The V&A is delighted to announce that it has been awarded a first-round pass for an Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant of £4,999,000 towards the Museum’s £42 million Exhibition Road Project.

The V&A’s Exhibition Road development will create a new purpose-built underground gallery for the Museum’s internationally renowned exhibitions, a magnificent courtyard space and a new entrance from the recently landscaped Exhibition Road on the west side of the Museum.

The V&A has already secured over £30 million towards the £42 million total from donations by The Monument Trust; The Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation; The Headley Trust; The Garfield Weston Foundation and other donors. The HLF grant would mean that the project has nearly 84% of its funding in place, with just over £7 million to raise before opening in 2017.

Martin Roth, V&A Director, said: “We are delighted to have been given this support from HLF for the Exhibition Road Project. It is an essential development for the future of the V&A which will transform the way we present our major exhibitions as well as how we welcome our increasing number of visitors. This grant would take us a large step towards achieving the £42 million needed to deliver the project and we are all working hard to secure a second round pass.”

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF London, said: “This is a visionary project which will create an open courtyard that has up until now been hidden from public view, a world-class exhibition space and a much-needed new entrance on Exhibition Road. We were impressed by the Museum’s careful phasing of a number of innovative ideas and, whilst this is only the first step in securing a full grant, we are pleased to be green light these initial plans.”

The Exhibition Road scheme, designed by AL_A, will transform a previously inaccessible back-of-house space into an open courtyard for installations, events and a café, and will create a new relationship between the heart of the V&A and the rest of the reinvigorated cultural quarter known as ‘Albertopolis’. The V&A is currently enjoying more visitors than ever before and the project is vital to sustain increasing audience numbers.

The large, uninterrupted major exhibition space will allow the V&A significantly to improve the way it designs and presents its world class exhibition programme. The
The project will also reveal the beautiful Victorian facades on the west side of the V&A's Grade 1 listed buildings which have been restored to their former glory but never before been on public view.

AL_A won the international competition to design the project in March 2011 and have since been progressing the design. Planning permission was awarded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in July 2012. Enabling work to divert services within the site was completed in June. The next phase of work is temporarily to remove the Aston Webb screen to allow access for building work. The main construction work is due to start in early 2014 and complete by the end of 2016, opening to the public in 2017.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

A first-round pass means the project meets HLF criteria for funding and HLF believes the project has potential to deliver high-quality benefits and value for Lottery money. The application was in competition with other supportable projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of outline proposals. Having been awarded a first-round pass, the project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award. On occasion, an applicant with a first-round pass will also be awarded development funding towards the development of their scheme.

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities across the UK and help build a resilient heritage economy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported almost 35,000 projects with more than £5.5bn across the UK. www.hlf.org.uk. For more information please contact Katie Owen, HLF Press Office, on 020 7591 6036/07973 613820.

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