

***A Stronger Future: Developing the Silk Heritage Trust's vision for culture and heritage in Macclesfield***

**Funding Application to Macclesfield Town Council  
November 2023**

1. The Silk Heritage Trust

Heritage Centre, Roe Street, Macclesfield, SK11 6UT

Registered charity number - Charity Number 519521 | Registered Company number 02182687

**2. What you want to deliver**

*A Stronger Future: Developing the Silk Heritage Trust's vision for culture and heritage in Macclesfield* – a 3-year development programme that will transform the cultural offer in the town and secure the Trust's future.

This phase of the development programme builds on what we have already achieved by establishing plans and initial costings for a reimagined Heritage Centre; and creating an overall vision for the Silk Museum & Paradise Mill as a single, unified heritage offer.

It moves the Trust forward in:

- achieving substantial fundraising towards capital development and building improvements, as well as ambitious engagement projects
- making our buildings accessible to all
- reducing the environmental impact and energy consumption in our buildings
- establishing strong local partnerships and buy-in to our vision with key organisations, communities, and stakeholders
- putting local people and local voices at the heart of engagement of the stories we tell of Macclesfield's heritage
- strengthening its financial resilience
- raising our profile, increasing audiences and participation in our work.

By the end of this 3-year programme the Trust will be in the strongest position to make the case to Lottery funders for investment between £5-8m that will deliver our capital plans.

The development of the Trust's vision for these important buildings will ultimately make an important contribution to the recovery and regeneration of the town - creating improved and expanded cultural spaces and programmes for residents.

**3. The geographical area the activity / service will take place.**

*A Stronger Future* delivers across the town, serving the community, particularly through transforming the provision of heritage services and creative activities and opportunities for local people, underserved communities, schools, and local creatives.

The Silk Heritage Trust is Macclesfield's only culture and heritage service, delivering programmes and engagement across three heritage sites: Old Sunday School, Silk Museum & Paradise Mill. The Trust is responsible for:

**The Heritage Centre** – an impressive 19th century listed building, home for Cinemac, the only cinema in the area; that is also a centre for social enterprise, working with partner organisations providing creative learning for disabled and clinically vulnerable adults and neuro-diverse young people; offering digital training space for artists.

**The Silk Museum/Paradise Mill** - Europe's largest collection of Jacquard silk handlooms in original setting, a Designated Collection and the only Silk Museum in Northern England; telling the story of a unique town shaped by a remarkable industry; and housing one of the largest collections of Textiles and Pattern Books in the North. The Museum & Mill deliver engagement programmes for schools, families, vulnerable young people, and older people experiencing isolation; and provides volunteering opportunities, work experience, training and jobs for local people.

**4. How long will the project/ service last?**

Funding is requested for the financial years 2023-24; 2024-25; and 2025-26

*A Stronger Future* will secure the long-term survival and development of the Trust's venues.

**5. How it fits with the Macclesfield Town Council Strategy**

*A Stronger Future: Developing the Silk Heritage Trust's vision for culture and heritage in Macclesfield* will make a significant contribution to the Town Council's vision, by:

- supporting community empowerment
- driving Macclesfield forward as a centre for heritage and cultural tourism
- supporting inclusive services
- improving the cultural and heritage experience for residents and visitors to Macclesfield
- increasing the environmental sustainability of the Trust's buildings and services

In particular it contributes to Local Service Delivery, through strengthening delivery of Macclesfield's heritage and cultural assets for the positive development of the town.

The Trust's purpose is to inspire engagement with Macclesfield's rich and diverse history amongst local people and visitors; and to encourage pride of place. The local community has long valued our work preserving heritage, delivering culture and creative engagement with unique heritage experiences in listed buildings.

**Context – where are we now?**

The Trust was able to secure substantial public grants to survive during the pandemic and emerged from this period in a strong position – with a new business model for the Heritage Centre, improved occupancy of the Centre's premises by social and cultural enterprises. During this period the Trust started to develop a powerful new vision and raised £750k in grants to protect Macclesfield's heritage buildings. The Trust now has a powerful direction and vision to achieve long-term sustainability and transform the cultural and heritage offer for Macclesfield residents as well as attracting visitors to the town.

Over the last five years the Trust has played an increasingly active role in the Town – as a creative partner for numerous town-wide events and celebrations, including the town-wide celebration of Charles Tunnicliffe; as part of the Cultural Forum; and as a member of the Town Centre Recovery Working Group.

The Museum has an effective and committed team that works to broaden connections with underserved audiences – particularly vulnerable people, neuro-diverse young people, older people experiencing isolation. We have expanded our work with local schools through visits, outreach projects, work experience and volunteering; and are currently piloting a partnership with Ash Grove Primary School to connect with both parents and pupils. We are responding to the long-term impact of the pandemic on the social confidence of younger children through a new offer for Early Years.

The Director has also worked closely with the Chair and Board, including Councillor representation from the Town Council and Cheshire East Council, to strengthen governance. This has included creating a Programme Board for robust project management.

The Trust now urgently needs support to move forward on the next phase of our ambitious strategy for our venues otherwise our plans are in danger of stalling at this critical time.

