

Press release

## New Leeds exhibition highlights vital role played by migrants in the NHS to mark 75th anniversary year



The Migration Museum is opening [Heart of the Nation: Migration and the Making of the NHS](#), a national touring exhibition to mark the 75th anniversary year of the National Health Service (NHS), at its new pop-up museum in Trinity Leeds shopping centre on Friday 10 November 2023.

The NHS has faced huge pressures over the decades – never more so than today. Yet the NHS and the millions of people who sustain it remain close to our hearts. And without its international workers, the NHS would not have become the beloved institution it is today.

Ever since its creation in 1948, people have come to Britain from all over the world to make this grand vision for a better society a reality. Today, around 1 in 6 people working in the NHS has a non-British nationality. And many others are the children and grandchildren of migrant healthcare workers, forging multi-generational legacies. But their crucial role has largely been ignored.

NHS workers care for us from the moment we're born, until the moment we die. *Heart of the Nation* is an immersive media exhibition that asks the question: who are the people who care for us? And do we care enough?

Featuring dozens of personal stories contributed by people who have come from all over the world to work at all levels of the NHS from the 1940s to the present day, alongside photography, film, newly commissioned artwork, unique artefacts and historical ephemera, *Heart of the Nation* shares the stories and experiences of the migrant healthcare workers who built and have sustained our health service.

The exhibition features stories of West Yorkshire-based NHS workers alongside people from around the world working in the NHS across the UK. Featured stories include Dr Arnab Seal and Dr Sunita Seal, who moved to the UK from India in 1992 and have spent much of the past 30 years working as doctors in Leeds and Bradford, with Dr Arnab Seal also a lecturer in child health at the University of Leeds; Josie Cauldfield, who arrived from Ireland in 1958 and worked as an A&E nurse in Leeds for 30 years; and the Dimov family, originally from Bulgaria via New Zealand, five of whom spanning two generations now work for the NHS.

The centre-piece of the exhibition is SPEAK, a newly commissioned interactive music and video installation co-created and performed by seven people currently working in the NHS, exploring themes of care through singing and storytelling.

Visitors will finish in an interactive healing space, where they'll be invited to reflect on and share their stories and experiences of care, and add messages for NHS workers who have cared for them throughout their lives to an evolving participatory installation.

The exhibition builds on a digital exhibition that the Migration Museum launched during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, which has been updated and integrated into the new exhibition. Visitors will also be able to contribute their own stories to this evolving, participatory exhibition.

Aditi Anand, Artistic Director at the Migration Museum, said: "For all its challenges, the NHS remains an immense source of national pride and is often painted as a distinctly British success story. Yet the NHS simply wouldn't exist without the generations of people from all over the world who have built, grown and staffed it.

"*Heart of the Nation* highlights the vital role that migrants have always played in the NHS and the extent to which, just like the NHS, migration is central to the very fabric of who we are in Britain – as individuals, as communities and as a nation. Now more than ever, this is a story that needs to be told – and we're delighted to be able to tell this story in the heart of Leeds."

Steven Foster, Centre Director at Trinity Leeds, said: "The Migration Museum's exhibition, *Heart of the Nation*, tells the inspiring stories of NHS workers from across the globe and their hard work and dedication to helping others.

"We're thrilled to host the interactive touring exhibition, including incredible stories from Leeds-based migrant healthcare workers which we're sure will inspire and inform our guests."

Dr Adil Akram, a psychiatrist working in the NHS who is one of the singers and co-creators of the music and video installation, said: "My father came over from Pakistan in the 1960s to practise as a doctor in the NHS – and I've followed in his footsteps. This exhibition is close to my heart – it's about the contributions of people like my father who came to this country and spent their lives and careers helping to build the NHS into the fantastic institution it is today, that symbolises all the good things about the UK."

The exhibition opens at the new Migration Museum Pop-Up in Trinity Leeds on 10 November 2023 and runs until 18 February 2024, the second destination of a national tour. The exhibition launched in Leicester in June 2023 and will move to London in Spring 2024.

