

Acquisitions Programme

Guidance for applicants

Art Fund_



Index

Welcome	2	4. Being part of our network	31
Key contacts	4	Museum Marketing Team	32
1. Before you apply	5	Staying in touch	32
Programme eligibility	6	Acknowledging your grant	33
Funding streams and decision times	7	5. Further advice and guidance	34
Pre-application advice	8	A. Other funding	35
How much to apply for	8	B. VAT and tax remission	36
How often to apply	9	C. Auctions	37
Terms and conditions	9	D. Provenance and due diligence	38
2. How to apply	10	E. Treasure	40
Accessing the online application forms	11	F. Accreditation	40
Privacy and data protection	11	G. Loans and tours	41
Step by step guidance	12	H. De-accessioning and transfer of objects	41
Supporting documents	24		
Application checklist	25		
Submitting your application	26		
3. What happens next?	27		
Decision	28		
Confirmation of grant offer	29		
How to claim your grant	29		
Announcements and press	30		
Evaluation	30		

Welcome

The guidance is set out in five sections and is hyperlinked so you can move between sections and access external resources.

Art Fund was founded as the National Art Collections Fund in 1903. We provide funding, training, promotion and networking to support your organisation's ambitions. We believe in the transformative power of art – for museums and galleries, for their audiences and for wider communities. We receive no government funding, with all those who buy a National Art Pass helping to support the work that we do and our grant giving from Cornwall to the Orkney Islands.

The acquisitions grants programme has supported hundreds of museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives to acquire works of art and objects for their collections for public benefit. We want to help you develop your collections, expertise and share great art with wide audiences. To find out more about our statement of public benefit www.artfund.org/supporting-museums/apply-for-an-acquisition-grant/acquisition-grants-statement-of-public-benefit

We welcome applications from organisations we have worked with previously and those who we have not yet worked with. We know that new acquisitions can be transformative for organisations and want to know more about how building your collection will benefit your organisation and your audiences.

This guidance will help you consider whether this funding programme is for you, and provides further information on eligibility and how to submit a strong application.

1. before you apply

Need advice or want to know if your organisation or the potential acquisition is eligible? Find out more here.

2. how to apply

Step by step guidance and more detail about the supporting information we need to progress an application.

3. what happens next?

From claiming your grant to helping us evaluate the programme, find out what is required if you have been awarded a grant.

4. being part of our network

Our support doesn't stop after we have awarded you a grant. Our network offers many opportunities to promote your organisation as well as skills and training for your staff. Find out how to stay in touch and acknowledge our support for your organisation here.

5. further advice and guidance

Want to know more about other funders, how to bid at auction or the impact of VAT on a potential acquisition? From the Treasure Act to the importance of provenance and ethical collecting, this section will signpost you to other sources of information.

Key contacts

From your initial enquiry to support promoting a new exhibition, there are a number of key contacts across the organisation who will be able to assist you at different points.

Initial advice, the application process, claiming your grant, evaluation and ideas or questions about other funding

Acquisitions contacts in the programmes team

General Enquiries

020 7225 4865

programmes@artfund.org

Ying Tan

Senior Programmes Manager, Collections

020 7225 4866

ytan@artfund.org

Nancy Saul

Programmes Coordinator

020 7225 4865

nsaul@artfund.org

If wishing to discuss a new application or for general advice, please contact Ying Tan in the first instance or contact the general enquiries line.

Planning press announcements, managing communications and providing images

Communications team

Lucy Hawes

Head of Press

020 7225 4804

lhawes@artfund.org

Images

images@artfund.org

Acknowledging your grant, promoting your organisation and being part of our network

Museum Marketing team

Charlotte Wood

Senior Marketing Manager, Museums

020 7225 4854

cwood@artfund.org

Merrin Kalinowski

Museum Marketing Relationship Manager

020 7225 4888

mkalinowski@artfund.org

1. Before you apply

Programme eligibility

What we will support

The acquisition programme offers grants to support the purchase of extant works of art and other objects of artistic interest, dating from antiquity to the present day. On a case by case basis, applications for commissioned work can be considered where the resultant work of art is accessioned as part of a permanent public collection.

Within this broad category our criteria include:

- Objects of national and international importance, including high value items subject to temporary export licence deferral or being offered with tax remission;
- Objects of significant regional interest judged to be of good museum quality;
- Objects which will artistically enrich collections and support their expansion and development
- Objects where there is associated touring or public programme linked to the acquisition.

Who we will support

Public museums, galleries, historic houses, libraries and archives based in the UK or Channel Islands.

Applicants must be open for at least half the week for at least six months of the year.

Applicants must be fully or provisionally Accredited through the Arts Council Accreditation scheme (please see Section 5. F for further advice).

Exclusions under this programme

We do not offer funding under this programme in the following instances, however please see [Section 5.A](#) for further advice on other funders to approach.

