



11 October 2012

## Prime Minister, David Cameron announces £5 million for IWM London's new First World War Galleries

The Prime Minister, David Cameron announced £5 million funding for the new First World War Galleries at IWM London today, in a speech outlining national plans to commemorate the First World War Centenary.

The new ground-breaking Galleries will open at IWM London in summer 2014, as part of a transformed museum and IWM's programme for the Centenary. The immersive and interactive galleries will draw upon the latest historical analysis of the war and will enable IWM to display more of the exceptional collections and tell the stories of those who lived, contributed, fought and died.

**The Prime Minister, David Cameron said** "The transformation of IWM London will see the museum re-opened as a centrepiece of our commemorations for the Centenary of the First World War and with it, new generations inspired by the incredible stories of courage, toil and sacrifice that have brought so many of us here over the past century.

"I have brought my children here several times and really believe in the importance of what this museum does. So I am delighted that the Government will provide a further £5 million today towards the transformation project. This project will be a vital component of Centenary commemorations and will ensure that many more parents and children come to this very special place to learn about a defining part of our history and to remember the sacrifice of all those who have given their lives for us in conflicts across the last century."

**Diane Lees, Director General of IWM said** "We are delighted by this announcement of funding for the Galleries and also the support for the First World War Centenary Partnership and the Centenary commemorations.

"The Imperial War Museum was established while the First World War was still being fought to ensure that future generations understood the causes and consequences of the war and to remember the men, women and children who played their role. Now that the First World War is outside living history, we are the voice of those veterans and the custodians of their stories.

We remain as committed as ever to continuing our founding mission and supporting the Nation's commemorations. This funding will help us do so"

IWM has extensive plans for the First World War Centenary, including new Galleries at IWM London and a major temporary exhibition at IWM North. Beyond the museum buildings, IWM is leading the First World War Centenary Partnership, a growing network of over 500 local, national and international cultural and educational organisations spanning 24 countries. The Centenary Partnership will present a four year vibrant programme of cultural events and activities engaging millions of people across the world.

IWM will also launch an innovative digital platform and invite people to become citizen historians and create online profiles to honour the millions of men and women who made life-changing contributions. This will create an online memorial called Lives of the First World War - a significant digital legacy for future generations.

## Ends

### For further information contact:

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### Notes to editors:

#### Transforming IWM London

Over the next decade IWM's flagship branch, IWM London, will be remodelled. We are transforming IWM London, creating new spaces and ways for our visitors to explore our rich collections.

In summer 2014 we will launch the first phase, with the opening of brand new First World War Galleries to mark the 100 year anniversary of the start of the First World War, our new atrium at the heart of the museum, with iconic objects and striking exhibits displayed across rising terraces and balconies, new shops and a café which will open directly onto Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park and a greatly improved visitor experience.

To deliver the new First World War Galleries, IWM London will be under development from September 2012. IWM London will temporarily close from January 1 – July 2013 for major building works to take place.

#### Funding

In addition to the announcement of funding today, IWM has secured £22 million of the total £35 million First World War Centenary redevelopment project cost, which includes the new First World War Galleries, a new atrium at the heart of the museum, with iconic objects and striking exhibits displayed across rising terraces and balconies and a greatly improved visitor experience.

IWM is particularly grateful for the generous support received from individual philanthropists, charitable foundations and a grant of £4.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Now that the government is contributing £5 million, the remaining £8 million is being sought from a variety of sources including donations from major philanthropists, Trusts and Foundations, corporate partners, IWM Friends and the public. IWM appreciates the support of the IWM Foundation, an independent charity chaired by Lord Rothermere with the Duke of Cambridge as its Patron. The IWM Foundation is fundraising for the new First World War Galleries and the transformation of IWM London.

#### IWM London

IWM London is IWM's flagship branch thanks to the breadth, depth and impact of our exhibits and displays. We share people's experiences of war through our galleries such as *A Family in Wartime*, the Holocaust Exhibition, the Lord Ashcroft Gallery, as well as many other displays and temporary exhibitions. Our family learning sessions and events encourage debate and challenge people's perceptions of war.

Open daily from 10am – 6pm. Closed 24 - 26 December, and 2 January 2013 – July 2013 as we [transform IWM London](#). IWM London, Lambeth Road, London, SE1 6HZ. T: 020 7416 5000

#### IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique Collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches are IWM London, IWM's flagship branch that is transforming with new First World War Galleries and Atrium space opening in 2014 to mark the Centenary of the First World War; IWM North, housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; IWM Duxford, a world renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; Churchill War Rooms, housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser HMS *Belfast*.

### **First World War Centenary**

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the First World War, a landmark anniversary for Britain and the world. IWM will mark the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year programme of cultural activities across the country, including the opening of brand new First World War Galleries at IWM London in 2014. For more information visit [www.1914.org](http://www.1914.org)