

CMS 156943/DC

Baroness Blackstone  
Chair  
British Library  
96 Euston Road  
LONDON  
NW1 2DB



department for  
culture, media  
and sport



*host government  
department*

20 October 2010

Dear Baroness Blackstone

## **2010 SPENDING REVIEW**

I am writing to inform you about the outcome of the 2010 Spending Review for my Department. DCMS's overall budget will reduce by 25% by 2014-15 which comprises a 24% reduction to the resource budget and a 32% reduction to the capital budget. Within this, we have been able to focus our resources to protect the core frontline services that the British Library provides by limiting cuts to resource funding to 15% in real terms.

This letter sets out the funding settlement for the British Library covering the financial years 2011-12 to 2014-15. I am setting out these high level budget allocations now to give you the best opportunity to plan for what will be a very challenging four year period. This letter will be followed by a more detailed funding agreement that will include full details of the settlement over four years, and the Government's requirements to support the transparency agenda.

My overall approach to the Spending Review has been to tackle the challenge in a strategic way, based on four principles:

- cutting waste and inefficiency, stopping lower priority projects and rethinking the role of the state in the sectors in which we operate;
- protecting for the long term our unique cultural, heritage and sporting assets;

- delivering a safe and successful Olympics in 2012; and
- contributing to the Government's growth agenda by supporting growth in our sectors and in the wider economy.

The resource grant in aid budget for your organisation will be cut by 15% in real terms by 2014-15. Within this settlement I expect –

- the world-class collections and front-line services of the British Library to be protected;
- that free entry to the permanent collections of the British Library will continue to be available;
- that the British Library will continue to work in partnership to maintain its status as a world class institution;
- that the British Library will pursue ways to increase its self-generated income.

I also look forward to the contribution that the British Library will make to the Cultural Olympiad, which will showcase the best of our cultural offer to the world.

I have not allocated specific funding for the World Collections Programme, but William Hague and I would like to see that collaboration and your wider international work continue to develop over the next four years. Government's priorities will be the emerging powers of China, India, Brazil, the Gulf States, Russia and Japan, and we would welcome your active engagement in those countries and others with a resonance for your collections and audiences, working in close partnership with Government, the British Council and UKTI. We hope there will be opportunities to unlock additional funding from the private sector to support those activities.

I recognise the important role that philanthropy and corporate support already play in your financial planning and operations. The Government will play its part in incentivising private sector support for culture over the next four years, and I expect you to enhance further your own fundraising capacity through cultivation of a broad range of donors, business supporters, trusts and foundations. Over time, I hope that legacies and endowments will increasingly help to reinforce the financial resilience of the sector, and we want to work in partnership with you to that end.

Given your role as a leading national collection, I hope you will be able to support and mentor smaller collections across the country in fundraising, just as you do in collections management, conservation and other areas.

Alongside your grant in aid budget allocations, we have secured agreement from Treasury to allow national museums and the British Library access to £143 million of reserves over the period. This is around half the total historic reserves. We will have further discussions about the arrangements for agreeing access to these reserves shortly. This is an important step towards delivering on the Coalition commitment to providing greater administrative freedoms for the British Library and the national museums and will, I hope, encourage you to work towards attracting further philanthropic donations.

If restructuring is necessary, we expect that bodies will meet those costs. Where there are genuine difficulties, you should contact DCMS to explore options that might be available.

### Budgetary control totals

The control totals against which British Library's net expenditure will be monitored and the grant in aid that DCMS will pay in each year are set out in the table below. The key controls are the first two elements of the resource budget – the near-cash spending on programmes and on administration, and the overall capital budget.