- Where objects are primarily of social-historical interest; scientific or technological material; or letters, manuscripts or archival material with limited aesthetic inscription
- Where objects are unavailable for viewing by an Art Fund Trustee or appointed representative; Where applicants or someone appointed on their behalf has not viewed the object;
- Inclusion of costs associated with acquisitions, such as valuation costs, framing and display, the conservation and restoration of works, transport and storage costs, temporary or permanent exhibitions and digitisation projects;
- Applications if the applicant has already purchased or made a commitment to purchase the object, or made a financial commitment to the project;
- Applications from individuals, artists' groups, commercial organisations, hospitals, places of worship, schools or higher educational institutions. If you are from an organisation listed above and have a permanent collection and can meet our public access requirements, please contact us to discuss possible eligibility further.
- Whilst the acquisitions programme does not support touring costs, education or community projects, salary costs or capital costs we are interested to hear about your wider proposals and where a strategic case might be made we may invite further discussion about ways in which we could work with you.

Where there is a significant programme of activity associated with an acquisition we may consider offering funding as a proportion towards both acquisition and programme on a case by case basis.

Funding streams and decision times

We currently offer three funding streams under the acquisitions programme:

Main grants

A grant falls under the main grants funding stream if the grant awarded would be above £7,500 and/or where the total cost of the work is £15,000 or above.

Main grants are considered at one of five Trustee meetings which take place across the year. Please contact us to find out the upcoming application deadlines.

A meeting normally takes place five to six weeks after the application deadline.

All works being considered for a main grant must be brought to London to be viewed by Art Fund Trustees on the day of the meeting.

If it is not possible for the work to be viewed at the Trustee meeting, alternative arrangements must be made. Trustees cannot award a grant without the work of art being viewed.

Small grants

A grant falls under the small grants funding stream if the grant awarded would be £7,500 or less and where the total cost of the work is £15,000 or less.

Small grants are considered on a rolling basis. You can apply at any time and we aim to get you a decision within eight weeks, subject to volume of business, receipt of all required information and availability of the work to be viewed.

Viewing of the object or work of art is arranged by Art Fund on a case by case basis, either by a Trustee or an appointed representative.

Art Fund may also occasionally award larger grants than requested at our discretion, or where the applicant can demonstrate exceptional need.

Auctions

We can fast-track grant applications for potential acquisitions coming up at auction whether being sold in New York or a local countryside auction house. Please contact us at the earliest opportunity if you are aware that something is coming up at auction. You don't need to wait until all the information has

been published by the auction house or your organisation has made a definite decision to proceed with putting a bid together.

Applicants are strongly advised not to contact the auction house prior to discussing the application with us.

We need a minimum of seven working days for an auction in London, and ten working days for an auction outside London (including international auctions). When discussing your application with us, we will advise on the deadline by which your application should be submitted.

An application can be withdrawn at any stage, but if submitted too late we may not have enough time to process your application.

Viewing of the object or work of art is arranged by Art Fund, either by a Trustee or an appointed representative. This normally takes place during the public viewing period before the sale.

[Section 5.C](#) of this document provides further information how auctions operate and how to bid at auction.

Commissions

Commissions can be considered on a case by case basis under either the main or small grant funding streams. All commissions must be discussed prior to beginning an application so that we understand fully the scope of the work, commissioning process and your plans for long-term display, care and access. If we agree to accept an application there is a specific application form that will be released to you to complete and submit.

Pre-application advice

All applicants should contact Ying Tan, Senior Programmes Manager, Collections to discuss a potential application in the first instance. She can be contacted on 020 78225 4866 or ytan@artfund.org. If she is unavailable please contact the team on 020 7225 4865. By discussing your application with Ying or another member of the team, we will be able to give advice on eligibility, timescales, deadlines for applications and your level of grant request to Art Fund.

The programmes team are happy to talk to you about your proposals at any stage and will give informal advice as you are developing your plans.

When you contact us about a possible grant application we will log your contact information and details about the nature of your enquiry to support our grants administration processes and ensure that we can remain in contact with you as your plans progress.

Information about how we hold your data and our privacy notice can be accessed on our website: www.artfund.org/pages/privacy-and-cookies

How much to apply for

Our funding ranges from a few hundred pounds to hundreds of thousands of pounds. We normally fund only part of the cost of an acquisition, however in very exceptional circumstances we may consider offering 100% of the required funding.

Like many grant giving organisations we have limited funds available and strong interest and competition for our funding.

There is no fixed percentage for which you must apply, however we expect you to explore the possibility of applying to all appropriate funding sources for which you might be eligible (see [Section 5.A](#) for information on other funding sources).

As part of any initial discussions we can advise you on the appropriate level of grant request before you submit your application.

In addition to deciding not to offer a grant, our Trustees may make reduced grant offers. They will consider the pressure on available funds, your other funding sources, strength of application and whether or not they think the work is fairly priced based on the independent valuation advice received in support of your application.

