Art Fund, the national charity for art, announced today that it has awarded £1,144,655 in the latest two rounds of Reimagine grants for 2021. The support will go to 40 UK museums, galleries, historic houses, trusts and professional networks to help
them reimagine their activities following the pandemic. Recipients are located across Britain - from the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, to Cardiff in Wales, Carlisle in Cumbria, and to Derry/Londonderry in Northern Ireland.

Among the projects to be supported are: a reinterpretation of Paradise Mill, the largest collection of Jacquard silk handlooms in their original C18th-setting at The Silk Museum in Macclesfield; a new mindful audio guide for the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery in Exeter, co-created with local people who have lived experience of mental health difficulty; and a series of new portrait commissions and gallery redevelopment for Judges’ Lodgings in Lancaster to re-interpret the collection.

Art Fund’s director Jenny Waldman said, “Art Fund’s latest Reimagine grants will allow even more cultural organisations to deepen their resilience for the future, turning some of the challenges, but also learnings, of the last two years into even greater resources for their communities. Museums vitally need enhanced resources - such as in digital, specialist support and staffing - to truly build for the future. We are proud to support these impressive projects, something we could not have done without the exceptional generosity of our members and donors.”

The Reimagine grants will support large and small projects and professional networks and will help these organisations build expertise, capacity, connections and access as they navigate their way to recovery from the pandemic.

The first round of grants were announced in October 2021, the second round of grants were awarded in November, and the final round of 2021 Reimagine grants have just been confirmed.

Organisations were able to apply for support of between £5,000 and £50,000. 185 applications were received for the second and third rounds with a total ask of £6.2 million demonstrating the continued level of need in the sector.

In addition, building on their successful partnership and collaborative response to the Coronavirus pandemic, in 2021 Art Fund awarded £175,000 for Recovery Grants and Programmes to Museum Development UK (MDUK) a partnership of Museum Development England (nine English regional M D programmes, funded by Arts Council England); Museums and Galleries Scotland; the Welsh Government; and Northern Ireland Museums Council - targeted at small and medium-sized museums across the UK to support their on-going recovery from the pandemic. Through the 2021 collaboration a further 139 grants were made including to a digital skills training programme in Scotland and recovery training programmes in Wales. Art Fund contributed £280,000 in 2020 and £175,000 in 2021 to MDUK to support Recovery Grants and Programmes. MDUK has match funded this with over £624,000 across the two years.

Art Fund’s Reimagine grants have supported the following, among others:

Digital resources and skills will be enhanced to provide increased and more dynamic access for audiences. Hampshire Cultural Trust has teamed up with Ubisoft, creators of Assassin’s Creed Valhalla video game to create an interactive experience of life in Anglo-
Saxon Winchester combining contemporary objects and video game content. The Royal College of Physicians Museum in London will build on the success of recent digital events to trial new hybrid-format events in 2022 and embed these into future programming. Brighton Photo Fringe was one of the first blended festivals in England in 2020 and this year’s biennial programme will present an enhanced digital offer illuminating the role photography plays in all our lives. In the Outer Hebrides, Museum nan Eilean will create an online resource offering training to the local network of historical societies and online lessons for schools as well as a pilot of artificial intelligence (AI) interpretation of Lews Castle.

A number of projects will focus on families, schools and young people. Empowering young people to engage with the universal themes of Jane Austen’s writing is central to enhanced learning resources at Jane Austen’s House in Hampshire. At Wolverhampton Art Gallery, a gallery will be reimagined as a new community learning space – transformed through collaborations with schools, families and young creatives. And digitising objects from fifteen museums across the Highlands for Museums and Heritage Highland will create a portal enabling children, young people and teachers to explore collections from the region in new and exciting ways. In 2022 Art Fund aims to spend £1m on museum projects that reach and inspire young people and have been asking the public for help to reach this target through the campaign Energise Young Minds.*

Knowledge of community needs and the expertise to deliver those requirements will be deepened through several major projects: The Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-Upon-Avon will pilot a co-curation process with local community, focused on reimagining The Play’s The Thing, the RSC’s permanent exhibition in Stratford-upon-Avon, ahead of its relaunch in 2023. In Newcastle, Equal Arts will work with older people, including those living with dementia, to explore the life and work of artist, Thomas Bewick, as a creative way to support people who have been isolated and lost confidence during the pandemic. A new role of Heritage Officer will be supported at New Lanark World Heritage Site, providing additional resource to focus on community engagement and volunteering.

Reimagine grants aim to increase creativity and stability in the sector with funding provided for projects that enable experimentation, deepen engagement with diverse audiences, and result in greater expertise. Areas of priority for the programme are collections, digital, engagement and the workforce.