Support from the Town Council will be an important message to stakeholders that there is strategic commitment and buy-in to the Trust's work. It will also help secure further public capital and revenue investment from trusts and foundations, as well as to develop individual giving from local philanthropy and sponsorship.

### **Current Position – Exceptional Circumstances**

The Trust is at an exceptionally challenging point and is requesting funding from the Town Council to ensure that it can strengthen resilience over the next three years. This is a critical time for the organisation to take forward its new stronger vision for the future.

The Trust has been hit hard by the cost-of-living crisis and has seen energy costs rise dramatically. Paradise Mill has been closed for 8 months and we have lost a vital income stream. The ongoing impact of the pandemic has meant that visitors have been slow to return to the Museum; we have seen a significant reduction in group visits, coach parties and international visitors, this has further weakened income streams as there has been decreased visitor spend. Income from Cinemac has been hit hardest due to global problems in the film industry and distribution – and this effects the business model for the whole Trust.

This is an exceptional time for the Trust – we recognise that we need time-limited support to recover resilience and take forward plans. There is a strong possibility that the Trust's progress will be put at risk and become a casualty of this situation – which in turn will significantly set back our ambitions for the town. Without Town Council funding our progress will stall:

- in developing the Heritage Centre as a crucial part of the town centre's economic and cultural life.
- in developing the Silk Museum & Paradise Mill as an outstanding creative and heritage attraction for local people

It is important to recognise The Silk Heritage Trust's complex governance as it combines two linked charitable bodies – The Heritage Centre Trust and the Silk Heritage Trust. The Heritage Centre Trust is an endowed trust and Charities Commission regulations mean that its endowed reserves have to be kept separate to protect this historic asset.

### **Funding from other sources**

The Trust has exhausted sources of external funding from trusts and foundations. Public funding is an increasingly competitive environment, and we urgently need to create match funding that is now essential for future grants. We have been in receipt of standstill funding from Cheshire East for the last 5-years. Income generation from our Friends Scheme is diminishing as membership shrinks. We are seeking a strengthened relationship and support from the Town Council for a time-limited period.

#### **6. How many people you will help?**

*A Stronger Future: Developing the Silk Heritage Trust's vision for culture and heritage in Macclesfield* will help take forward our sites as hubs of creativity and heritage, unique to Macclesfield, so that we can continue to employ a museum staff team of 20 part-time staff including creative facilitators – primarily local residents; plus, over 35 museum volunteers.

It will help us rebuild annual audiences to pre-Covid levels and reach

70,000 for film and performance events

35,480 museum visitors

Educational, wellbeing & creative activities for 1225 families, 2500 school children, 100 groups and 1480 individuals.

#### **7. Who will benefit?**

*A Stronger Future: Developing the Silk Heritage Trust's vision for culture and heritage in Macclesfield* will ensure organisational development, increased resilience, and income generation, this will benefit: -

- Local audiences – through a reimagined Heritage Centre – through an expanded auditorium facility which will transform the entertainment and hospitality offer and create a landmark, accessible venue for the town.
- Local businesses – through secondary spend from a strengthened night-time economy, plus visitors attracted to the town by an expanded high-profile heritage offer and entertainment venue.
- Local audiences – through dynamic, expanded creative engagement with their heritage – celebrating stories of local people and experiences, particularly focussing on celebrating the contribution of women to Macclesfield's heritage through the *Women's Town* project; and, through a potential partnership with the Silk Men Supporters Trust to tell the story of football in Macclesfield.
- Local communities through ongoing delivery of social enterprises Scoop & Scales and the New Macclesfield Art School
- Underserved communities – through creative and well-being partnerships with organisations including SUSO, Pinc College, Just Drop In! Silver Rainbows
- Local schools – through delivery of learning programmes for Primary and Secondary pupils
- Early Years and Families – through new opportunities for creative play
- People with visual impairment and their families – through an expanded partnership with East Cheshire Eye Society, working towards their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Local young people and volunteers – through wide-ranging skills development and training opportunities that address career pathways.

#### **8. How will you monitor the service/project to show impact and value for money?**

Project Monitoring

The Chair and Trustees will have ultimate responsibility for overseeing the project and together have an array of relevant experience. The Trust has a track record of 30+ years of delivering externally funded projects supported by Cheshire East Council, John Ellerman Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Architectural Heritage Fund, Historic England, and the Headley Trust.

The Chair, Vice Chair and seven Trustees include Councillors from Cheshire East Council and the Town Council, plus the Trust's accountant. Trustees meet 4 times a year and are steered by the Project Board to make high level strategic decisions. The Trust will invite local Council representation on to the Silk Heritage Board.

The Project Board is formed of 3 Trustees and oversees progress on large-scale, externally funded projects led by the Director and delivered by the Museum team. This Project Board meets monthly to review reports from and provide guidance to the Director and submits quarterly reports to the full Trustee Board.

The Trust’s Development sub-group will monitor the Director’s progress in delivering an ambitious fundraising strategy securing grants from Arts Council England, National Heritage Lottery Fund, trusts and foundations, plus individual giving, that build the Trust’s future sustainability.