How often to apply

We do not limit the number of times that an organisation can apply for our funding in any time period, however we like to see evidence of a strategic and considered approach when developing your collection through new acquisitions.

We are aware that opportunities to make good acquisitions can present themselves simultaneously or in quick succession. Where you would like to submit multiple applications, please contact us to discuss so we can manage how these applications will be taken forward. If there is no time-sensitivity, it is our advice that applications should be staggered. In all instances we would need to be convinced that each application you make is a priority for your organisation and complements your collection development policy.

Terms and conditions

Please ensure that the person with relevant authority in your organisation has read and understood our terms and conditions before submitting an application. At the time of submission, we will ask you to confirm that these have been read and understood. At the time of claiming a grant, you will need to sign an agreement saying that you accept our terms and conditions. If applying in partnership with other organisations for a shared acquisition, all partners will have to sign our terms and conditions.

Our full terms and conditions can be accessed on our website: www.artfund.org/assets/supporting-museums/apply-for-an-acquisition-grant/grant-conditions.pdf

If your organisation has already received an acquisitions grant from us, you will already be in our partner museum network.

For new applicants if you are successfully awarded a grant and accept our terms and conditions, you will join our network. [Section 4](#) explains in greater detail the opportunities for us to work together to promote your organisation, to thank our members and enable them and the wider public to see works of art that they have helped acquire.

To help facilitate this, our terms and conditions ask you to:

- Give free admission to your permanent collections for National Art Pass holders. Give free or half-price entry to your temporary exhibitions.
- Make a permanent acknowledgement of our help.
- We expect to be fully acknowledged in all credit lines and associated material relating to the acquisition, including when on loan or tour to other organisations.
- Collaborate over publicity and promotional work.
- Notify us of any long term loan of the acquisition or sale or transfer of the object in future.

2. How to apply

Accessing the online application forms

You can apply for a grant using our online application system. To access the application forms you will need register for a 'My Art Fund' account as a professional user.

If you do not have an account, please register using the following link: www.artfund.org/my-art-fund/professional-registration

If you have a 'My Art Fund' account, but cannot see the online forms, please contact the programmes team on programmes@artfund.org and we will update your account to have professional user status. This will mean you can access our grant applications and other services available to those working or volunteering in the sector.

When you log-in, the link to applications is under the heading 'Funding & opportunities'. Select 'Create and view applications' and follow the on screen instructions to select the appropriate application form. If you require the application form in an alternative format, please get in touch.

If applying for a commission, please discuss with the team first. If we decide to progress an application, a form, specific to commissioned works will then be shared with you on the online system.

Privacy notice and data protection

Information requested is for the purposes of administering, monitoring and evaluating grants. Our privacy notice is available online at the following link: www.artfund.org/pages/privacy-and-cookies

Please ensure you have any relevant consent from third parties to share any personal data with us.

Step by step guidance

In this section we explain what information is needed at which stage in the application process and provide further advice on submitting a strong application.

Each section of the form can be navigated by moving through the six sections listed on the top left of the page:

1. Contact and organisation information
2. Catalogue
3. Financial details
4. Case for acquisition
5. Impact and future plans
6. Submission

Things to note:

Please back-up your work by saving progress on a regular basis using the save button on screen. If you need to paste information from an offline draft you can use the 'Ctrl+V' command on your keyboard.

The form can be downloaded as a pdf after final submission.

The form allows for additional supporting documents to be uploaded under [Submission](#)

The form has some mandatory fields (marked *) which must be completed before you can move to the next stage and/or submit the form. If you try to submit without completing these, an error notification will appear which highlights the section of the application form which needs amending in red.

All numerical fields should be entered without commas or symbols, so £100,000 would be simply entered as 100000.

Please make sure you select the form for the relevant funding stream (large grants, small grants or auction). Unless specified, all questions below are relevant across the three funding streams (large grants, small grants and auctions).

If at any time you encounter an error or difficulty in using the form, please contact programmes@artfund.org or 020 7225 4865

Section 1. Contact and organisation information

Application heading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– The application header is how your application will be described in correspondence with you.– Please set out in the following format: your institution, name of artist(s), title of work or collection e.g. Ferens Art Gallery, Pietro Lorenzetti, <i>Christ Between Saint Paul and Peter</i>.– If the artist is or maker is not attributed, please write 'unknown' e.g. The British Museum, unknown, <i>Medieval Ring</i>– If you are applying for multiple works or a collection, please give the group of works a title e.g. Victoria and Albert Museum, Various artists, Collection of Middle Eastern Photography.
Your details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– In this section we would like to know more about your organisation. If your organisation looks after multiple sites, please tell us the name of the main organisation and also the individual venue where the acquisition would be primarily displayed e.g. English Heritage would be the main, or parent, organisation but Eltham Palace would be the primary venue where the work would be displayed or stored.– Please provide the name of the organisation who owns the collection, and the organisation you would like us to pay. This is particularly relevant in instances where a local authority may own the collection but it is managed by a separate organisation.– If you are unclear about your organisation's legal status, please seek clarity from the relevant person in your organisation.– To be eligible for our funding we expect organisations to be fully or provisionally Accredited. If you are not fully Accredited (e.g. you are not eligible for Accreditation or are currently applying for Accreditation) please provide further information. Where your organisation is not Accredited you should provide us with supporting information which demonstrates how your organisation meets good collection care standards. For further information please see Section 5.F of this guidance note.
Curator responsible for collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– We are aware that applications are often collaborative and are submitted by colleagues in different departments. In this section we would like you to provide the details of the curator who is leading on the acquisition.