£m	Resource Budget			Total Resource (DEL) Budget	Capital Budget			Total Capital (DEL) Budget	Grant in Aid
	Programme (near-cash)	Administration (near-cash)	Ring fenced depreciation		Core capital	Grants	Projects		
2011-12	85.153	8.314	17.700	111.167	2.906		11.100	14.006	107.473
2012-13	83.575	8.164	18.700	110.439	3.047		1.500	4.547	96.286
2013-14	82.311	8.044	18.700	109.055	3.189			3.189	93.544
2014-15	82.147	7.929	19.205	109.280	3.331			3.331	93.407

The approach that I have taken in setting these allocations is to commit most of the Department's resources to the bodies that we fund, and to keep only very limited funds back at the centre. This necessarily means that I am left with very little flexibility to deal with risk, for example to meet unforeseeable changes in circumstances and priorities that will arise, particularly in the latter years of the Spending Review period. So, while these allocations set out my firm plans for the next four years, they cannot be immutable, particularly for the third and fourth years. I must ask you to build into your own plans some flexibility in the later years. My intention, of course, would be to minimize any changes to budgets, and to keep them below 5 per cent of your overall allocation in any case.

The Resource DEL Budget is split into three sub-totals. The **Administration** budget is the amount available for net expenditure on administration and management of your organisation. The reducing budget over the period reflects the priority I place on ensuring that funds are used for front-line delivery. Further information about the nature of these control totals and the flexibility between budgets can be found in **Annex A**.

## Capital

DCMS's capital budget reduction is 32%. Capital budgets are tighter than for resource spending, making decisions here more difficult. We have therefore focussed our spending on completing those major projects that are already underway and maintaining capital spending on maintenance of core cultural and sporting assets. We have also been able to provide funding for the roll out of the Coalition's commitment to high speed broadband

Your core capital budget is £12.473m over the financial years 2011-12 to 2014-15.

You are also allocated £12.6m towards the Newspaper Storage Programme over the financial years 2011-12 to 2012-13. Following previous discussions with DCMS and HMT, it will be important to agree the Final Business Case before proceeding.

## Transparency

In place of the performance frameworks that you may have been used to in the past, the British Library will now be expected to make information available to the public on a range of subjects. This will involve the formulation of an information strategy setting out what will be published and when. Further guidance about what must be included will be given in the funding agreement (which will be issued shortly) but it will incorporate a range of inputs and impact indicators.

Despite the difficult circumstances, this represents a fair settlement with safeguards to protect the cultural, heritage and sporting core. My Ministerial Team and I look forward to working with you over the next four years.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy', written in a cursive style.

**JEREMY HUNT**  
Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport

## Annex A

### Resource DEL budget

The **Depreciation** budget is operated as a one-way ring fence. This means that, after your net depreciation<sup>1</sup> and impairment charges have been set against it, any overspend must be covered by a reduction in expenditure on either the Programme or Administration budgets. Should there be an underspend against the depreciation budget however, no additional expenditure is permitted in other areas.

### Capital DEL budget

The Capital DEL budgets are also separated into three distinct control totals.

Where the British Library has a **major project**, the specific funding for this is shown separately. It is not permissible to switch funding from that project to other areas of capital expenditure without the permission of the Department. You are expected to control expenditure on the project and plan to ensure that the project conforms to the budgetary limits shown. I wish to be quite clear that any slippage in the project that requires the deferral of expenditure to a later year will only be approved if the Department's overall budget has sufficient headroom to accommodate it. If it does not, you will be expected to defer expenditure and re-phase the project to conform to the profile shown. I would encourage you to ensure that any contracts you sign or agreements that you enter into are flexible enough to accommodate this.

The second category is **core capital**. This captures all other capital expenditure and might include smaller capital projects, maintenance and replacement work. The Department will look kindly upon proposals to use the budget allocated for core capital expenditure on either increasing the value of capital grants distributed or on assisting with the re-profiling of major projects; however, you still require Departmental approval to change the nature of the expenditure.

For museums and galleries (including the British Library) that have reserves, separate arrangements will be put in place to manage the drawdown of accumulated reserves and to handle their future build up (eg from new donations).

Please remember that any project that costs (over its lifetime and including all funding streams) more than your delegated capital limit must be approved by the Investment Committee at DCMS using the approved process.

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<sup>1</sup> The depreciation charged against the DEL budget excludes depreciation on assets funded by lottery grants or donations including donations of assets.