The funding is being made available in direct response to Art Fund’s survey of over 300 Museum Directors in the UK, published in May 2021 and reflects the demand there is for Art Fund support. In response to this and because we wanted to make an impact at a critical time, Art Fund’s Together for Museums campaign in 2020/21 raised over £1.1 million through the generosity of over 4,000 funders, including The Headley Trust. This, together with the ongoing support of members, Art Partners, donors and legacy gifts, make the Reimagine grants possible. Alongside this, Art Fund continues to provide grants for acquisitions and professional development.

Full details of round 2 and round 3 of allocations are outlined below:
Smaller grants (between £5K and £15K)

Round 2
- **The American Museum, Bath** - ‘Audience Research and Development’ - £15,000. Working with the Audience Agency to better understand the current visitor offer while identifying potential new audiences and ensure future plans to embrace and celebrate diversity.

- **Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham** – ‘Female Voice Season: Adeela Suleman 2022’ - £10,000. This is a major presentation of work by Pakistani Artist, Adeela Suleman, accompanied by activities devised with South Asian organisations and charities to reengage with communities who feel underrepresented by visual arts.

- **Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool** – ‘Re-Framing Culture’ - £5,600. A training programme for curators and aligned professionals exploring the process and impact of commissioning socially engaged photographers and developing non-cultural organisations as partners. The programme will be co-delivered with organisational partners from the Socially Engaged Photography Network.

- **Visual Arts South West, Bristol** - ‘Sustainability and Capacity of Associate Programmes’ - £15,000. A partnership with ‘a space’ arts, Aspex, CAMP, John Hansard Gallery, Quay Arts, Somerset Art Works and Spike Island to develop the capacity, reach and impact of associate programmes in South West England as vital support for independent practitioners in the visual arts sector.

- **Coldharbour Mill Trust, Devon** - ‘Design Residency’ - £7,600. This pilot project will explore cross-disciplinary collaboration through a new residency. Housed in the restored Yarn Store space, Emily Sorrell, an immersion designer, will explore innovative ideas for immersive learning experiences at this heritage site.

- **Cumbria’s Museum of Military Life, Carlisle** – ‘Audience Development’ £13,950. This project will undertake valuable audience research and consultation to build a framework for future audience development and sustainability, underpinned by ambitious plans to increase access to collections, develop digital engagement, new income generation opportunities and provide an engaging activity programme.

Round 3
- **Royal College of Physicians Museum, London** – ‘Hybrid events for a sustainable digital future’ £8,770. Building on a successful digital programme in 2020-21 the RCP Museum will capitalise on this increased reach by trialling new hybrid-format events in 2022 and embedding these into future programming.

- **Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum** – ‘Canaletto: A Venetian’s View’ £15,000. This exhibition exploring Canaletto’s artistic practice and influence will include a significant collection of Canaletto paintings lent for display alongside works from Worcester’s own collection.

- **Meadow Arts, Pershore** – ‘Avon Meadows — people, place, participation’ £14,800. In collaboration with Riverside Youth & Community Centre this project will support young people from Pershore to work alongside artist duo Juneau Projects to co-create artwork inspired by and responding to the Avon Meadows floodplain and the young people’s experience of Pershore and the rural context within which they live.

- **Brighton Photo Fringe** – ‘Join Up! - making digital platforms accessible’ £9,000. Building on one of the first blended festivals in England in 2020, the forthcoming photography biennial programme will present an enhanced digital offer, including an ambitious commission, illuminating the role photography plays in all our lives.

- **Equal Arts, Newcastle** – ‘Out and about with Thomas Bewick’ £13,500. This project will support older people, including people living with dementia, to explore the life, work and legacy of the artist Thomas Bewick. This work will prioritise people who have been isolated and lost confidence during the pandemic and need encouragement to re-connect socially and re-engage with creative and cultural activities.

- **Arnolfini, Bristol** – ‘A Bridge to Arnolfini’ £12,000. In partnership with Bridges for Communities, a charity working outside the cultural sector supporting asylum seekers and refugees settling in Bristol, this project focuses on contemporary visual art as a tool to address wider social needs, sharing stories unbound by language whilst promoting connectedness, wellbeing, exercise and creativity.

- **IWM North, Manchester** – ‘Tell us What we Don’t Know’ £10,000. This pilot project will bring together Manchester’s Yemeni community and artist, Amerah Saleh, to design and deliver online creative workshops resulting in new digital artworks. Using arts-informed methods and creative tools the artworks will amplify the participants’ voices in conversations resonant to their identity, experience, and the human impact of war.