Joint applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– If you are applying in partnership with one or more organisations to jointly acquire an object, please provide details of your partners here.– The applicant who is submitting the form is considered the 'lead applicant' and will be who we contact in the first instance.– All partners will need to sign up and accept our terms and conditions.– Whilst a signed partnership agreement is not a requirement at the time of application, if a grant offer is made you will be expected to provide this to be able to access our funding.– At the point of application submission you should provide either a draft agreement or a detailed overview of how your partnership will work as a supporting document.– If you are working with other organisations for shared activity, e.g. tours or loans, but are not making the acquisition with them, then this does not need to be detailed in this section. You can expand on these activities under Impact and Future Plans
Other contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Please provide contact details for another person in your organisation who we can contact about the application with any queries in your absence.– Please also provide your press and marketing contacts so that we know who to contact should a grant be awarded.

Section 2. Catalogue

Under this tab you can add multiple records for individual works of art.

We can consider applications for multiple objects on one application form providing they are all being sold by the same vendor.

If your application is for a group of works of art or objects larger than 20 in number this is considered a collection. For collections you only need to create one cataloguing section. Please contact the team for further advice on this point.

Work of art	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– If the work or object has a given title, please include here e.g. <i>Sunflowers</i>– If the work or object is untitled, please give a descriptive title e.g. <i>Medieval gold ring with inscription</i>– If you are applying for a collection (more than twenty objects), please give a descriptive title e.g. <i>A collection of photographs depicting the Lake District</i> or <i>The Staffordshire Hoard</i>– Please upload a primary image of the work. Additional images can be uploaded under the final section, Submission. Please provide an image caption and picture credit.
Artist details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Information about artists will be used for monitoring purposes so we can consider the types of work and artists we are supporting through our grant giving– If the artist is unnamed, please give 'unknown' as the artist's name.– If the artist is still alive, please leave the 'died' field blank. If the precise dates of an artist's practice are unknown, please select the relevant approximate date category.
Work details	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Please select the most relevant categories from the options available for date, type of work and medium. There is an option for 'other' in all instances.– For collections please pick a main work type and medium. There is opportunity expand further later in this section.– Geographical area of the work refers to the broad area in which the work was produced.– If the work is being sold from an edition, please indicate which number in the series you are intending to purchase
Dimensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Please complete only dimensions which are known.– If measurements have been provided in imperial units, please convert these to metric (e.g. cm or kg).– For moving image or film works, please provide the duration including seconds.

Additional information for collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This question is only required if you are applying for a collection (defined as 20 or more objects or works of art of similar material or varied materials connected contextually). If you are applying for a collection, please provide a catalogue list as a supporting document which provides further detail of the works or objects in the collection or grouping. – For works or collections where there are multiple mediums or work types which are relevant, please include this information here.
Provenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Before making an application, you must be fully satisfied as to the legitimacy of the vendor and the sale. We expect applicants to take full responsibility for ensuring that any object that they wish to acquire with Art Fund’s help is legally and ethically sound. – Please provide a full account of the object’s previous history including, where appropriate, supporting evidence that it was legally exported from its country of origin. Should the provenance be incomplete, you will need to provide additional information such as an Art Loss Register certificate. Please see Section 5.D of this guidance for further guidance on provenance and due diligence checks. – Please include any exhibition in which the work has previously been included, along with references to any relevant literature.
Condition report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You will need to confirm that you, or someone appointed by you, has viewed the work, or will do so in the near future, no matter where in the world the work is situated. A final decision will not be made on your application until this has taken place. – Please state if the condition of the work of art or object is: excellent, very good, good, fair, poor or unknown. – A conservation report must be provided or commissioned if the condition is stated less than excellent.
Treasure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please confirm if you are applying for an acquisition which is considered Treasure under the 1996 Act or as Treasure Trove under the Scottish Treasure system . – If you are not applying for an item considered Treasure, please leave the section for additional information blank. – For further details about Treasure and our requirements, please see Section 5.E.

