

## Art Fund & Creative Scotland: Touring and shared exhibitions research

### Background

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art, independent of government, and founded in 1903. Our aim is to help museums, galleries and other institutions that care for and display collections take their ambitions further - by building these collections, providing opportunities for curators to develop their expertise, and supporting audience engagement.

Our programme develops and iterates in direct response to the needs of the sector. We conduct research to better understand the particular and changing museum and gallery landscape, and how we can make a distinct, valuable and relevant contribution to supporting its ambitions. Our recent Headley Fellowships and Curatorial Network Grants were set up in direct response to challenges identified as part of the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Curator* (2017), while *Why Collect* (2018) provides a platform and voice for museums to advocate for continued investment in their collections.

### Project overview

Art Fund is working in partnership through 2019 with Creative Scotland on a piece of research which will report, investigate and reflect on how UK museums, galleries and other cultural organisations work together to share collections and/or programme temporary exhibitions through partnership or other forms of collaboration, all for the benefit of a wide and diverse public. We will use the research to inform the development of our programmes of support for loaning and touring within and between cultural venues, and to inform Art Fund policy positions or other activity that relate to the development of exhibitions in the UK. Alongside this we would wish the outcome of the research to have a wide applicability across the sector and feed more into the future development of other national programmes, such as ARTIST ROOMS beyond 2020, and the development of a stronger national policy framework to support exhibitions.

We are delighted to partner with Creative Scotland on this project as organisations that are committed to supporting the creativity, ambition and growth of the sector, and see this as an opportunity to combine forces and increase the collective impetus we can achieve. As our funding and the way in which we support the visual arts sector expands and deepens, we want to ensure that we can speak with authority on this subject and would share and promote the understanding derived from this research widely. We will form an Advisory Panel to consult through the project and assist with the shape of the research and the final output. Representatives will be invited from across the museum and gallery sector, representing a broad range of institutions, experience and perspectives.

The report will take the establishment of the ARTIST ROOMS touring model in 2009 as the starting point, tracing the impact of this initiative over the last decade, and using this to understand how institutions share collections and exhibitions, examining other key initiatives that have shifted the landscape in recent years, and the impact of public and private funding. The research aims to bring new thinking to the subject, aiding museums and galleries to articulate the purpose and benefit of working in partnership to stakeholders, policy-makers and the media, helping the public to understand their impact

better. As well as ARTIST ROOMS other projects and programmes such as Hayward Touring, the work of the British Council, Art Fund's Weston Loan Programme and projects delivered via the National teams within DCMS funded museums will be used as primary reference points.

The report will include provocation by a senior cultural figure, a selection of case studies, and be supported by new quantitative evidence on the impact of sharing collections and/or programming exhibitions in partnership. This data will also inform content of the introduction.

Questions the report might consider include:

- How can we identify and encourage innovative touring models that reveal and showcase the UK's exceptional collections and/or make the most of the creative capital invested in commissioning temporary exhibitions?
- What is the role of funders and policy makers in relation to touring?
- What are the organisational and individual skills gaps and how can these be addressed?
- How can we build resilience in the sector through new touring models?
- What are the key priorities, barriers and how do we measure success?
- How can a commitment to a strengthened EDI agenda be supported via touring? What opportunities lie around audience or content development?
- How does the national policy framework impact on exhibitions and touring, and what improvements could be made?
- How should museums balance an ambitious audience development targets alongside a challenging curatorial programme?
- What do visitors want and expect from exhibitions?
- How can exhibitions encourage new and repeat visitors?
- Does the idea of a 'distributed national' collection hold weight? What could this look like and mean?

It is expected that each of these themes will be considered longitudinally, so respondents will be asked to reflect on the current situation and how this differs from 10 years ago.

We anticipate the report being 30-50 pages long and produced as a visually led and easily digestible document. This will include an executive summary and key chapter headings detailing the major themes and supported by case studies, infographics, images, and illustrative quotes. A data analysis will be included as an appendix to the report. We do not propose producing in hard copy but a PDF will be made available on both Art Fund and Creative Scotland's website. Art Fund's communications team would work closely with Creative Scotland on a dissemination and distribution strategy.

#### Research methodology

Art Fund are seeking to commission specialist consultancies to undertake the quantitative and qualitative research. Following a tender process, we would either select one agency to deliver both aspects, or commission separately. Drafting of case studies will be overseen by our in-house writers and editors and design of the final report overseen by our creative team. All aspects will be developed and delivered in close collaboration with Creative Scotland.

The suggested methodology could include:

- A desk-based literature review surveying the history, funding and policy landscape for this activity, major schemes/investments/initiatives (i.e. ACE and Creative Scotland strategic touring), key relationships, and how this has shifted in the last 5-10 years
- An online questionnaire of the c.750 museums within our network to create a national 'map' of activity in this area, looking back over the last 5-10 years, and identifying the opportunities, benefits and challenges of touring and partnership. This will include curators and exhibition co-ordinators, museum directors; representatives from subject specialist networks; touring agencies (i.e. Hayward Touring); museum development officers; National Programme managers; and professional bodies such as Touring Exhibitions Group
- A representative selection of in-depth case-studies which profile examples of good practice with a focus on the national and local impact of such projects on audiences and institutions.
- A small number of managed focus groups and one-to-one interviews with key stakeholders and partners examining what success looks like in this arena.
- (for discussion) An analysis of successful international models that could be used to inform UK policy and practice. The value of including this data will be judged following feedback from the focus groups.

#### Timetable

- Early April: Finalise brief in consultation with Creative Scotland
- May: Tender for research consultancy
- June: Appoint consultancy
- June: Advisory panel meets
- June - August: Desk-based and online research
- July: Focus groups
- Early Sept: Draft collated and submitted for review
- Early Sept: Advisory Panel meets
- Late Sept: Design
- October: Final proof agreed
- November/December: Present findings via sector event

#### Budget

There is a total budget of £15,000 available for the external market research and analysis (2 x £7.5k or 1 x £15k)

#### Contact details

Please contact Rachael Browning, Head of Programme Development, [rbrowning@artfund.org](mailto:rbrowning@artfund.org) with any queries. We request that interested agencies submit a detailed methodology including timeframe supported by costing by 19th June.