Reaching audiences digitally during the Covid-19 crisis

**Programme:**
Small Project Grants

**Case study:** Ditchling Museum of Arts + Craft
Joined National Art Pass network: 2010
Annual visitors: 13,000 (pre Covid-19)
2019 monthly website visits: 15,277
Staff: 11

**Challenge**
In response to the Covid-19 crisis, Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft turned to Art Fund for a small project grant to help realise #CreateToRelate – an online programme of talks, workshops and events led by artists, craftspeople and art historians aimed at audiences unable to visit during lockdown. A brand-new initiative, #CreateToRelate ensured that existing audiences - such as local people and families - could still engage with the museum and its collection and provided a means of connection during self-isolation for those most vulnerable. The programme also aimed to reach Ditchling’s 13.5k Instagram followers, as well as new audiences through social media.

“Getting the Small project grant from Art Fund at the time we did was a fantastic boost. We were able to use the museum closure as an opportunity to develop a digital programme to continue relationships with our audience and community. We had wanted to develop an online offer for some time but didn’t have the capacity under normal circumstances. We are now thinking about how #CreateToRelate can be integrated into our long-term programming.”

Stephanie Fuller, Director

£7,430 offered in funding through our small project grants
19,000 Instagram views for #CreateToRelate
47,900 Twitter views
296 new Facebook followers
Working with Art Fund

Ditchling, like many other museums, was caught unawares by this crisis and so did not have the resources or budget to pivot its programme into a digital offering. Art Fund were able to assist the museum through the grant to help pay for artists to deliver the programme, employ a social media manager to run it, and help cover marketing costs to ensure #CreateToRelate reached as many people as possible.

Outcomes

- Engage audiences online with museum collection and content.
- Provide opportunities for learning, participation and interaction using online tools.
- Develop new skills in developing multimedia content for online broadcast.

Looking ahead

Ditchling are using this opportunity to learn more about their audience and what makes them tick. Keeping in regular contact with those who joined in with #CreateToRelate to ask what they enjoyed, or what they want to see more or less of will allow the museum to continue to programme relevant activity. Ditchling won’t stop here after lockdown has been lifted and are keen to programme into the summer, developing into a digitally integrated programme to continue long term.