



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Heritage Crafts and The Royal Mint award first five bursaries to protect critically endangered precious metal crafts**

**Earlier this year The Royal Mint and Heritage Crafts announced their partnership to award four bursaries to preserve and champion traditional craft skills related to precious metals.**



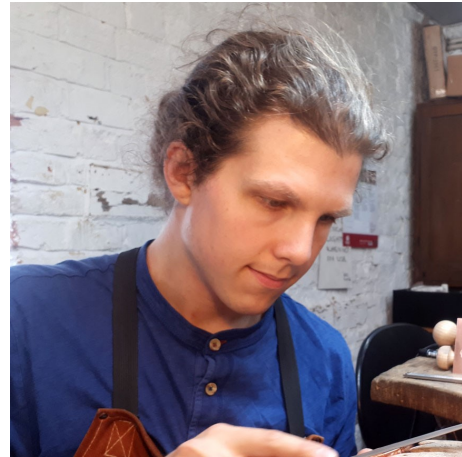
Heritage Crafts and The Royal Mint received 80 applications from aspiring precious metal crafters, keen to learn from some of the greatest craftspeople across the United Kingdom. Following shortlisting and interviews, five successful recipients were selected, all of whom show huge potential but require additional support in order to progress their careers. The additional bursary was added at the discretion of The Royal Mint, following a very close and competitive application and interview process.

Later this year, The Royal Mint will open an additional bursary scheme for those looking to hone their skills precious metals and learn from some of the best in the industry.

The five successful applicants of the bursary scheme will benefit from up to £4,000 in funding each, as well as having the opportunity to spend time with The Royal Mint's master craftspeople, including Gordon Summers, Chief Engraver, and Paul Morgan, The King's Assay Master.



**Claire Mooney** from Newry, Northern Ireland, and **Caius Bearder** from Glasgow will train in silver spinning with Sheffield-based Warren Martin. Silver spinning is the process of shaping a flat silver disk into a hollow item on a lathe, shaping it over a former known as a 'spinning chuck'. It is a critically endangered craft on Heritage Crafts' *Red List of Endangered Crafts* with fewer than 15 practitioners in the UK. Claire will use her new skills to offer one-off and production work to silversmiths across the UK and Ireland. Caius will use the skills he learns to help reduce the production costs of his beautiful engraved silver vessels which have until now been laboriously hand raised.



**Iona Hall** from Bristol and **Emma-Jane Rule** from Leicester will train with Kent-based silversmith Ray Walton. Both will spend their time with Ray making silver boxes, with Iona focusing on various techniques of hinge construction and Emma-Jane specialising in chasing and repoussé, the process of shaping silver by hammering from the reverse side to create a design in low relief. Iona plans to take her box making to the highest level, creating unusual objects that evoke a strong emotional connection. Emma-Jane is a second-career silversmith who plans to combine commercial practice with teaching the craft to others.



**Rosie Elwood** from Whitley Bay, Tyneside, is a jewellery maker who will train in the craft of metal thread embroidery with goldwork embroiderer Hanny Newton and through various short courses offered by the Royal School of Needlework. Rosie plans to incorporate goldwork embroidery into her jewellery, as well as seeking employment in the embroidery itself. The manufacture of metal thread is another critically endangered craft in the UK, and Rosie's work will help raise awareness of this unique material.



The Royal Mint's expertise in precious metals spans over a thousand years. Known as the home of precious metals in the UK, The Royal Mint offer products including gold, silver and platinum commemorative coins, bars for investment, and a digital gold saving option, backed by metal held in their vault. Last year they announced plans to build a factory to recover precious metals from electronic waste, currently active at lab level. Recovered metal is being used to create beautiful jewellery pieces in their latest business venture, 886 by The Royal Mint.

**Paul Morgan**, The King's Assay Master said:

*“As an exemplar of British craftsmanship, we believe we have a duty to promote, protect and celebrate British craftsmanship. I am extremely proud to announce the successful recipients of the bursary scheme in partnership with Heritage Crafts.”*

*“Our long-term mission is to spearhead the resurgence of precious metals craftsmanship in the UK. By doing this we hope to provide more job opportunities for future generations and offer a more sustainable, viable manufacturing alternative to international suppliers – qualities which are increasingly important.”*

**Daniel Carpenter**, Executive Director of Heritage Crafts, said:

*“Our partnership with The Royal Mint speaks to the very core of our mission in safeguarding and celebrating traditional craft skills as being of vital importance to the cultural, social and economic life of the UK. We are thrilled to have joined together to enable Claire, Caius, Iona, Emma-Jane and Rosie to overcome the barriers they faced and set them on the path to mastering their chosen crafts.”*

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- For press information and photographs, contact **Lottie Whalen**, PR Officer – [lottie@heritagecrafts.org.uk](mailto:lottie@heritagecrafts.org.uk).

**Photo captions:**

- Claire Mooney, silver spinner – photo by Ruairí Jordan
- Caius Bearder, silver spinner
- Iona Hall, silversmith
- Emma-Jane Rule, silversmith – photo by Yatish Chavda Photography
- Rosie Elwood, jewellery maker

## **About Heritage Crafts**

Founded in 2009, Heritage Crafts is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered as the 'Heritage Crafts Association', the advocacy body for traditional heritage crafts. Working in partnership with government and key agencies, it provides a focus for craftspeople, groups, societies and guilds, as well as individuals who care about the loss of traditional crafts skills, and works towards a healthy and sustainable framework for the future. Its aim is to support and promote heritage crafts as a fundamental part of our living heritage.

[www.heritagecrafts.org.uk](http://www.heritagecrafts.org.uk)

## **About the *Red List of Endangered Crafts***

The Red List of Endangered Crafts, created by Heritage Crafts, was the first to rank traditional crafts in the UK by the likelihood they would survive the next generation. The 2021 edition of the Red List, funded by the Pilgrim Trust, assessed 244 crafts to identify those which are at greatest risk of disappearing, of which four have been classified as extinct, 56 as critically endangered, 74 as endangered and 110 as currently viable.

The Red List shows that the craft knowledge, skills and practices that form an important part of our shared cultural heritage are – for a number of reasons – at risk of being lost. Heritage Crafts believes that these cultural assets are as important as unique heritage buildings and ancient beautiful landscapes and could provide future generations with fantastic opportunities to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

<http://redlist.heritagecrafts.org.uk>