Cost of work

- When purchasing from a dealer or commercial gallery, we expect applicants to negotiate a museum discount. Most vendors will give museums a discount on the selling price, usually a minimum of 10% of the original price, so do not be afraid to ask! If a discount has been negotiated, please also confirm the price before discount.
- Please confirm if your organisation can reclaim VAT. If your organisation can reclaim VAT, the price payable may be reduced in certain circumstances.
- The total cost of the work should be the actual price payable to your organisation after discount (inclusive of any fees or artist resale right, but exclusive of VAT if it is anticipated that this can be reclaimed). If sold overseas import tax may be incurred, please calculate this as part of the total cost.
- Where we ask if the cost includes any tax remission, this concerns acquisitions which are being offered through either the Acceptance in Lieu or Private Treaty Sale schemes which are administered by Arts Council England. If this is applicable, please provide additional details.
- **For all grant streams:** please see [Section 5.B](#) for further guidance on VAT, tax remission and private treaty sales.
- **For auctions only:**
 - Please confirm the high and low estimates as published in the sale catalogue.
 - Please provide your maximum bid amount. This will inform the associated fees and other costs.
 - Check the auction catalogue to see what percentage of 'buyer's premium' is charged on top of your bid. This varies from auction house to auction house.
 - VAT is often added on top of the buyer's premium for works sold at auction. Please indicate if your organisation can reclaim VAT. If so, you may need to register to bid 'outside the margin scheme' which will allow the auction house to issue a VAT invoice.
 - If you do not feel confident in bidding at the sale you may wish to instruct an agent. Some agents may offer to assist for free, others may charge a fee. We will accept applications that include agent fees, but ask that this is itemised so we can consider if the level of agent fee is an appropriate use of our funds.
 - The auction house catalogue will detail if Artist Resale Right is charged on top of the hammer price. If so, please provide the calculation.
 - The maximum total cost will be the amount of money that your organisation would have to pay per lot based on your proposed maximum bid. It includes your maximum bid, plus buyer's premium, any VAT or import tax (which is not reclaimable), Artist Resale Right (if incurred) plus agent fee (if applicable).
 - [Section 5.C](#) provides further information on bidding at auction. If you have any questions about the auction process, please get in touch and we'll be happy to advise.

Independent valuation / Advice on your bid at auction

- Please confirm the name of the person providing the independent valuation, their professional position and organisation (if affiliated) and the valuation figure they have provided.
- It is crucial that whoever provides this valuation is not told of the selling price, either by the vendor or the applicant.
- Evidence of the independent valuation (either an email or letter) must be submitted as a supporting document.
- Further guidance on obtaining an independent valuation:
 - We want our funding to go as far as possible, so expect applicants to ensure the work they wish to acquire is offered at a reasonable price. Therefore we require all applicants to provide us with an independent valuation.
 - An independent valuation should be sought from a specialist in the field who is familiar with market values, for example an auction house or dealer. Valuations from curatorial colleagues will not normally be accepted.
 - The person providing the independent valuation should, where possible, provide context to the figure given e.g. comparisons to previous sales or other information regarding levels of market interest.
 - If you have difficulty in identifying a suitable person to provide an independent valuation, we suggest you contact the relevant department in a National museum, who may be able to advise you further.
 - If there have been any negotiations to date with the vendor, or if there is other context that you would like to note which details how the price has been agreed, there is space for you to comment on this. If you have sought advice from a number of sources on potential value, you can expand on this as well.
- Please note that if you are applying for a work which is subject to a temporary export bar where the price payable is fixed, we would ask that some brief commentary is provided on the value of the work as the price payable will be in the public domain.
- For contemporary works of art the independent valuation needs to be supplied from someone with trade experience who does not deal in work by the artist that you are hoping to acquire.
- If applying for a commissioned work we can offer additional guidance on what we would like to see concerning a valuation. This may vary dependent on the type of commission, so please do discuss directly with us.

For auctions only: We do not require an independent valuation to be submitted for auction applications, however we do ask that you take advice on your maximum bid level from someone with market expertise, such as an art dealer or auction house who is not associated with the sale. You should confirm who has advised you on your maximum bid, their professional role and upload a supporting document which provides evidence of this advice. If you wish to bid above or below the level advised, there is space for you to explain why you would like to do so.

For treasure only: We ask that all valuations which may have been reviewed by the Treasure Valuation Committee (England, Wales, Northern Ireland) or the Treasure Trove system in Scotland to be shared with us, including any summary or report that explains how the decision on price has been reached.

