will have:

- exposure to new places, stories, ideas, tools and techniques;
- new networks and relationships;
- the ability to think in a more creative and rounded way about what they can offer to stakeholders or ask of suppliers;
- a personal development plan;
- a short proposal to take back into their workplace;
- developed personal journalling and collecting techniques that can be applied to other projects;
- the chance to make recommendations to the MLA London Board and the London Development Agency on the potential for a regular development programme or other activities that explore and influence the wider conversations about knowledge transfer between museums, archives and business.

As well as the places and collections where we'll meet, there will be archivists and curators who will talk about their own fields of expertise and their application in a business context. We'll be drawing on and extending the narrative database that we started during the formal enquiry and introducing case studies

and evidence not just from London but from European businesses, whose use of their art collections and archives in a business context is highly inventive and woven into the business strategy; and from entities such as the New York Public Library which is key to fostering networks of creativity in New York.

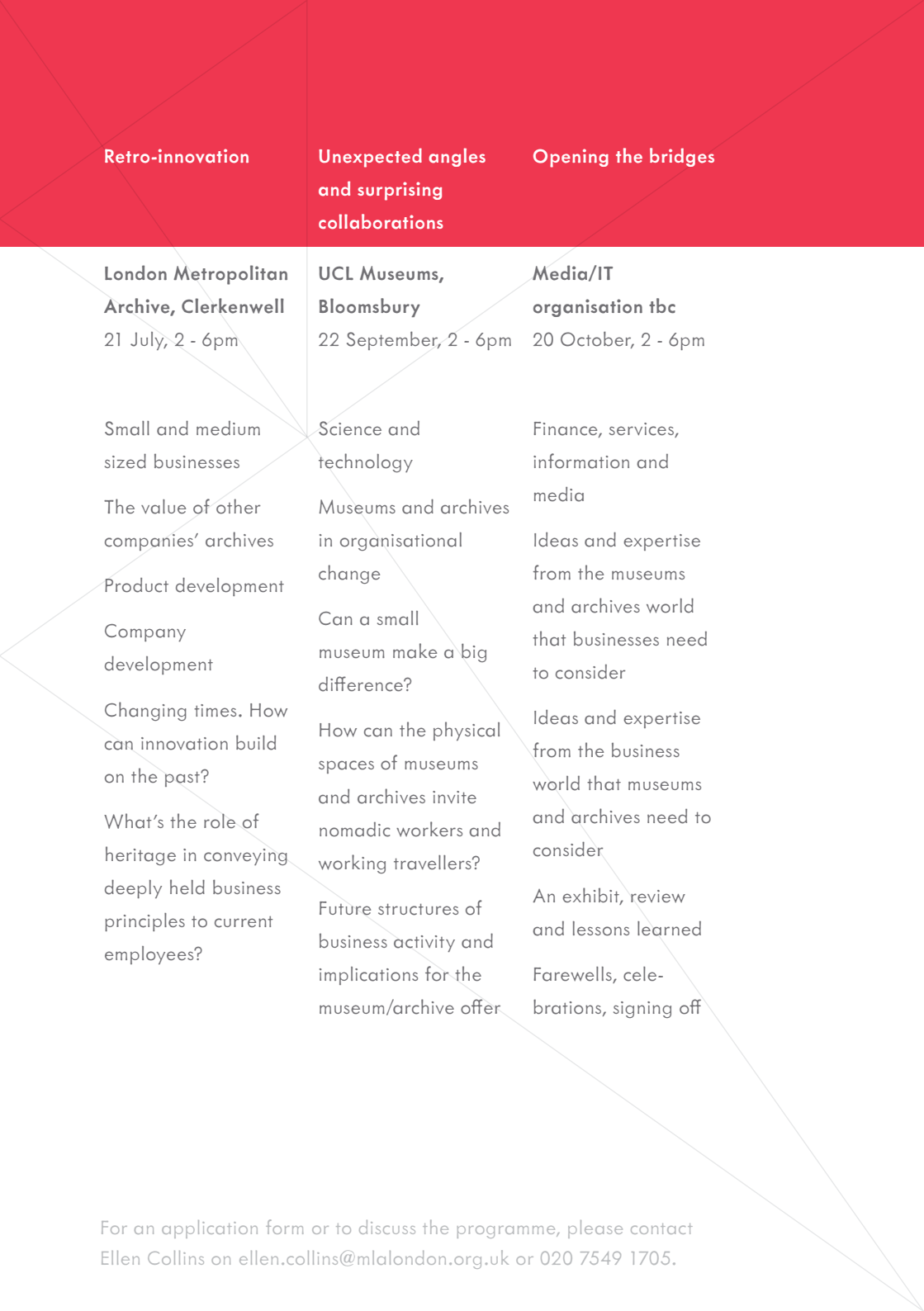
The programme will be run by MLA London with the support of an independent guide; a bridge-builder who will help to convene the events and coach and support participants, and who will evaluate the programme itself as well as the contributions and progress of the individuals taking part.