The Project Board will submit monthly or quarterly reports to the Council as required.

**Project Impact**

The Project moves the Trust forward in:

- achieving substantial fundraising towards capital development and building improvements, as well as ambitious engagement projects – **fundraising target £396,000**
- making our buildings accessible to all – **essential equipment acquired and staff upskilled.**
- reducing the environmental impact and energy consumption in our buildings –**low energy lighting installed; detailed planning for energy efficiency improvements.**
- establishing strong local partnerships and buy-in with key organisations, communities, and stakeholders –**powerful evidence of need with plans defined by local need.**
- putting local people and local voices at the heart of engagement of the stories we tell of Macclesfield’s heritage – **compelling and inclusive engagement projects and evaluation.**
- strengthening its financial resilience - **robust contractual relationships with Heritage Centre partners to secure income streams**
- raising our profile, increasing audiences and participation in our work – **rebuilding audiences to pre-pandemic levels**

**Project value for money**

The Project delivers value for money through:

‘Return on investment’ - £60,000 grant over 3-years is expected to yield grants and individual giving up to £390k.

Efficiency – ensuring that our contractual relationships with Heritage Centre partners are robust and fit for the future, to secure income streams.

Effectiveness – working with sector experts to lead ambitious fundraising, business modelling and partnership development.

The Trust has already gone through extensive efficiencies.

**A detailed budget**

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>Totals</b>
1. Fundraising support - freelance fees to develop and deliver ambitious fundraising from public and private sources; including extensive public and stakeholder consultation and evaluation	5000	5000	8500	<b>18500</b>
2. Project management support - freelance fees to oversee the Heritage Centre, Silk Museum & Paradise Mill development projects	6000	6000	8500	<b>20500</b>

3. Legal fees - to support review of contractual relationships with Heritage Centre partners to ensure they are fit for purpose for future development plans	2000	2000		<b>4000</b>
4. Business expertise to review the Heritage Centre business model to ensure that the Auditorium development maximises income	3000	3000	1000	<b>7000</b>
5. Improving disabled access for the Heritage Centre, Silk Museum & Paradise Mill through new equipment and staff training	3000	2000	2000	<b>7000</b>
6. Essential updated Condition survey for the Silk Museum as a prerequisite for capital development fundraising	4000	4000		<b>8000</b>
7. Marketing expertise to support audience development for the Heritage Centre, Silk Museum & Paradise Mill	2000	3000	2000	<b>7000</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>25000</b>	<b>25000</b>	<b>20000</b>	<b>70000</b>
<b>Income - secured match funding</b>				
Project management support - freelance fees for Heritage Centre development	3000	3000		<b>6000</b>
Business planning support	1000	1000		<b>2000</b>
Marketing support	1000	1000		<b>2000</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5000</b>	<b>5000</b>	0	<b>10000</b>
<b>Request from Macclesfield Town Council</b>	<b>20000</b>	<b>20000</b>	<b>20000</b>	<b>60000</b>

**Notes**

1. Fundraising support – crucial freelance support to drive the Trust’s fundraising plans. This additional capacity will focus on delivering a series of major grants – including the National Heritage Lottery Fund; Arts Council England; Headley Trust; Pilgrim Trust. It will also enable the Trust to transform individual giving and philanthropy through cultivation campaigns and by working in partnership with other local charities Just Drop In!, YouthFed, East Cheshire Eye Society and the Friends of Macclesfield Silk Heritage.  
Funds raised through this work will support a range of public engagement projects and progress towards ambitious capital development.

<b>Income targets (unconfirmed)</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Trust, foundations &amp; public bodies</b>	<b>8000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>358,000</b>
<b>Individual giving</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>38,000</b>

2. Project management support - freelance fees to oversee externally funded projects and partnerships across the Trust that extend its reach and impact with underserved communities

and local groups, to ensure that the Museum & Mill offer is dynamic, relevant and reflects the needs and interests of local people.

3. Legal fees - to support review of contractual relationships with Heritage Centre partners. There is an urgent need for this work to ensure they are fit for purpose for future development plans.
4. Business expertise to review the Heritage Centre business model. There is an urgent need for this work to ensure that Auditorium development proposals maximise income, reflect market and audience demand.
5. Improving disabled access for the Heritage Centre, Silk Museum & Paradise Mill through new equipment and staff training. Consultation has been carried out with the Disability Information Bureau and East Cheshire Eye Society and they have identified essential equipment and staff training that is required to improve access to our buildings.
6. Essential updated Condition and conservation survey for the Silk Museum. This is a prerequisite for capital development fundraising – the Museum is a complex building which requires significant physical repair work, particularly for the roof. We have been unsuccessful to date in securing public funding for repairs and renewals as we have no updated Condition and conservation survey.
7. Marketing expertise to support audience development for the Heritage Centre, Silk Museum & Paradise Mill – freelance fees to help us build profile and audiences for our programmes. This is an essential part of rebuilding income streams as well as connecting with local people.

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