

News release



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Museum of Natural History named 'Best of the Best' at Museums and Heritage Awards for Excellence

Oxford University Museum of Natural History has been named the Best of the Best in the UK at the prestigious Museums + Heritage Awards for Excellence 2016 yesterday (18 May). The top accolade followed the Museum's win earlier in the evening in the Project on a Limited Budget category for its Dodo Roadshow project.

The Dodo Roadshow was a tip-to-tip trip across Britain in June 2015 with one of natural history's most iconic specimens, the Oxford Dodo. In a celebration of museums and collections across the country, the Dodo and its escorts visited 24 museums and galleries – from Land's End to John O'Groats – in just eight days and on an extremely small budget.

The winners and runners-up in each of the hard-fought categories were announced by comedian and TV personality Marcus Brigstocke at the Historic State Rooms of 8 Northumberland Avenue in central London.

"To take the Best of the Best award at the end of the night was a huge thrill and surprise, especially against such stiff competition. These prizes reward an astonishing period of creativity and hard work since our museum re-opened in 2014 and I am very proud of everyone involved," says Professor Paul Smith, director of the Museum of Natural History.

On awarding the accolade for the Project on a Limited Budget, Marcus Brigstocke said: "A clever, fun and engaging idea, completed in a very short period of time, which celebrated new conversations and partnerships across the country."

He added on awarding the Best of the Best Award: "This special judges' nomination award - the Best of the Best - recognises outstanding achievement it goes to a museum which is brand stretching, risk taking and creative."

Now celebrating its fourteenth year, the annual Awards, organised by the sector's largest event, The Museums + Heritage Show, recognise the innovators and leaders of the UK and Europe's diverse museums, galleries and visitor attractions.

The Awards are judged by a panel of sector experts including: Dr Diana Owen, Director, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; Maggie Appleton MBE, Chief Executive Officer, Royal Air Force Museum; Stephen



Duncan, Director of Commercial and Tourism, Historic Scotland; Bernard Donoghue, Director, ALVA; Diane Lees CBE, Director General, Imperial War Museums; Dr Matthew Tanner MBE, Chief Executive of the ss Great Britain Trust and Sam Mullins, Director, London Transport Museum.

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Notes to editors

About the Museum of Natural History

Founded in 1860 as the centre for scientific study at the University of Oxford, the Museum of Natural History now holds the University's internationally significant collections of entomological, geological and zoological specimens. Housed in a stunning Pre-Raphaelite-inspired example of neo-Gothic architecture, the Museum's growing collections underpin a broad programme of natural environment research, teaching and public engagement.

www.oum.ox.ac.uk

www.morethanadodo.com

About the Museum + Heritage Awards

The Museums + Heritage Awards were launched in 2003 by the organisers of The Museums + Heritage Show, the sector's biggest trade event for museum and heritage/cultural visitor attraction professionals. The Museums + Heritage Show is an annual event and took place at Olympia Exhibition Centre, London on 18th and 19th May 2016. For more information about the Awards or the Show and a full list of Winners and Highly Commended attractions, please visit www.museumsandheritage.com or call 01905 724734