There will also be plenty of opportunity to **work and share experiences with each other** in between the organised events, with a virtual forum, other study tours and small learning sets that will help participants make the most of what's on offer and the most of **exploring London and its collections and exhibits** during this period.

"I was helping with a workplace migration for a Dutch company and found they had a great contemporary art collection. I asked for some pictures, so they sent over not just the pictures but a curator to help me hang them. When we were done with the pictures, she took a look round at the signage (ladies loo, fire extinguisher, second floor) and asked if I'd mind if she hung those too. I can't tell you what a difference her curatorial eye made to the effect of the signs."

Tim Young, move programme manager

Workshops 2009	The role of a museum in a business network	Public-facing use of an archive	The value (or not) of CSR
Proposed study themes	London Transport Museum, Covent Garden 21 April, 2 - 6pm	John Lewis, Victoria 19 May, 2 - 6pm	Foundling Museum, Brunswick Square 22 June, 2 - 6pm
	The transport sector	The retail sector	Corporate philanthropy and philanthro-capitalism
	Active stakeholder management	Fashion and textiles	
	Fieldbooks and sketchbooks as professional development tools	What can archivists do to get businesses to make the most of their resources?	Employee engagement, development and incentive through better application of cultural resources
	Self assessment indicator for establishing baseline and monitoring	Building the archive into the fabric of place and product	The role of objects, images and place in inspiration, imagination and identity
		The role of heritage and history in future vision and strategy	Curating the workplace
	“We use our archives to confirm what we’re doing now, not predict what’s going to come next – but we could. All our shops had wooden floors in the 1930s, then the carpet went down in the 1970s. Now, we’re back to wooden floors. It’s the same with food halls – they used to be central, then they disappeared, and now they’re back. We could be using our archives much more efficiently.” Business archivist		



Retro-innovation

London Metropolitan Archive, Clerkenwell

21 July, 2 - 6pm

Small and medium
sized businesses

The value of other
companies' archives

Product development

Company
development

Changing times. How
can innovation build
on the past?

What's the role of
heritage in conveying
deeply held business
principles to current
employees?

Unexpected angles and surprising collaborations

UCL Museums, Bloomsbury

22 September, 2 - 6pm

Science and
technology

Museums and archives
in organisational
change

Can a small
museum make a big
difference?

How can the physical
spaces of museums
and archives invite
nomadic workers and
working travellers?

Future structures of
business activity and
implications for the
museum/archive offer

Opening the bridges

Media/IT organisation tbc

20 October, 2 - 6pm

Finance, services,
information and
media

Ideas and expertise
from the museums
and archives world
that businesses need
to consider

Ideas and expertise
from the business
world that museums
and archives need to
consider

An exhibit, review
and lessons learned

Farewells, cele-
brations, signing off

For an application form or to discuss the programme, please contact
Ellen Collins on ellen.collins@mlalondon.org.uk or 020 7549 1705.

"The LDA for some time has been proactively looking to unlock the rich resources within other parts of the knowledge base in London. This initiative with the MLA sector has been a real eye opener: not only is it encouraging businesses to innovate, but it is also helping business to see new ways to communicate and engage with their staff."

Judith Rosser Davies, London Development Agency

Visit the the Knowledge Transfer Programme, download its report and join the discussion at mla.sparknow.net

MLA London is the strategic development agency for museums, libraries and archives in London. www.mlalondon.org.uk

The London Development Agency aims to improve the quality of life for all Londoners - working to create jobs, develop skills and promote economic growth. www.lda.gov.uk



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