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Making the case for cataloguing

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My experience

1999
• £96k NOF

2004
• £45k HLF

2005
• £243k HLF/RMBC

2013
• Permanent Assistant Archivist post created
• £35k NCGS
• £1,964mill HLF/UoH
The challenge

Uncatalogued collections

Demand

Reduced resources

Competition for attention
The essentials

Identify the backlog

Documentation procedures

Collections mgmt policy
Prioritising the backlog

- “value”
- status
- Conservation/preservation
- processing
Now what?

- Cataloguing is a process, with a product but
- Funders want outcomes: so what?

what will people be able to do that they couldn’t do before?

Why this? Why us? Why now? Why do it?
Business case (very generic)

Issue
• What is it?!

Solution
• How can we take advantage of the opportunity/address the problem?

Approach
• Viable options – including Do Nothing. Costs of each option.

Risks
• What are the risks associated with each option?
• What are the risks of doing nothing?

Value
• What’s the value of each option?
“Social” outcomes

- Greater use of “community assets”

**Outcomes for individuals**
With our investment, people will have:
- learnt about heritage (weighted for all grants);
- developed skills (weighted for grants over £100,000);
- changed their attitudes and/or behaviour;
- had an enjoyable experience;
- volunteered time.

**Outcomes for communities/society**
With our investment:
- environmental impacts will be reduced (weighted for grants over £100,000);
- more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage (weighted for grants over £100,000);
- organisations will be more resilient;
- local economies will be boosted;
- local areas/communities will be a better place to live, work or visit.
Organisational outcomes

- Strategic fit
- Invest to save
- Risk management
- Income generation?
## Is it for you?

**Mission**
- Do you need the funding to deliver your mission?
- Is your mission aligned with funders’ priorities?
- Is there buy-in within your organisation (strategic & operational levels)?

**Capacity**
- Do you have the resources to pursue the opportunity?
- If successful do you have the capacity to deliver?
- Do you have a clear model for delivery, including unit costs?

**The Opportunity**
- Do you have access to funders?
- Do you meet their criteria?
- Can you answer the “why us, why now, so what” questions?

**Chances of success**
- Do you need partner(s)? – can you find them?
- Can you evidence your outcomes in the way funders expect?
- Do you add value?
Top tips

• Be realistic about capacity
• Be bold!
• Use the language of social outcomes
• Provide evidence
• Form relationships