

### MUSEUMS LOOK TO THE FUTURE WITH INNOVATIVE PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY RESPOND AND REIMAGINE GRANTS

- Over £600,000 in funding awarded in first round of £1.5m programme
- 18 museums and galleries supported across breadth of UK

The UK's museums are responding with innovation and imagination to the challenges posed by Covid-19: from taking a pop-up museum to a shopping centre to working with actors to engage audiences, installing outdoor exhibitions, and creating compelling learning resources for home-schooling. Today Art Fund announces £630,729 of funding for 18 projects supported through its new Respond and Reimagine grants, designed to meet immediate needs connected to Covid-19 and reimagine future ways of working.

Jenny Waldman, Director, Art Fund, said: *"We were inundated with applications to Respond and Reimagine, evidence of the vast need amongst museums and galleries whose funding models have been shattered by this crisis. But it is hugely encouraging to see ambitious and creative proposals from museums all over the country who are passionate about serving their local communities and engaging audiences, despite very challenging circumstances and devastating loss of income. Our help has never been in greater demand and we are grateful to Art Fund's members and donors to our #TogetherForMuseums campaign, whose generosity allows us to support museums."*

The first Respond and Reimagine grants have been awarded to organisations in all four nations ranging from contemporary art galleries to museums of local history, transport, science, technology, design, arts and culture. Recipients include The Box, Plymouth; The Foundling Museum, London; Ceredigion Museum, Aberystwyth; Void Art Centre, Derry; and Dundee Contemporary Arts. The applications saw organisations focusing on provision for schools and young people; thinking about their local communities as people remain closer to home; and equality, inclusion and diversity in audiences, programming and artistic practice.

In 2020 Art Fund will award £1.5m in Respond and Reimagine grants between £10,000 and £50,000 in three rounds. 114 applications were received in the first round alone: 16% were successful. The programme is part of £2m in adapted funding, new partnerships and digital activity to support museums through crisis, following Art Fund's Covid-19 Impact Report which found museums needed support in four key areas of collections, digital, workforce and audiences.

A grant to **The Wycombe Museum** will facilitate an innovative project taking the museum to the town's main shopping centre. A pop-up space will showcase objects from the collection in public

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for the first time in decades, the museum's recent *Windrush* project, and engagement activities for families. **The Foundling Museum** will strengthen connections with its diverse local audiences and share new research into black lives and women at the Foundling Hospital through a strengthened digital offer.

In response to the needs of children and educators the **National Civil War Centre** will use its grant to help turn its successful learning programme into a blended learning offer, working across the museum's sites, outdoors, in classrooms and home schools. Objects will travel in loan boxes, artefacts will be 3D printed, and livestreamed sessions tailored to the national curriculum will cover a broad range of historic periods and curriculum subjects based on the varied collection.

**The Novium Museum** will create virtual field trips to bring museum learning into the classroom and particularly supporting the teaching of Key Stage 2, whilst non-contact digital interpretation on site will provide an opportunity for engagement with the Roman collection for family and school audiences when they can return.

Respond and Reimagine grants will also support museums commemorating the Covid-19 crisis in their local communities. **Side Gallery and Cinema** in Newcastle will collect a new body of photography documenting the extraordinary time we are living through. **Ceredigion Museum**, Aberystwyth, will create *Human Threads*, an exhibition and digital project to memorialise local experiences of Covid-19 through a digital quilt. Inspired by the museum's collection of Welsh quilts, which embody a rich social history, the project also allows for digital improvements to help widen collections access.

Art Fund's Covid-19 Impact report identified that although 86% of museums had increased their online presence in response to temporary closures during lockdown, digital resources and expertise were patchy, with many left behind. **Jaywick Martello Tower**, a former Napoleonic fort in which social distancing is difficult, serves one of the most deprived areas in the UK and will use their grant to train volunteers to use equipment and software to aid moving the programme online. **Aerospace Bristol** will transform their unique archive material into a digital storytelling experience, and the **National Videogame Museum** will introduce a new online gallery dedicated to the visual arts in videogames with online access to the collection, workshops from games artists and opportunities to make your own videogame art.

