PRESS RELEASE

ART FUND ANNOUNCES £2m TO SUPPORT MUSEUMS THROUGH CRISIS

- Additional £2m funding supporting museums and galleries through reopening and beyond
- Respond and Reimagine Grants, open for applications today, help meet immediate need and reimagine future ways of working
- New partnerships target smaller museums at serious risk, and support resilience
- Free ticketing tool to support access at time of social distancing

Today, as doors to the nation’s much-loved museums and galleries remain closed by the Covid-19 crisis, Art Fund announces funding and resources in response to the challenges they face. After hearing from hundreds of museum directors and professionals through its Covid-19 Impact Report to identify needs now and in the future, the national fundraising charity for art will make more than £2m available in additional funding through grants and strategic partnerships to support reopening and beyond.

Jenny Waldman, Director, Art Fund, said: ‘The future of our museums and galleries, which are so vital to society, is far from certain. Art Fund is putting every effort into helping museums through the current crisis, informed by our recent report into what museums and galleries need, and following the exceptional immediate response from public funders which provided a lifeline for many organisations. We encourage all those at immediate risk or reimagining future ways of working to get in touch. However, these steps alone will not secure the future - more help is required. We are now fundraising so we can continue to support museums and galleries and we’re calling for everyone to come together now to help museums and galleries adapt and thrive during the biggest challenge in our lifetime.’

Following the temporary closures of cultural organisations across the UK, Art Fund surveyed the sector to identify how it could best support as many museums as possible through this period. The Covid-19 Impact report, drawing together over 400 responses, showed 56% of directors to be worried about the viability of their organisation, and 85% spoke of their concerns over attracting visitors back. 98% of respondents shared details of cancelled exhibitions, conservation, community projects and more. Four key areas of need emerged: the future of collections and exhibitions, digital skills and infrastructure, reopening and encouraging audiences back, and supporting a passionate and skilled workforce.

In response, Art Fund is making £1.5m available this year in Respond and Reimagine Grants. Open for applications from today, this flexible and responsive funding will meet immediate needs in the four priority areas of collections, audiences, digital, and workforce, costs to support reopening, as well as encouraging creative and innovative projects as organisations look to reopen with fundamentally different operating models.

Three new strategic partnerships will help reach smaller museums at serious risk; build skills amongst the workforce; and respond to the need to re-focus on collections. The Covid-19 Impact report showed that 12% of respondents were not eligible for existing emergency funds, 68% of staff would find free online training helpful; and that there would be fewer toured-in or blockbuster exhibitions.
A £280,000 partnership with the Museum Development Network will distribute additional grants prioritising museums who have not yet received emergency public funding and smaller museums fulfilling specific cultural or local needs. £150,000 will be provided in seed funding for the newly established Museums and Galleries Network for Exhibition Touring to support an ambitious programme for co-curated, collections-based exhibitions to tour nationally. A £35,000 collaboration with Clore Leadership to support sector professionals will build skills, competencies and connections for current and future resilience and innovation.

Art Fund’s existing programme will also be bolstered with an additional £250,000 for Small Project Grants and Network Grants - flexible, quick-turnaround funds to support museums reach audiences and develop professional networks - which have been open and helping organisations improve digital infrastructure, reach audiences and develop networks from the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Art Fund also has free digital services available to help museums with ticketing, crowdfunding and audience engagement, including Art Tickets, to help organisations with capacity and timed tickets as museums navigate reopening. Free development opportunities, including online training, new case studies and other learning resources are being made available at artfund.org

**Respond and Reimagine Grants**

Available in three rounds. Applications open 16 June for the first funding round, closing on 8 July and awarded by 31 July. Round 2 applications by 17 August and Round 3 applications by 12 October. Funding available: £1.5m

Respond and Reimagine Grants will provide £1.5m to support museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives, and non-venue-based visual arts organisations through reopening and beyond. Flexible and responsive grants of £10,000 - £50,000 for projects focusing on collections, digital, audiences and workforce, will support immediate and practical funding needs. The fund also aims to encourage applications for creative and innovative projects as organisations look to reopening with different models and in vastly changed circumstances, aiming to support organisations deliver activity that will provide positive change, to offer new or improved ways of working during, or in response to, the Covid-19 pandemic.

Grants might help organisations identify works at risk; ensure works or objects related to the Covid-19 pandemic are collected or commissioned; or support previously planned exhibitions to take place. They may support the improvement of digital skills and help raise income through digital; build staff confidence and adaptability and preserve museum roles. These grants will also support museums that are unable to access sufficient emergency public funding to prevent immediate insolvency.

**Partnership: Museum Development Network**

Open for applications at the end of June. Funding available: £280,000

Art Fund is contributing £280,000 to its partnership with the Museum Development Network (MDN), to reach museums across all nations of the UK who have not yet received emergency public funding or smaller museums fulfilling specific cultural or local needs. Open for applications from the end of June, the partnership will offer grants up to £10,000 depending on regional and national circumstances, to support effective reopening, meeting audience needs, and developing a sustainable offer.