Financial details for grant application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Total cost of works should be the total amount of all objects you are seeking to acquire. For one object or work of art this will be straight forward, for multiple objects please add these up. – Please confirm the grant request to Art Fund.
Other funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This section asks you to breakdown and give details of all funding that you are seeking from other sources. By clicking 'Add funding sources' you can add multiple sources. For each listed you should indicate whether this funding is secured or not. – The total funding package should be the total cost of all your funding sources and should not exceed the total cost. – We ask that you provide reasons for any lack of other funding. If you have approached other relevant funders and they have given advice that your application is unlikely to qualify, or if any other application has been formally rejected, please explain the reasons for this. If your organisation is unable to commit any internal funding, you should also explain why here. – If you are applying to other funders, e.g. the National Lottery Heritage Fund for costs towards an associated activity, exhibition or touring programme, please provide information about this. If applicable you can also upload a supporting document which explains the activities and associated costs. On a case by case basis we may consider offering our grant towards both acquisition cost and associated activity.
Vendor details / Auction details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Vendor details are required and it is standard practice for Art Fund to publish the names of vendors as part of the catalogue information given in print and online. Please ensure you have consent to share this information with us. – Please enter the name of the vendor in terms of how it should be officially published. If the vendor wishes to remain confidential, please write 'private collection'. – If the vendor's name is to remain confidential you must include this under 'vendor name – for internal purposes'. This name will only be shared with our Trustees and will not be released publically. – Where the vendor wishes to remain confidential please state the full reasons for this, which will be passed to Trustees. – In instances where the vendor's name is not forthcoming, we may not be able to offer a grant.

For treasure only: Whilst we do want to know the name of the landowner and finder, we would not publish these unless we have permission to do so. We would not publish specific details about the location of the find spot as we are aware that this may encourage looting activity.

For auctions only: If the vendor (selling through the auction house) is known, please include this information here. As the auction house is acting for the seller, they may not be able to release the vendor's name. If so, please simply enter the name of the auction house.

- For auction applications there is an additional section of the form to complete 'auction details'.
- Please provide the name of the auction house, title of sale and lot number(s) you wish to bid on.
- Please confirm who will be bidding for you at the sale.
- If you successfully acquire the work, and the name of the vendor is not known to you, we suggest asking the auction house to contact the former owner on your behalf to see if their name can be released to you for your provenance records.

Case for acquisition

- Please consider this section carefully as it forms the supporting statement for why this acquisition is important to your museum or gallery, and the broader significance within the artist's body of work and local or national contexts.
- Trustees will make a decision on your application based primarily on the points you raise here. They will want to understand why this object is a priority for your collection.
- There are no word limits for these sections, however please be concise where possible.
- Where multiple objects are being applied for, you should make a case for each but should also provide a comment on why all the works should be acquired together if they are contextually linked.
- As this section may take time to complete, we suggest that you may wish to save your work on a regular basis or work in separate document and then paste the information into the form when ready.
- Our Trustees have a broad range of expertise, however you should note that they may not be familiar with your organisation, your collecting priorities or the work of art or artist under consideration. Try not to assume too much pre-existing knowledge. If anything is unclear, a member of the team will be in touch to clarify before presenting to Trustees.
- When discussing your collecting policy, please do not provide the whole document. We ask that you provide the relevant extracts only.
- If applying as a joint applicant we would expect to understand how the acquisition would also have relevance for each collection, with reference to the collecting policy for any additional organisations you are partnering with to jointly own the acquisition.

Impact and future plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Our Trustees will also consider the impact that acquisition will have on your organisation and audiences. You may wish to refer to any audience development plans or organisational strategy that you have in place.
Future plans: Beneficiaries and audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – This section will link to future evaluation of the grant. We ask that you define the key groups that you think this acquisition will engage or benefit. These may be new audiences or existing staff, volunteers or visitors. – You may select as many as you wish, however you will be asked to re-visit these as part of the evaluation process, so please make these selections thoughtfully as we would not expect every applicant to select all of the options. – Please select ‘other’ and provide detail if there is a group or audience you would like to include that is not listed.
Future plans: Activities and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please select the activities and possible outcomes that may result from the acquisition. – As above, you may select as many as you like but please be aware that you will be asked to re-visit these as part of the evaluation process. – Please select ‘other’ and provide detail if there is an activity or possible outcome you would like to include that is not listed.
Detailed examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please give three examples of how you plan to use and display the acquisition(s) in order to maximise impact for audiences and organisation. Refer if possible to one immediate and one longer term example. The drop down options link to the headings under ‘activities and impact’. If your intended activity or outcome was not listed above, you can add this here. – As part of our evaluation you will be asked to re-visit these three examples 12 months after the acquisition has taken place. Trustees will also use the information provided to assist them in their decision taking. – We are aware that the scale of an organisation and the size of an acquisition may have a bearing on the types of outcomes and associated activities. Please identify things which you think are deliverable within the context of your organisation and your available resources. We want to know what is realistic, not what you’d like us to hear. – In addition to benefits for the public there may be curatorial or organisational benefits which you would like to reflect. However, please be aware of our statement of public benefit as linked to our charitable aims.
Future exhibitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If the acquisition is confirmed or likely to be included in a future exhibition or tour, please detail the dates so we can help you promote these activities if offered a grant.

