

PRESS RELEASE

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New funding gives curators 'the time and resources' to research and share nation's collections

- £600,000 for new initiative: Headley Fellowships with Art Fund
- Scheme created in direct response to declining numbers of curators and specialists nationally
- Investment goes to build specialist knowledge relating to treasured collections in museums across the UK

The Headley Trust and Art Fund announced today a new £600,000 funding programme to give curators the time and resources to develop specialist knowledge relating to their collections.

Headley Fellowships with Art Fund will invest in UK museums and their curators, to enable them to realise ideas for engaging audiences with the breadth of their collections. It also aims to broker new relationships and share knowledge between museums and curators across the country.

The scheme comes at a time when public spending on museums and galleries in England has declined in real terms by 13% over the last decade, and museums reliant on local authority funding have been hit the hardest, with cuts averaging 30% over the last 5 years. According to the Museum Association's 2018 study, 34% of local authority museums reduced the number of full-time staff in the past year alone, and Art Fund's own research has revealed a decline in the number of curators and specialist roles nationally over the last 15 years.

Headley Fellowships with Art Fund is a three-year programme which will enable 22 curators across the UK to undertake a fellowship. Mid-career and experienced curators will be given time away from their day-to-day responsibilities to embark on a period of in-depth research into their museum's collection, with funding provided to backfill their post either full-time for six months or part-time for a year.

Each fellowship will result in a creative project – such as an exhibition, re-display, book or learning programme - that shares the knowledge gained with other curators nationally and with the museum's audiences. Each fellow will also receive up to £5,000 towards training and research, which can be assigned towards travel, learning opportunities and courses of

study, the purchase of publications and other resources.

Applications for the scheme open today, Wednesday 18 July, via artfund.org/headley-fellowships. Applicant curators must be nominated by their institution, demonstrating a commitment to advancement of specialist knowledge across the organisation. Applications close on 15 October 2018. Successful curators for year one of the programme will be announced in early 2019 with fellowships expected to commence from April 2019.

Alan Bookbinder, Director, the Headley Trust, said, 'If there was ever a time to invest in the curators and specialists working with our incredible UK collections, then that time is now. I know that curators nationwide are brimming with ideas, both about avenues of research into the art and objects they care for, and how they might share this knowledge more widely. All they need is to be given the time and funding to do this, so I'm pleased that we'll be able to support this vitally important work through the Headley Fellowships with Art Fund.'

Stephen Deuchar, Director, Art Fund, said, 'UK museums hold some of the finest collections in the world. However, without sustained investment in the people who care for them, the knowledge they hold will be lost for future generations. The Headley Trust is to be applauded for their foresight in helping give curators the time and resources they need to build their understanding of the treasures in their care, and to share this with the wider world. We're delighted to be partnering with them on the Headley Fellowships with Art Fund and look forward to announcing the successful curators in the coming months.'

Please find more information here: <https://www.artfund.org/supporting-museums/curators-and-expertise/headley-fellowships-with-art-fund>

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Notes to Editors:

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 <http://www.sfct.org.uk/Headley.html> for information about the full range of the trust's interests

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 139,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 320 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