



Curriculum Vitae

Sophia is a professional with extensive experience across the heritage and cultural sectors including work with national sector bodies, local authority services, independent and volunteer run trusts.

She is a clear strategic thinker with excellent analytical, planning and communication skills. Coupled with a pragmatic and flexible approach, she is focused on getting the best results for each project, with an eye on long term sustainability and organizational resilience. With a thorough understanding of sector good practice and standards, and wide knowledge of comparator projects gained from over 25 years in the heritage sector, she enjoys mentoring organisations to achieve the best quality outcomes from their projects. She is skilled at supporting organisations in project development with a focus on public engagement, business planning, activity and interpretation planning.

Since establishing CCN in 2007 Sophia has also worked on national research & evaluation projects for The National Archives, ACE, MLA and HLF. Prior to that she worked at the Museum of London, regional support agencies and abroad. She is currently a member of the National Trust London and SE Advisory Board including the fundraising sub group and Cliveden visitor infrastructure project.

She has been an expert advisor and mentor for the Heritage Fund for over 20 years and is regularly commissioned to support major capital and service development projects, including Kew Gardens Temperate House (£34.3m), V&A Exhibition Road (£33.4m), National Portrait Gallery Transformation (£34m), Chelmsford Museum (£2.1m). As a consultant she also enjoys working with a range of heritage, including LA, independent and community organisations such as Royal West Academy, Highdown Gardens, Providence Chapel, Fulham Palace.

“...the combined experience, creativity and professionalism has assisted in shaping our project and generated high quality documents that will guide the future delivery of our work’.
HLF R1-2 development support, Gods House Tower, Southampton

Selected Projects

Activity Planning. Since 2007 Sophia has produced over 20 Activity Plans and 10 Interpretation Plans including Museum of English Rural Life; Llanthony Secunda Priory; Oxford House; Highdown Gardens, Fulham Palace, Quarr Abbey, William Morris Society.

Heritage Lottery Fund. Research and evaluation for the Policy and Regional teams including Review of Development Service (2015), Oral History Review (2012); BAME & Social Priority Research (2011); Collecting Cultures (2009-11).

Royal College of Music ‘More Music’ new museum Activity & Business planning and successful HLF R2 application support (2016).

Gloucestershire Archives capital and service redevelopment project, R1 and R2 consultancy support including Activity Plan (2014-15).

Fulham Palace Trust. Trustee visioning & strategic planning (2014); and Activity, Business and Interpretation planning for successful HLF R2 capital & activity bid (2016).

Resilient Heritage. Support for governance and business planning for Severndroog Castle, New Forest Centre, Cowper and Newton Museum.

Canal and River Trust. Feasibility study for investment options for Gloucester Docks and Ellesmere Port museums (2016).

Natural History Museum. Gardens and biodiversity project development and HLF Heritage Grant consultancy support (2018).

Evaluation Studies. TNA, Mary Rose Trust, Boleh Trust, Rochester Cathedral.

Qualifications and membership

MA (Cantab) Archaeology

MA Museum Studies (Distinction) University of Leicester

Associate Member of Museums Association

Association of Independent Museums

Charities Aid Foundation (Associate Consultant, fundraising & business planning)

Trustee Boleh Trust

Summary of project and Heritage Fund experience and knowledge

I regularly support clients and grantees in project development work which means I have an excellent understanding of the realities of planning effectively for major heritage projects and the potential issues and risks involved. Work includes overall strategic advice and support in the planning of capital and service development schemes, translation of Heritage Fund requirements, and specific strong competencies in governance, business, public engagement, activity planning and interpretation. This experience is reflected in the range of project on which I work, as well as the number and type of commissions I regularly receive from the Heritage Fund. For them I act as a consultant providing strategic expert advice and support to applicants during the development, delivery and execution of their projects across a range of heritage sites, major museums, historic mansions and parks, archives including sound and film, and smaller community schemes.

I have recently been appointed to advise the National Portrait Gallery Transformation project. In this role I support overall strategic development, activity and interpretative planning – working closely with the project team to ensure the organisational, operational and delivery aspects remain properly aligned and integrated with capital plans. I have been closely involved with a number of these schemes over several years and this has given me a unique insight into critical success factors and lessons that can be learnt from other projects and apply this for the benefit of other clients. This provides an enhanced service as my approach is based on project realities and the ability to ‘design out’ some potential issues for the applicant at an early stage.

Testimonials

Temperate House Precinct Project, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (£34.3m) Mentoring: 2013-present

During the course of this large and at times complex project, Sophia provided expert advice and guidance to the project group. The insights that she was able to draw from her wider experience of best practice in projects in the heritage and cultural sector were very valuable, and her perspectives and informed questions certainly similarly added quality to the project and ensured that we were able to deliver the best possible outcomes.

Through our on-site meetings and ancillary communications, we found Sophia to be very easy to work with, and her attitude was always constructive and positive. She demonstrated a commitment to achievement of the highest quality results from the project, and ensured that we, as a project team, were consistent and effective in our aim of achieving our own objectives from the project.

I would highly recommend Sophia for this type of role into the future. I am sure that the Temperate House project would not have been such an outstanding success, particularly in terms of achieving our step-change in interpretation and community engagement, without her guidance and mentorship. Richard Barley, Project SRO and Director of Horticulture, Learning and Operations, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

St Mary's, Walthamstow 'A creative church for a creative community' Development support (2019- present)

"I wanted to say an enormous thank for all you have done. You have been so clear, efficient, supportive and encouraging and we have felt so thankful to have had your experience and vision on this project. We feel very aware that we would not be where we are now without your generous commitment to our project. Thank you so much'. Rev Vanessa Conant, Team Rector, St Mary's & Parish of Walthamstow.

"CCN have been fantastic."

Heather Forbes, Head of Information Management and Archives, Gloucestershire County Council (HLF Round 1, Round 2 and evaluation support)