<p>Supporting documentation: Additional images</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please upload any supporting images including an image caption which tells us what the image depicts, plus any credit if applicable. Click ‘add another’ to upload multiple images. – We need at least one image which is of a suitable size for printing in an A4 document without pixelation. If offered a grant you will be asked to provide higher quality images.
<p>Supporting documents</p>	<p>The following section of this guidance offers further guidance on supporting documents which are specific to particular types of acquisition (e.g. items which are considered Treasure or export stopped items). Please review this information and upload any additional documents. You may also upload other documents in support of your application.</p>
<p>Terms and conditions</p>	<p>Please read our terms and conditions. Please tick the box to confirm that the Director of your organisation, or person with relevant authority, is aware of your application and these conditions and confirm that you have also read these.</p>
<p>Submit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please review your application before submitting. – If there are mandatory fields which have been missed, or if there are pieces of information which have not been entered correctly in this final section the form will not allow you to submit.

Supporting documents

The following supporting documents must be provided as part of your application. If these are not available at the time of a given submission deadline, please contact us so that we can consider the timescales for receiving the documents ahead of a decision being made.

For all grants:

- A suitable image
- Condition report if condition is stated less than ‘excellent’
- If your organisation is not Accredited, a brief supporting document which demonstrates how your organisation meets good Accreditation and collection care standards.

For main and small grants (not including auctions):

- Independent valuation

For partnership applications (where the acquisition is being made by more than one organisation):

- A draft partnership agreement or summary of how the partnership will work, including how the acquisition and future responsibilities and costs will be shared across organisations in future.

For collections (groups of objects or works of art above 20 in number):

- Full catalogue details of the collection
- Additional supporting images which illustrate the scope and scale of collection

For auctions:

- A link to the auction house catalogue if published online
- Advice on your maximum bid

For commissioned work:

Please speak to us before applying for any commissioned work as there is a separate application process. Examples of supporting information we may request include:

- A copy of the project brief, artist(s) brief and commission plan
- Copies of the artists proposals and any illustrative material available
- Images of similar works realised by the artist
- A full cost break-down including any artist fees and project costs
- A comment on valuation for prices previously achieved for works by the artist, including production of works of a similar scope
- Timeline for commission

For acquisitions where tax remission is relevant (e.g. Private Treaty sales or Hybrid Acceptance in Lieu cases):

- Tax computation breakdown (please consult [Arts Council England](#) if unclear) including confirmation of the price prior to tax remission being applied. Details of the valuation advice received may be shared with us by ACE.

For acquisitions where the work or object has been export stopped:

- Details of the deferral deadlines and a copy of the relevant Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art (RCEWA) case hearing.

For acquisitions declared Treasure:

- A copy of the Coroner’s report
- Copy of the provisional valuation submitted to the Treasure Valuation Committee (TVC)
- A copy of the final valuation set by the TVC
- Copies of letters pertaining to any valuation disputes

Application checklist

- Further information about the find site, including any archaeological reports if available and the names of the finder and landowner.
- Please contact us if your application concerns items which are going through the Scottish Treasure Trove system as the process is slightly different. [Section 5.E](#) provides further information about Treasure and who to contact for guidance.

Before submitting your application please ensure that you have:

- Contacted us to confirm eligibility, deadlines and relevant meeting dates
- Completed all sections of the form in full
- Viewed or made arrangements for someone to view the object on your behalf. If the condition is stated as less than excellent, you must provide a conservation report.
- Attached at least one clear image of the work in an electronic format.
- Submitted supporting evidence of the independent valuation (for main grants and small rolling grants) or advice on your maximum bid level (for auctions).
- Provided full details of the provenance of the object. For the provenance checks and due-diligence procedures that the Art Fund expects applicants to follow please see our guidelines under [Section 5.D](#)
- Read our Grant Conditions and confirmed that the person with relevant authority in your organisation is able and prepared to meet our terms and conditions.
- Considered the location of the work and the availability of it for our Trustees or a representative appointed on their behalf to view.

Submitting your application

Once you have reviewed your application and have uploaded all supporting information, press the submit button on the online form. Once you submit you will no longer be able to edit the form. When you log into your account you will see that your form status has moved from *In progress* to *Application started*. A pdf copy of the application can now be downloaded.

Upon receipt of your application we will assign an Art Fund caseworker to your application. They will be in touch to introduce themselves and will let you know if there are any queries on your application. If you do not hear from us within 14 days, please contact us to check we have received your application safely.

Please note that if you do not send in all the information we ask for, including all supporting material, we will not be able to process your application and your application may be delayed or rejected.

3. What happens next

Decision

How do our Trustees make their decision?

All applications are assessed by our Board of Trustees, with input from a wide range of independent expert advisors.

Applications will be assessed against the following core criteria:

- Artistic merit and quality of the work; including consideration of why this particular acquisition above others.
- Regional/national/international importance of the work
- Impact on the museum and its visitors, relating to how you will use and display the object and any access, exhibition or education plans.
- Trustees will prioritise works of art which will enrich collections and support their expansion and development.

