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# The Devon and Exeter Institution

For immediate publication

**The Devon and Exeter Institution secures National Lottery investment for its project *The Next Chapter.***

The Devon and Exeter Institution, an independent library and educational charity in the heart of Exeter, has received initial support\* and a development grant of £192,000 which will fund preparatory work to secure a further £808,000 in funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund; a total grant of one million pounds.

The project will take place over the next three years and will:

* create an enhanced welcome area, better access and upgraded facilities
* open-up all four front rooms and the garden space for reading and events
* offer an enhanced programme of activities for all ages and abilities, including events for UNESCO City of Literature
* support essential conservation work, a collection review and the development of a long-term research strategy

*"The Next Chapter* project will address the way we use space in the building; will upgrade our service areas and further develop and disseminate our academic knowledge of the collection and our capacity to enhance well-being.  What is central to our project is the creative drive to engage with a wider range of people as our charitable objects demand and as our founders intended in 1813.

We are absolutely delighted to receive National Lottery investment which will support us to deliver outstanding public education, essential collection care and ensure the preservation of 7 Cathedral Close for future generations"

Said Emma Dunn, Director of Programme and Projects at the DEI

***Notes to Editors***

**About the Devon and Exeter Institution**

The Devon and Exeter Institution is a flourishing independent library and educational charity which is open to new members of all ages. Our founders established the Institution in 1813, in order to promote *‘the general diffusion of Science, Literature and the Arts, and for illustrating the Natural and Civil History of the county of Devon and the History of the City of Exeter'.*

This resolution remains at the centre of our strategy to this day.

The Institution occupies an historic building in the heart of the City. The Medieval property was originally owned by the Cathedral. It was inherited by the Courtenay family in the 17th Century and used as a town house for over 150 years. In 1813, ‘200 Gentlemen of the City’ took ownership of 7 Cathedral Close and adapted the double-courtyard layout to create two elegant Georgian rooms, These rooms functioned as both library and a museum; the museum objects were later donated to form the foundation collection of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in 1868.

Today, our two galleried libraries hold a unique historical book collection and provide a place for research and reading, educational activities, cultural events, and lectures. Our events programme is inspired by our collection of books, maps, prints, drawings and our fine and decorative art collection.

The DEI has been an Educational Charity since 1989 and enjoys a close working relationship with the University of Exeter and other heritage sites across the city. We offer meeting rooms overlooking the Cathedral and our libraries are available for cultural activities and business hire.

The Institution is cherished by members for its calm and peaceful atmosphere in the heart of the city and its ability to bring a wide range of people together. Ordinarily, we are open for public tours every Wednesday afternoon from 1pm – 4pm, much to the delight of all our visitors but remain closed until further notice at the present time.

The DEI is a strong-knitted community and even during the current global pandemic, we continue to look out for each other. The staff and trustees are certain that we will emerge from this even more resilient and with a deeper appreciation for the Institution and the role it plays in our lives.

**About the National Lottery Heritage Fund**

\*National Lottery Heritage Fund grant applications over £250,000 are assessed in two rounds. The ‘Next Chapter’ project has initially been granted round one development funding of £192,000 by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, allowing it to progress with its plans. Detailed proposals are then considered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund at second round, where a final decision is made on the full funding award of £808,000.

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **Inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK’s heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future. [www.heritagefund.org.uk](http://www.heritagefund.org.uk).

**Further information**

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