

PRESS RELEASE

5 December 2019

SEARCH FOR ART FUND MUSEUM OF THE YEAR 2020 BEGINS TODAY

Today, Thursday 5 December, Art Fund director Stephen Deuchar launches the search for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2020.

The biggest museum prize in the world – with a total prize fund of £140,000 – Art Fund Museum of the Year champions UK museums on a national stage, rewards innovative and transformative work and inspires more people to go and visit them.

The application deadline is 13 February 2020 and the shortlist of five museums will be announced in late April 2020. The winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2020 will be announced at an award ceremony in London in early July 2020. The winning museum will receive £100,000. Each other finalist will receive £10,000.

The competition has become an important vehicle for promoting the achievements of UK museums and raising their public profile nationally and internationally. Previously known as the Prize for Museums and Galleries, it was re-launched as Art Fund Museum of the Year in 2013 by Stephen Deuchar, who has chaired and selected the judging panel since then. He steps down from his role as Director of Art Fund on 31 March 2020. The 2020 Museum of the Year chair will be Art Fund trustee Dame Liz Forgan.

Forgan, a Trustee of Art Fund since 2012, has held positions including: Chair, Scott Trust 1993-2017; Deputy Chair British Museum 2008-2016; Chair Arts Council England 2008-2012; Chair Heritage Lottery Fund 1999-2008; Chair Churches Conservation Trust 1994-1998; Managing Director BBC Network Radio 1990-1993; Director of Programmes Channel 4 TV 1981-1990.

There are around 2,500 museums in the UK, many of them free, including national museums, local authority museums, university museums, independent museums, historic properties and heritage sites, National Trust properties and royal palaces. More than 100 million visits are made to UK museums every year, making museums some of the most popular visitor destinations in the country.

Art Fund Museum of the Year champions the work of museums – shining the spotlight on the originality and creativity of museums of all kinds and sizes from every part of the UK. To be considered, museums are asked to show how their achievements of the preceding year stand out, what makes their work inventive and the impact it has had on audiences. These achievements might include: innovative exhibitions and events, engagement programmes

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transforming lives in the local community, creative use of digital media and technology to connect with new audiences, a project that transforms the physical space of the museum, and leadership in areas of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Previous winners of the prize include: The British Museum, London (2011), Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery, Exeter (2012), William Morris Gallery, London (2013), Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield (2014), The Whitworth, Manchester (2015), V&A Museum, London (2016), Hepworth Wakefield (2017), Tate St Ives (2018), St Fagans National Museum of History (2019).

Art Fund Museum of the Year will continue its media partnership with the BBC in 2020 through programming across platforms.

How to apply:

Art Fund Museum of the Year is open to all museums, galleries and historic sites in the UK. Applications open on Thursday 5 December and the deadline to apply is 13 February 2020. For further information and to apply visit artfund.org/moty20-apply or contact Emma Mills at emills@artfund.org

@artfund #museumoftheyear artfund.org/museum-of-the-year

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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, and also helps museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, as well as making 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 St Fagans National Museum of History in 2019) and a range of digital platforms. Find out more about Art Fund and the National Art Pass at artfund.org