- **Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter** – ‘Mindful Museum Audio Guide’ £7,209. A new partnership with Devon Recovery Learning Community to co-create a mindful audio resource to support the mental health and wellbeing of the local community as it recovers from the impact of Covid. Working with local people with lived experience of a mental health difficulty to co-create content for the guide, the project will also help RAMM better understand and respond to the needs of those experiencing mental health challenges.
Larger grants (between £15K and £50K)
Round 2

- **Matt’s Gallery, London** — ‘MattFlix’ £39,766. This project will see twelve new online commissions for MattFlix, an ongoing series of monthly digital projects as a means of supporting artists and engaging audiences. It will continue to build capacity and develop digital programmes, increasing access to original online content.

- **The Silk Museum, Macclesfield** — ‘Paradise Mill Regained’ £30,000. This project will reimagine the Mill, the largest collection of Jacquard silk handlooms in their original 18th-setting, by investing in training for current and new guides, deepening interpretation and introducing ways of broadening the experience for families and children.

- **Art360 Foundation** — ‘Artists’ Legacies in the Museum’ £33,750. This project engages three museum curatorial teams with the archives of Vanley Burke, Donald Rodney and Maud Sulter in Birmingham, London and Glasgow through workshops led by emerging curators, supported by mentors and the International Curators Forum. The project aims to develop tools for museums to enact transformative change through exhibitions, events and collecting practices, and culminates in a toolkit on preserving the Legacies of Black British Artists in the museum.

- **Tramway, Glasgow** — ‘Tramway Beyond Walls’ £50,000. This project will be a season of newly commissioned public artwork encouraging audiences to reflect on our collective futures exploring environmentalism, social justice and health. The works will include public sculpture, contemporary art interventions and participatory activities that will build on pilot activity which took place during lockdown.

- **Wolverhampton Art Gallery** — ‘Making Space’ £40,000. This project will reimagine an exhibition gallery as a new learning space for collaboration, creativity and community — inspired by artworks held by Wolverhampton Arts and Culture. Working with schools, community groups, artists, families, young creatives and visitors to create a welcoming place that meets the needs of communities now and in the future.

- **International Curators Forum (ICF) and Block 366, London** — ‘Diaspora Pavilion 2: London’ £40,000. This is a multi-site professional development project testing sustainable strategies for promoting UK emerging artists on national and international platforms. This iteration of ICF’s DP2 London will be hosted by and presented in collaboration with Block 336 in Brixton, London, featuring 4 site-specific, solo installations by UK-based artists between 2022 and 2023, including new commissions and community programming.

- **Touchstones Rochdale** — ‘Free-for-All’ £20,000. This is a three-part collaborative project between Touchstones Rochdale, the artist Harry Meadley,
community groups and the people of Rochdale. It seeks to reimagine the role civic gallery spaces and collections can play within their municipality and the communities they serve.

- **Hampshire Cultural Trust, Winchester** - ‘An Anglo-Saxon Experience’, £50,000. A new experience opening in autumn 2022 giving visitors an interactive insight into life in Anglo-Saxon Winchester at the time of Alfred the Great through immersive storytelling and the use of contemporary objects, complimented by assets from Ubisoft’s *Assassin’s Creed Valhalla* video game.

- **Brighton CCA** – ‘RESOLVE Commission’ £20,000. A collaboration with the RESO LVE collective will create a new sculptural installation at Brighton CCA as well as a participatory community engagement programme; a symposium, and a publication, supported by digital programming.

- **UP Projects, London** – ‘Constellations 2022’ £39,780. Constellations is a free, nine-month learning and development programme for artists, curators, producers and practitioners active and/or interested in the expanded field of public art. Constellations addresses an urgent line of enquiry relating to this field, while tackling barriers to access within the public art sector.

- **New Lanark World Heritage Site** – ‘Community Engagement and Volunteering’ £41,230. This grant supports a new role of Heritage Officer, with a focus on Community Engagement and Volunteering, enabling the Trust to implement a formal Community Engagement Strategy with a focus on making New Lanark an inclusive and welcoming place for all.

- **Queercircle, London** – ‘In Conversation Programme 2022’ £25,000. This free series will feature 48 talks with commissioned LGBTQ+ artists from around the world, to engage a broad demographic on the world’s most pressing issues from a queer perspective and highlight the ways in which art and creativity can bridge social, national and international divides.

- **Bluecoat, Liverpool** – ‘Visitor Experience workforce development’ £40,000. A new undertaking in supporting vital Visitor Experience staff and volunteers, investing in new skills and knowledge. Also developing a more sustainable approach to recruiting and managing volunteers by running three pilot projects, each attached to an exhibition in 2022.

- **London Transport Museum** – ‘Progressing Participatory Practice’ £30,000. This grant will build on the museum’s work with an external Advisory Board to create its brand new exhibition, *Legacies: London Transport’s Caribbean Workforce*. It will support ongoing collaboration to inform future programming with a view to embed participatory practice more widely.

