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Art Fund Prize 2012 launches search for the nation's Unsung Museum Heroes

This year is the tenth anniversary of the Art Fund Prize for Museums and Galleries, and to celebrate, the Museum Prize Trust is looking to champion ten Unsung Museum Heroes who have made a truly memorable contribution to museums and galleries.

Whether they are a committed curator or an invaluable archivist, a terrific tour guide or a fabulous fundraiser, the Art Fund Prize is urging museum and gallery professionals to nominate the staff and volunteers who have made an invaluable contribution to their organisation.

Nominations open today, and forms can be downloaded from www.artfundprize.org.uk/heroes. The deadline for nominations is 4pm on 12 April, and the ten Unsung Museum Heroes will be announced in the June issue of *Museums Journal*, which will feature a brief profile interview with each winner. The Heroes will also be invited to the award ceremony of the Art Fund Prize 2012 at the British Museum on 19 June, and given a private and exclusive guided tour of the British Museum immediately beforehand.

Penelope, Viscountess Cobham, Chairman of The Museum Prize Trust said: "The Museum Prize has always recognised the outstanding work of world class museums and galleries. In our tenth anniversary year, we are delighted to also celebrate the unsung heroes of the museum world whose invaluable contributions have a significant impact on their organisations and its relationships with the public. We very much look forward to hearing the stories of the many people who work tirelessly to support a thriving museum and galleries sector."

Ends

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Notes to Editors

The Art Fund Prize is administered by The Museum Prize, a charitable company created in 2001 by representatives of National Heritage, the Museums Association, the Art Fund and the Campaign for Museums and chaired by Lady Cobham**.** These organisations agreed to put aside award schemes they

formerly ran (including National Heritage's Museum of the Year) and lend their support to this single major prize.

The Art Fund has sponsored The Museum Prize since 2008. The Art Fund is the national charity which helps museums and galleries to buy, show and share art for the enjoyment of all. Over the past five years, the Art Fund has given £24 million to buy art and supported a range of projects and programmes aimed at helping more people enjoy art. The Art Fund is independently funded and the majority of its income comes from almost 90,000 supporters who purchase a National Art Pass, which gives free entry to over 200 museums, galleries and historic houses across the country as well as 50% off many major exhibitions.

Find out more about the Art Fund and the National Art Pass at www.artfund.org.uk. The press office can be reached on 020 7225 4888 or media@artfund.org

The Clore Duffield Foundation is chaired by Dame Vivien Duffield DBE and has a strong focus on supporting cultural learning, particularly within museums and galleries and at heritage sites. www.cloreduffield.org.uk. It is one of the founding partners of the Cultural Learning Alliance, a collective voice working to ensure that all children and young people have meaningful access to culture in this difficult economic climate. www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk

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