

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Art Fund announces record membership growth and launches new funding for the conservation of collections in UK museums

- *Membership of the national charity for art doubles in a decade*
- *Brand new funding for art conservation*
- *Further funding invests in UK public museums and galleries*

Today, Art Fund, the national charity for art, shared news that its membership has grown by 8.5% in the last year, to 151,000 members – a doubling in the last decade.

The charity also announced brand new funding to support a range of conservation projects treating art and objects in museum and gallery collections. It is made possible thanks to the generosity of Art Fund donors and members.

In the last year alone, Art Fund has given £355,000 in grants dedicated to conservation, including major restorations of works by Artemisia Gentileschi, Lubaina Himid and Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

This new, dedicated scheme for public museums, galleries and historic houses in the UK is specifically designed to help give newly acquired works any conservation treatment they require, as well as to enable existing works to come out of storage and be prepared for public display. It is solely dedicated to conservation, allowing for a proportion of support for display and public engagement, and in the breadth of organisations eligible for funding. Applications will open from 28 July 2019.

Art Fund helps museums to realise their ambitions: from buying works of art and sharing them across the UK, to training and developing their curators – and much more besides. In 2018 Art Fund awarded £4.9m in grants. Over 400 works of art and objects went to 78 organisations across the UK. Some 80% of grants were awarded to organisations outside of London.

As an independent charity, Art Fund is supported by the generosity of its members, who buy the National Art Pass, as well as by many trusts, foundations and other individuals. The National Art Pass gives Art Fund members free or reduced-price entry to hundreds of museums, galleries and historic houses across the UK.

Together with supporters and partners, Art Fund has opened the following new funding programmes and services for UK museums and galleries to date in 2019:

- Headley Fellowships with Art Fund – a three-year, £600,000 programme with The Headley Trust to give curators the time and resources to develop specialist knowledge relating to their collections.
- Curatorial Network Grants – a £150,000 open fund to support Subject Specialist Networks and other curatorial channels to develop and share knowledge, skills and resources.
- Art Tickets – a free ticketing system to bring museum and gallery ticket sales online, streamlining the process for both visitors and museum staff.
- Art Fund & AAMC Foundation Travel Fellowships – an international collaboration between Art Fund and the US-based Association of Art Museum Curators Foundation to enable UK curators to travel and attend the AAMC conference in New York City, accompanied by further grants to active.
- Small project grants – seed funding for projects of up to £10,000 will be open for applications from late July 2019.

Art Fund chairman, Lord Smith of Finsbury, said: 'Museums and galleries are vital spaces for society. That's why we support them in doing more for everyone, everywhere. We're proud to be providing new funding towards the conservation of objects in UK collections, to help unlock new stories about these objects and improve collections care and display. We're entirely supported by our 151,000 members who buy the National Art Pass, as well as the generosity of many trusts, foundations and other individuals. This growing community shares our vision to help UK museums and champion them at every level.'

For further information, please see the report Art Fund in 2019: [artfund.org/af19](http://artfund.org/af19)

A selection of high-res images can be downloaded here: [bit.ly/2ZtJV8Y](http://bit.ly/2ZtJV8Y)

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# Art Fund\_

## Media enquiries:

Emma Phillips, Press Relations Manager  
ephillips@artfund.org / 020 7225 4804

Rachel Mapplebeck, Director of Communications  
rmapplebeck@artfund.org / 020 7225 4820

## Notes to Editors:

### Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. In the past five years alone Art Fund has given £34 million to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. It also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, and makes additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators. Art Fund is independently funded, with the core of its income provided by 151,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions and subscription to Art Quarterly magazine. In addition to grant-giving, Art Fund's support for museums includes Art Fund Museum of the Year (won by Tate St Ives in 2018) and a range of digital platforms.

Find out more about Art Fund and the National Art Pass at [www.artfund.org](http://www.artfund.org)

### The Headley Trust

The Headley Trust was founded in 1973 by Sir Timothy Sainsbury, who remains the Chairman 45 years later. It is one of 16 Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts. The Headley Trust makes grants of around £5 million a year, largely in the Arts and Heritage field. Among its priority areas are museums and galleries, particularly those operating in the regions. The trustees particularly wish to support the professional development of curators, as well as the display, study and acquisition of British ceramics and the conservation of industrial, maritime and built heritage.

See [www.sfct.org.uk/Headley.html](http://www.sfct.org.uk/Headley.html) for information about the full range of the trust's interests