Application pack
About Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022

Tell the world your story.

Art Fund Museum of the Year is the world’s biggest museum prize. It celebrates exceptional museums, galleries and heritage sites, recognises imaginative work, and inspires more people to engage.

In 2022 it continues to be more important than ever to champion the UK’s vital museums, and we are seeking applications from organisations whose achievements tell the story of the creativity, ingenuity and resilience of the sector – with practice that can be sustained for audiences of today and tomorrow at the forefront of our minds.

The prize will be judged by an independent panel who pick one outstanding winner from a shortlist of five finalists. The panel will be chaired by Art Fund director Jenny Waldman, joined by judges with a spread of expertise from the museum, media, cultural and arts sectors.

The winner will be awarded £100,000, and each of the other finalists will receive £15,000.

We have endeavoured to make the 2022 application process light-touch and easy to access, and applicants and chosen finalists will be guided and supported fully at every stage.

Could 2022 be your year? Read on to find out more.
Could it be you?

As we collectively register the impacts of the pandemic, museums have been a source of great inspiration, escape, and support for many people. Organisations have shown incredible imagination and creativity in adapting in the face of constant change and challenge – finding new ways of working, new stories to tell and new audiences to engage. As we all look to the future we are interested to hear from organisations who have embraced these changes and who are finding ways to make this creativity and resilience sustainable for the next generation of museum visitors.

Are you creating innovative projects or engagement programmes which make a difference to people’s lives?

Are you putting on bold and imaginative exhibitions or displays which broaden audiences?

Are you delivering inventive activities and resources especially for young people?

Has the last year been one of of exceptional achievement for your organisation?

We want to share how important museums are, to advocate for your work and share your story with everyone.

The judges are keen to hear from all kinds of organisations, no matter their shape, size or location or whether you have a collection or not.

You can choose to focus on one thing in your application or give us an overview of several types of activity. We ask only that you can tell us, in your own words, what you did in the last year which showed creativity and resilience, how this made a difference, and how you will sustainably build on this in the future.

So, if you have a story to tell, we strongly encourage you to apply.
Why you should apply

There are many benefits to your organisation if you are shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year.

You’re likely to see an increase in attendance and engagement, a strengthened profile, a boost in support from stakeholders and a greater awareness of who you are and what you do. It’s the perfect opportunity to galvanise your visitors, both locally and nationally, and to build lasting relationships, all the more vital in 2022.

The prize awards £15,000 to each finalist and £100,000 to the winner. We don’t expect you to tell us how you’ll use the money; we award it simply on the understanding that it will be spent to the benefit of your audiences.

Throughout the process Art Fund will be there to guide and support you. We’ll provide the tools for a successful campaign, both on the ground and online. We’ll also drive visitors to your organisation through our digital and marketing support, reaching over 130,000 National Art Pass and Student Art Pass members as well as audiences nationally and internationally.

All we ask in return is a willingness to collaborate closely with us so we can help you make the most of being shortlisted.
Timeline

5 January
Application portal opens

8 February
Applications close at noon

Late February
Longlist of organisations selected

Mid-March
Judges meet longlist representatives and select five finalists

Late March
Art Fund’s team meet with finalists to prepare for campaign

Early May
Public announcement of shortlist

June
Judges’ visits

Early July
Winner announced
How to apply

If you think your museum or gallery is the next Art Fund Museum of the Year, the best way to begin the process is to read this pack and look at our FAQ’s. These should answer all your initial queries. If you have any remaining questions we recommend you have a conversation with prize project manager Amy Dickson on 020 7225 4836 or 07734 229 959.

To begin the application process please go to artfund.org/museum-of-the-year-apply

You will be asked to log in to or create a My Art Fund account to process your online application.

To apply you will need:

– your completed online application form (the form can be filled out in My Art Fund). This year’s application form is very straightforward and should not take long to complete. The form asks you to provide some information about your organisation and to briefly answer three questions: What did you do in the last year which showed imagination and creativity? How did this make a difference? How will you sustainably build on this in the future?

– a short letter of support from your director confirming their wish for the organisation to be considered for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022 and agreeing to our terms and conditions for finalists (see p8). This should be no more than one page in length.

– up to eight pieces of supporting digital media (photographs, films, screenshots) that best illustrate your application. If you plan to include films please do not send more than four, and they should have a total running length of no more than 10 minutes. If you plan to send PDFs please limit this to two existing files.

The deadline to apply is midday, Tuesday 8 February 2022.
Next steps

Following the deadline your application will be reviewed by an internal panel, who will compile a longlist of organisations. Up to two representatives from each of the longlisted organisations will be invited to meet the judges over Zoom in mid-March.

There are two weeks between the selection of the longlist and the Zoom meetings, during which we’ll be in touch to help you prepare. Each meeting will take 30 mins where you’ll have an opportunity to give a short presentation, followed by a conversation with the judges.

Following the judges’ meeting we will bring together the selected five finalist organisations, again on Zoom, to discuss how Art Fund can support you over the campaign period and how you can make the most of being selected.

In early May there will be a public announcement of the shortlist.

Finally, the judges will visit the finalists as a group in June, to help them make their decision.

The winner will be announced in early July. The format of the celebration will be decided in due course.
Terms & conditions

We ask longlisted organisations to:

– Be present to meet with the judges in March to discuss your application.

We ask shortlisted organisations to:

1. Work collaboratively with us as part of a joint initiative to celebrate and promote the shortlist. Art Fund can provide advice and press and marketing support as needed.

2. To sign a Memorandum of Understanding which outlines mutual areas of responsibility and expectations between Art Fund and all finalists.

3. Be represented at the evening celebration event in July 2022.

4. Support the summer audience engagement campaign with a special benefit for National Art Pass visitors from the date of the shortlist announcement to after the announcement of the winner, the duration and details to be determined in conversation with Art Fund’s marketing team. (This could be a free or discounted admission offer, for example, or shop and/or café discount).

5. Display Art Fund print and digital materials, such as posters and digital assets, at least for the duration of the campaign onsite and online.

6. Provide Art Fund with feedback at the end of the prize process to help us assess the impact of Art Fund Museum of the Year and make improvements for the future.
Contact details

For further information and guidance, please contact prize project manager Amy Dickson on adickson@artfund.org, 020 7225 4836 or 07734 229 959.