Museums that been unable to access existing emergency funds due to capacity, timing or ineligibility may include independent museums - many of which are volunteer led and which make up 56% of the Accredited museum sector, museums officially Working Towards Accreditation and smaller local authority museums. The priority will be to support the recovery phase for museums that are located in areas of low cultural community engagement, where the museum is
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the main cultural offer in a locality, and museums in urban areas that have rich collections and specific cultural offers outside the larger city institutions.

The Museum Development Network will distribute the grants. It comprises of: The Museum Development Programme across England, consisting of 9 English regional programmes, who will provide its own match grant support to the value of £200,000; Museums Galleries Scotland; the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales, distributing funds for the Welsh Government who are allocating a further £3,000; and the Northern Ireland Museums Council, who are adding £4,200.

Claire Browne, Chair of the Museum Development Network said: “Even the smallest amount can make a difference to small and local organisations as they adjust their offer to reopen effectively and remain relevant to audiences going forward. These funds will make a significant impact on smaller museums that are highly valued community assets”.

Partnership: MAGNET and the Horniman Museum and Gardens

£150,000 seed funding is being provided to the Museums and Galleries Network for Exhibition Touring (MAGNET) for the pilot of an ambitious new programme for museums to develop co-curated, collections-based exhibitions designed to tour nationally.

The grant will support the inaugural collaborative project Hair, Untold Stories, an innovative exhibition using anthropological collections to explore global hair cultures, to launch at the Horniman Museum and Gardens (who are the lead MAGNET partner) in October 2021 before touring to Museums Sheffield and Tullie House in Carlisle.

The newly established MAGNET network of twelve museums and galleries aims to allow organisations to pool resources, develop curatorial expertise and share their collections with diverse national audiences. Co-curated touring exhibitions are a powerful potential tool in helping the limited funds museums will have for exhibitions go further. They also respond to historic challenges faced by regional organisations including a lack of affordable quality touring exhibitions and budget cuts reducing the ability to generate exhibitions. The partnership between Art Fund and MAGNET will develop a replicable and sustainable model for collaboration between regional museums that could create a long-term legacy for the sector and help bring regional collections to wider audiences.

Nick Merriman, Chief Executive of the Horniman Museum and Gardens, says: ‘Each museum in MAGNET has in its stored collections huge numbers of objects with a wealth of stories to tell, yet we each lack the resources to create new exhibitions to tell those stories. By working together, we all have a chance to showcase our collections, share knowledge and resources, and bring to our visitors a series of new and relevant exhibitions for a fraction of the cost of buying them in or creating each one ourselves. This new collaborative way of working will be a powerful tool both in helping the limited funds museums have for exhibitions go further and in supporting our recovery in a post-coronavirus world.’

Partnership: Clore Leadership

Art Fund and Clore Leadership will deliver a suite of leadership development opportunities for sector professionals to build skills, competencies and connections for current and future resilience and innovation.

Clore Leadership, the first initiative of its kind in the UK, is aimed at developing and strengthening leadership potential across the cultural and creative sectors. This partnership will centre on the collaborative development with Art Fund of a bespoke Leadership Insights Programme for museum professionals. Designed to be responsive and adaptable to changing circumstances and involving a mix of modular online and blended learning, the programme will
help to embed leadership skills within a changed museum sector working to create a ‘new normal’ and will be delivered across the end of 2020 and into 2021.

Art Fund will also support four bursaries for museum professionals to participate in Clore Leadership’s highly sought-after courses commencing autumn 2020: two for the Leadership Intensive Courses, which provide professional and personal development for cultural leaders; and two for the Emerging Leaders Course, for early career leaders.

The partnership will also involve collaborating on Clore Leadership’s Emerging Futures Conference - an annual opportunity for early career leaders to convene, develop leadership ambitions and tackle key issues, to be delivered digitally in September 2020. In addition, museum-centred issues will be enhanced on the Clore Leadership funded Cultural Governance Alliance website which encourages good governance in the culture sector.

Hilary Carty, Director, Clore Leadership, says ‘Clore Leadership is delighted to be working with Art Fund at this most critical of times, when inspiring and effective leadership is so vital to meeting the immediate and long-term needs of the sector. Museums and galleries face steep challenges ahead and this targeted support to strengthen priority leadership skills, competences and wider sector connections will create a tangible change for sector resilience, innovation and sustainability. We are grateful to Art Fund for supporting Clore Leadership to make a positive difference in the professional development of both established and aspiring leaders.’

Small project grants and network grants

These grant programmes, which have remained open with flexible criteria throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, have been boosted with an additional £250k funding.

Small Project Grants help organisations realise adventurous projects to benefit their audiences. They are quick, responsive grants, and can include funding for core costs, staff costs and equipment. Network Grants support professional networks to develop and share knowledge, skills and resources, and Art Fund is encouraging applications for self-initiated peer support, mentoring, training and knowledge sharing.

Since 1 March 2020 Art Fund has awarded 32 Small Project Grants totalling £252,404 and 13 Network Grants totalling £114,585. These include a grant to Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft for a project developed in response to Covid-19 enabling the museum to reach audiences at home through a digital programme of free content created with artists, craftspeople and art historians, and a grant for Glasgow International to create a digital platform in lieu of the 2020 Glasgow International Festival which should have taken place in April and May this year. Artists from the original programme will adapt of create new work for the platform, alongside a digital programme focusing on the festival theme Attention.

