

## PRESS RELEASE

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### £250,000 for UK's regional museums to borrow national treasures

- *Applications open today for third year of funding from Garfield Weston Foundation and Art Fund*
- *Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund scheme empowers museums and galleries nationwide to borrow major works of art and objects from UK's national collections*
- *Up to 50 museums nationwide expected to benefit from programme*

[www.artfund.org/weston-loan-programme](http://www.artfund.org/weston-loan-programme)

Art Fund announced today that applications are now open until 10 September for the third round of the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund, a £750,000 funding and training programme across three years to support the wider sharing of national collections with museums across the UK through loans of key works and objects.

Created by the Garfield Weston Foundation and Art Fund the Weston Loan Programme is the first ever, UK-wide grant programme specifically designed to directly fund and empower regional and smaller local authority museums to borrow major works and collections of art and objects from national museums and galleries.

Twenty-six museum and galleries, along with 123 curators have already benefitted through grants from the scheme in its first two years with a range of exhibitions opening throughout 2018 and 2019.

This year the funding scheme sees loans including: JMW Turner's landscape masterpieces are now touring museums in the North of England; Wakefield Museum will host Ancient Egyptian mummies and artefacts from the British Museum in July; and George Stubbs' iconic equine portrait *Whistlejacket* travelling from the National Gallery to Milton Keynes in October.

Museums have seen significant increases in their visitor figures following support through the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund. In 2018, the first year of the scheme, Rugby Museum and Art Gallery saw a 70% increase in attendance for their exhibition *About Face* which featured artists' portraits borrowed from the National Portrait Gallery, while Manor

House Museum in Kettering attributed a 100% increase in monthly visitors year on year to its exhibition of treasures from the British Museum and Cannon Hall Museum in Kettering saw a 30% increase in visitor numbers during its exhibition of objects from the British Museum in Autumn 2018.

The scheme aims to widen access to works from national collections to audiences across the country, to strengthen the skills of up to 100 regional museum professionals and to share resources and expertise across the UK. It is now open for applications from museums of between £5,000 and £25,000 via [artfund.org/weston-loan-programme](http://artfund.org/weston-loan-programme)

Successful projects will be announced later in 2019. Loans of works of art and objects will go on display from 2020 onwards.

Sophia Weston, Trustee of the Garfield Weston Foundation, said: 'Up and down the country we know museum curators are brimming with ideas about famous works of art they would like to bring to their audiences locally. We are delighted to see that our programme is helping them overcome barriers to sharing works of art, forging new connections between museums and continuing to inspire many exciting exhibitions across the UK. We are looking forward to seeing more museums taking advantage of this unique loan programme so that many more local communities can benefit.'

Stephen Deuchar, Director of Art Fund, said: 'This scheme has shown that the loan of a single masterpiece can be transformative for a museum - sometimes even doubling daily visitor figures. We're proud to be partnering with the Garfield Weston Foundation on this imaginative funding scheme helping museums around the country, and we encourage anyone with a bright idea for 2020 to apply.'

Grants to museums will cover costs including: transportation of works of art and objects, insurance, conservation, installation, advocacy, marketing and audience development. The three-year, £750,000 initiative is awarding a minimum of £600,000 in grants, providing up to £150,000 for a range of costs including training and networking opportunities for museum professionals, evaluation and reporting of key learnings for the scheme, and other costs associated with promoting the exhibitions.

The Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund is intended to complement past and current programmes such as Arts Council England's 'Ready to Borrow' scheme, which is no longer running, and the Touring Exhibition Group's (TEG) 'Preparing to Borrow' programme as part of a joined-up funding approach to all stages of securing loans of works of art and objects. The charities are working closely with TEG and other partners to highlight the range of opportunities available.

Art Fund is encouraging interested UK museums to participate in one of the Preparing to Borrow workshops taking place around the country until 10 July run by TEG.

[www.artfund.org/weston-loan-programme](http://www.artfund.org/weston-loan-programme)

# Art Fund\_

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## Notes to Editors:

### Garfield Weston Foundation

Established over 60 years ago in 1958, the Garfield Weston Foundation is a family-founded, grant-making charity which supports causes across the UK with grants around £70million annually. It has donated over £1billion to charities since it was established.

One of the most respected charitable institutions in the UK, the Weston Family Trustees are descendants of the founder and they take a highly active and hands-on approach. The Foundation's funding comes from an endowment of shares in the family business which includes Twinings, Primark, Kingsmill (all part of Associated British Foods Plc) and Fortnum & Mason, amongst others – a successful model that still endures today; as the businesses have grown so too have the charitable donations.

From small community organisations to large national institutions, the Foundation supports a broad range of charities and activities that make a positive impact in the communities in which they work. More than 1,800 charities across the UK benefit each year from the Foundation's grants.

### 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)