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For more info, contact Matthew Plowright: (E: [matthew@migrationmuseum.org](mailto:matthew@migrationmuseum.org) T: 07585 117 924

# Notes for editors

## Where and when

*Heart of the Nation: Migration and the Making of the NHS* opens to the public at the Migration Museum's new Leeds Pop-Up in Trinity Leeds on 10 November 2023. The exhibition and the pop-up will be open until 18 February 2024.

The exhibition can also be explored online at: [www.heartofthenation.co.uk](http://www.heartofthenation.co.uk).

## Opening hours and admission

The Migration Museum Leeds Pop-Up is open five days a week:

Wednesday to Saturday: 11am – 5.30pm

Sundays: 11am – 5pm

Admission free – no booking.

## Address

Migration Museum Leeds Pop-Up

Trinity Leeds

G Floor – opposite Boots

Leeds LS1 5AT

For more visitor information, please visit: <https://www.migrationmuseum.org/leeds/>

## Website and social media

Website: [www.migrationmuseum.org](http://www.migrationmuseum.org)

Instagram: [@MigrationMuseumUK](https://www.instagram.com/MigrationMuseumUK)

Twitter: [@MigrationUK](https://twitter.com/MigrationUK)

Facebook: [MigrationMuseumUK](https://www.facebook.com/MigrationMuseumUK)

Hashtag: #HeartoftheNation

## Media images

A selection of media images can be found [here](#).

## Supported by:

Arts Council England, Garfield Weston Foundation, Rumi Foundation, Alfred Caplin Charity Settlement, The Dorfman Foundation and Unbound Philanthropy. We are grateful to Landsec for the opportunity to host our pop-up museum in Trinity Leeds and for their support with marketing and promotion.



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## About Trinity Leeds

- Trinity Leeds provides 1,000,000 sq ft of retail space in the heart of Leeds city centre, encompassed beneath its iconic 40,000 sq ft glass dome.
- More than 120 brands and 40+ restaurants, coffee shops and bars under one roof, including Trinity Kitchen – a unique mix of permanent restaurants and street food vans hosting rotating 'pop-up' vendors.
- It is home to striking artwork including the iconic packhorse sculpture Equus Altus and Minerva statue on Briggate, reflecting the city's textile heritage, both specially-commissioned by Scottish sculptor Andy Scott.
- A 40,000 sq. ft. Everyman Cinema features 600 seats across 5 auditoriums, as well as a private screening lounge, outdoor terrace and stylish bar.
- Celebrated its 10th anniversary in March 2023, marking a decade since launching as a key part of the city and the community, giving people a place to meet, shop, drink and dine.
- Trinity Leeds is owned and operated by Landsec. For more information, visit [www.trinityleeds.com](http://www.trinityleeds.com) and [www.landsec.com](http://www.landsec.com)

## About Landsec Group PLC

At Landsec, we build and invest in buildings, spaces and partnerships to create sustainable places, connect communities and realise potential. We are one of the largest real estate companies in Europe, with a portfolio of retail, leisure, workspace and residential hubs. Landsec is shaping a better future by leading our industry on environmental and social sustainability while delivering value for our shareholders, great experiences for our guests and positive change for our communities.

Find out more at [www.landsec.com](http://www.landsec.com)

## About the Migration Museum and our Leeds Pop-Up

The Migration Museum explores how the movement of people to and from Britain across the ages has shaped who we all are – as individuals, as communities and as nations.

We stage interactive, story-led exhibitions and a wide range of events, alongside high-profile digital campaigns and an education programme delivering workshops to thousands of young people each year and reaching millions more across the country via teacher training and partnerships. We also convene a knowledge-sharing Migration Network of museums and galleries across the UK.

Since 2020, the Migration Museum has been based in a dynamic temporary venue in a busy shopping centre in Lewisham, south-east London. From November 2023 until February 2024, the Migration Museum will be running a pop-up museum in Trinity Leeds, where you can explore our *Heart of the Nation* exhibition, browse our award-winning Migrant Makers Market shop, discover stories contributed by visitors – and share yours.

Longer-term, we aim to open at our new permanent home in the heart of the City of London in 2026/7, allied to a network of venues across the UK and a digital storytelling hub. Find out more at: [migrationmuseum.org](http://migrationmuseum.org)

**For more information, please contact:**

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*Lead image: Photo © Roy Mehta*