Resources for museum professionals

Art Fund’s Covid-19 Impact Report identified gaps in the provision of direct training and development opportunities for museum and gallery professionals, particularly for a hub of information on resources that already exist. To help meet this need, Art Fund has drawn together free professional development opportunities, including online training, new case studies and other learning resources at artfund.org, helping to support an expert and passionate workforce through a period of continued uncertainty.

Digital services

Art Fund has a number of free digital services available to help museums with their ticketing, crowdfunding and audience engagement needs. With many organisations exploring the need for timed entry tickets, available to book online in order to ensure safe social distancing, Art Fund’s
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free ticket management system Art Tickets is immediately available. The purpose-built platform helps manage capacity and ticket bookings simply online and is already in use by a range of institutions including Norfolk Museums and the Foundling Museum, London.

The free crowdfunding platform Art Happens helps museums and galleries raise money for exciting arts projects and inspire audiences for the future. It supports fundraising but also raises awareness, reaches new audiences, engages existing supporters in new ways, and encourage visitors to go from going to giving. Art Fund also provides marketing support, helping organisations reach its members and wider audiences online.

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Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. It provides millions of pounds every year to help museums to acquire and share works of art across the UK, further the professional development of their curators, and inspire more people to visit and enjoy their public programmes. Art Fund is independently funded, supported by the 159,000 members who buy the National Art Pass, who enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places, 50% off major exhibitions, and receive Art Quarterly magazine. Art Fund also supports museums through its annual prize, Art Fund Museum of the Year, which was won by St Fagans National Museum of History, Cardiff, in 2019, and through a range of digital platforms: www.artfund.org

MAGNET

The Museums and Galleries Network for Exhibition Touring (MAGNET) is a partnership between 12 museums and galleries around the UK, to develop collaboratively-produced collections-based exhibitions which will tour around the member venues. The 12 partners are: Horniman Museum and Gardens (lead); Birmingham Museums; Bristol Museums; Derby Museums; Glasgow Museums; Manchester Museum; National Museums Liverpool; Norfolk Museums Service; Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter; Museums Sheffield; Tullie House Museum, Carlisle; and Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums.

The pilot phase of the MAGNET partnership, funded by the Art Fund, will see the co-curation and production of the Hair, Untold Stories exhibition, which will open at the Horniman Museum and Gardens in late 2021 before touring to Museums Sheffield and Tullie House Museum.

Lead partner the Horniman Museum and Gardens opened in Forest Hill, south London in 1901 as a gift to the people in perpetuity from tea trader and philanthropist Frederick John Horniman. Today the Horniman has a collection of 350,000 objects, specimens and artefacts from around the world. Its galleries include natural history, music, an acclaimed aquarium and the World Gallery of anthropology. Indoor exhibits link to the award-winning display gardens – from medicinal and dye gardens to an interactive sound garden, Butterfly House and an animal walk – set among 16 acres of beautiful, green space offering spectacular views across London. horniman.ac.uk. For more information about MAGNET, the Horniman or Hair, Untold Stories, contact press@horniman.ac.uk.

Clore Leadership

Clore Leadership was initiated in 2003 by the Clore Duffield Foundation, and is sustained by a partnership between private philanthropy and public funding. It has succeeded in creating a sought-after cadre of creative and cultural leaders and inspired investment in leadership on the part of governments, agencies, foundations and charities both nationally and internationally. Clore Leadership has been outstandingly successful in providing excellent training and development for more than 2,200 cultural sector leaders. At its inception, Clore Leadership (CL) provided only one leadership programme, the Clore Fellowship, and over the past 15 years the ‘offer’ has been expanded to include more training opportunities, including early career courses and board development. We offer a strong and supportive foundation from which leaders at all stages of their career can develop and strengthen their leadership skills, competencies and performance.

Our aim is to inspire and equip leaders to have a positive impact on society through great leadership of culture. We offer opportunities for professionals in our sectors to understand and develop their leadership strengths, providing spaces to challenge prevalent ideas and beliefs and develop confidence in their leadership styles and potential for impact. We provide leadership development programmes, promote thought leadership and fresh ideas through
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debate and challenge, and offer access to an incredible network of leaders. Our programmes range from a tailored Fellowship, through intensive leadership courses, leadership development days, seminars, webinars, conferences and events. To offer the broadest spectrum of opinion, we commission and encourage research and provocation pieces from a rich variety of sources, keeping abreast of leadership knowledge and opinion. From freelancers and entrepreneurs to heads of established institutions, Clore Leadership nurtures dynamic and diverse leaders. Participants on our programmes are drawn from a range of specialisms including the visual and performing arts, film and digital media, libraries, museums, archives and heritage, and cultural policy. www.cloreleadership.org

Museums Galleries Scotland

Museums Galleries Scotland is the National Development Body for museums and galleries in Scotland and offers strategic development support to the sector. For further information about Museums Galleries Scotland visit www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/about-us/