Round 3
• Hastings Contemporary – ‘Adapting for the Future’ £49,425. This grant will fund a relaunched, vibrant outreach and engagement programme, including an enhanced digital offer, to build partnerships and reach diverse audiences locally and nationally. The new programme will support the gallery as a creative hub: an inclusive space that showcases international art and engages people through events, workshops and creative opportunities that appeal to all.

• Castlefield Gallery, Manchester; Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool; Touchstones Rochdale; University of Salford Art Collection and Shezad Dawood Studios – ‘Hybrid Futures’ £34,000. This project is a pilot initiative to grow and diversify public collections through a dynamic artist development programme. With a focus on the climate emergency and based on a distributed leadership model, it will highlight, challenge, embed and share learning on environmentally sustainable best practice through co-commissions to collect, exhibitions and interdisciplinary public engagement.

• Old Royal Naval College, London – ‘Revisiting Greenwich: The Talking Project’ £44,040. This oral histories project will record, archive and share the ways in which the heritage of Greenwich has shaped, and been shaped by, the lives of its visitors. By attending to the less physical, more experiential modes of heritage participants and visitors will be encouraged to consider how heritage belongs not just to the past but is alive in the present and future as well.

• The Holburne Museum, Bath – ‘Reimagining our Collection’ £44,595. This project will reimagine the online collection, enabling audiences to engage with the collection virtually with enhanced themes of storytelling, as well as interactive and immersive content to engage a broader demographic.

• Centre for Contemporary Art Derry~Londonderry – ‘Online & Remote Programmes’ £35,000. This grant enables CCA to run dedicated online and remote programmes by creating paid opportunities for artists to participate in digital residencies, podcasts, takeovers & Riso projects. It will also work with young people living in rural or deprived areas to collaborate with artists to create digital zines.

• g39, Cardiff – ‘Reimagine: socio-economic equality in the arts in Wales’ £45,000. This project will investigate how socio-economic inequality acts as a barrier preventing people from pursuing their engagement with the visual arts in Wales. By recognising and understanding barriers in the sector, pilot schemes can test best practice solutions as well as identifying where further research and consultation is required.

• Museums and Heritage Highland, Scotland – ‘Museum of the Highlands’ £48,900. A dynamic digital learning hub, this project brings together objects from fifteen museums across the Highlands, digitally showcasing the rich history and culture of the region. The portal will enable children, young people and teachers
to discover and engage with museum collections from across the Highlands in new and exciting ways.

- **Museum nan Eilean, Outer Hebrides** — ‘Digital Hebridean Stories’ £46,000. This grant will support the creation of events and digital content for the Year of Scotland’s Stories 2022 as well as an online resource and skills portal offering refreshed training to the local network of historical societies and online lessons for schools. They will also pilot an artificial intelligence (AI) project for interpretation of Lews Castle.

- **Judges’ Lodgings, Lancaster** — ‘Facing the Past: Enslaved Africans Art Commissions and Gillows Gallery’ £50,000. A partnership project to decolonise and re-interpret collections through new commissions in dialogue with the collection, community education and redevelopment of Gillows Gallery at Judges’ Lodgings.

- **Jane Austen’s House, Hampshire** — ‘Creativity & Curriculum: Engaging Today’s Young People with Jane Austen’s Eternal Themes’ £35,740. This project will empower young people to engage with the themes of Jane Austen’s work, including the role of women at home and in society, the impact of Empire, social inequality and personal freedoms, through enhanced school sessions, online resources and a refit of the Learning Centre.

- **Turner Contemporary, Margate** — ‘Connecting New and Existing Audiences with Art in the Wake of COVID-19’ £40,000. Working with local communities, a new Learning programme for 2022-23 will focus on reaching audiences from the local area who are least engaged with contemporary art. Exploring themes of identity and belonging, the plans will offer transformative experiences by developing creative skills, building self-confidence, and fostering a greater sense of connectedness within the community.

For downloadable press images, please go to: [https://bibli.artfund.org/web/5c6858dff7aaf5c0/reimagine-round-2-and-3/](https://bibli.artfund.org/web/5c6858dff7aaf5c0/reimagine-round-2-and-3/)

*For information about Art Fund’s Energise Young Minds campaign, visit: [https://www.artfund.org/get-involved/campaigns/energise-young-minds](https://www.artfund.org/get-involved/campaigns/energise-young-minds)

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Notes to editors:
About 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. In response to Covid-19 Art Fund made £3.6 million in urgent funding available to support museums through reopening and beyond, including Respond and Reimagine grants to help meet immediate need and reimagine future ways of working. A further £2million has been made available for the 2021 Reimagine grant programme. Art Fund is independently funded, supported by the 130,000 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. The winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2021 is Firstsite in Colchester. 

www.artfund.org