Participatory experiences, not currently possible with social distancing measures in place, are a highlight for many museum visitors. At **The Box**, Plymouth – designed for dynamic, hands on engagement with exhibitions - visitors will be equipped with a stylus to safely engage with audio-visual technology. **The National Glass Centre**, Sunderland, will adapt their glassmaking demonstrations safely for visitors, whilst the **Florence Nightingale Museum** will work with actor-guides to manage social distancing whilst simultaneously immersing visitors in the nurse's world and legacy.

The full list of projects supported through the first round of Respond & Reimagine grants are:

- **Aerospace Bristol**, Bristol: £30,000 to create a new interactive online platform, transforming unique archive material and community stories into a digital storytelling experience.
- **Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution**, Bath: £40,000 to support their campaign Forward to the future, a blend of digital and traditional activity to adapt to Covid-19, including the development of a new app.
- **The Box**, Plymouth: £25,390 to supply visitors with a loaned stylus so they can safely interact with the exhibits and develop digital assets.

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- **Ceredigion Museum, Aberystwyth:** £40,000 to support an exhibition and digital project to engage the communities of Ceredigion in recording their experiences of COVID-19.
- **Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff:** £40,000 to deliver a visual art exhibitions programme in 2021-22, support staffing and the creation of a new digital engagement programme.
- **Collective, Edinburgh:** £40,000 to use insight from programming in response to Covid-19 to renew the organisation, commissioning research and digital projects with artists and audiences to improve the organisations' civic role.
- **Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee:** £44,759 for a broad package of support towards recovery, implementing measures to support audiences, digital engagement and workforce affected by Covid-19.
- **Florence Nightingale Museum, London:** £45,934 for a project drawing attention to Nightingale's health legacy in connection to Covid-19, and for the setting up of an interactive guided experience to manage social distancing, whilst immersing visitors in Nightingale's world at the time of her bicentenary.
- **The Foundling Museum, London:** £37,000 to adapt to the new normal, focusing on the hyper-local to build new partnerships, increase collections access and engage with the community.
- **Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast:** £38,000 to support the reopening of the gallery, enhance operations and staffing for the future and continue to support the visual arts in Northern Ireland
- **Jaywick Martello Tower, Clacton-On-Sea:** £23,000 towards creating safe access to a unique heritage space in an area of low cultural provision and moving their programme online.
- **National Civil War Centre, Newark:** £40,000 to adapt their schools learning programme to a blended offer of film, objects travelling via loan boxes, 3D printed artefacts and live streamed sessions and workshops.
- **National Glass Centre, Sunderland:** £40,000 to reimagine and adapt their glassmaking experiences offer, support new income generation opportunities and encourage visitors to return.
- **The National Videogame Museum, Sheffield:** £40,000 to support their National Videogame Gallery, a key digital development facilitating collections access and online learning
- **The Novium Museum, Chichester:** £21,646 towards an ambitious collections-based digital learning programme in response to the challenges Covid-19 poses for primary schools, consisting of virtual field trips and digital interpretation of their Roman Gallery.
- **Side Gallery and Cinema, Newcastle-upon-Tyne:** £20,000 to install outdoor exhibitions in marginalised communities, create a virtual cinema season of screenings and talks and collect photography that documents Covid-19.
- **Void Art Centre, Derry/Londonderry:** £30,000 to support the online expansion of their learning and community outreach programme Void Engage.
- **Wycombe Museum, High Wycombe:** £35,000 towards a new pop-up exhibition space and community hub in a shopping centre in High Wycombe, improving collections access and trialling new ways of working.

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The deadline for applications to the second round is 17 August. Through its fundraising campaign Together for Museums, Art Fund is rallying its supporters and museum goers across the UK to donate and help support as many ambitious projects as possible. For more information visit [www.artfund.org/together](http://www.artfund.org/together)

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Notes to editors:

## 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](http://www.artfund.org)