The Board is also responsible for deciding the level of the grant, and so will also take into account your proposed funding package and whether they believe the cost of the work to be fair and reasonable. In certain circumstances a reduced offer may be made. Trustees will compare the cost of the work with your independent valuation along with the level of financial support from other sources.

The decision made by the Trustees and communicated to applicants is final. We will endeavour to give clear, constructive feedback if your application is unsuccessful. Please be aware however our resources are very much in demand, and sometimes, although deserving, your case may not be as high a priority as others we consider.

In almost all instances, once turned down, we will not reconsider your application. There are very rare occasions where we may review the case.

Main grants

Following receipt of an application, we will be in touch with you to make arrangements for the work or object to be brought to the decision meeting to be viewed by Trustees at our offices in central London. If you have any questions about this process, please get in touch. Applicants will normally be notified verbally within three days after the decision meeting. If we can't reach you we will send an email to you.

Small grants

Following receipt of all required information we aim to get you a decision within eight weeks subject to volume of business. If your application is time sensitive, please let us know. All works under consideration must be viewed by our Trustees or representatives appointed on their behalf. Ensuring that the work or object can be accessed and is available to view will help us make arrangements as swiftly as possible.

Auctions

To give our Trustees the largest window of time to consider your application, we will give a decision the day before the date of the auction. We will confirm our offer based on a maximum bid level via email. If you successfully bid for the work at a lower hammer price, our grant will be reduced proportionally. After the sale you must contact us to confirm the final cost so that we can calculate our final grant offer when issuing the paperwork and contracts.

For all programmes applicants will receive a formal letter notifying them of the decision within two weeks of the decision being made.

Confirmation of grant offer

If your application is successful we will issue our offer paperwork to you. The offer paperwork includes:

- Offer letter
- Our 'agreement to grant conditions' (contract)
- Evaluation form
- Key information and contacts

Your application status will be updated on your 'My Art Fund' account to indicate that you have been successful. Past and current applications will be archived on your account on your account. The status of a grant will be updated to notify you when subsequent information is due so you can claim your grant and submit evaluation information.

How to claim your grant

Successful applicants should not claim their grant until they have completed their fundraising and are in a position to pay the vendor. Please note that we do not expect applicants to have already paid for and taken receipt of the work before claiming their grant as we are aware that many organisations need to receive the grant to have sufficient cash flow to make the acquisition.

Once you have completed your fundraising and are in a position to claim your grant, please notify programmes@artfund.org or your grant caseworker that you are ready to claim your grant, and a link to DocuSign will be provided to allow you to sign our 'Agreement to Grant Conditions' (contract) digitally. Please retain a copy of this signed document for your records.

Next please log on to your My Art Fund account and under 'Apply and manage', locate the record for the successful grant application. Here you will find links to upload: a copy of the signed 'Agreement to Grant Conditions'; completed grant claim form; vendor's invoice; and an invoice from your institution for the full grant amount. When all four documents have been uploaded your grant can be paid.

If we have not paid your organisation a grant recently we may ask that you complete a 'new vendor form' which verifies your bank account details so that we can pay you the grant.

Please ensure that any grant claims are submitted in good time to allow for internal approvals to release the funds to you. We will not expedite payments unless urgent.

Grants are paid by BACS and you will be notified as soon as the payment has been sent by email.

Grants will be reserved for a period of six months from the date of the offer letter. Please let us know as soon as possible if you do not expect to claim the grant within this timeframe.

Announcement and press

We want to help promote and celebrate all new acquisitions made with our support. We are happy to work with you to co-ordinate announcements and press releases as well as promote the news through our communications channels including our magazine *Art Quarterly* and on social media.

Images

You will need to supply us with a high-resolution digital image of the work which we will use to promote the acquisition through our digital channels and media in print. Please send the images to images@artfund.org within 30 days of making the acquisition.

When arranging photography, please ensure that the object is photographed in its entirety against a neutral background with a colour bar and grey scale, and that the resolution is of sufficient quality to be reproduced in a high quality, fine art publication (300dpi, in Adobe RGB 1998 colour profile).

Press releases and announcements

In planning press announcements please liaise with our communication team regarding timings and publicity materials. We can, where appropriate, provide quotes for press releases, and can also offer support and advice on maximising publicity. Please contact Lucy Hawes, Head of Press lhawes@artfund.org to find out more.

Acknowledgement and marketing

To find out more about acknowledging your grant and working with us to promote your organisation to our membership and the wider public, please see [Section 4](#) below.

Evaluation

Evaluating our programme helps us ensure that our grant giving is effective and helps us identify new ways to develop our funding and support for the sector. It also helps us monitor whether our charitable aims are being met through our grant giving. All grant recipients are asked to help us with this process, and evaluation is the final stage of a grant award.

When you claim your grant Art Fund we will supply you with a copy of the evaluation form. You will be asked to fill this in one year after the grant payment has been made. The form is designed to be light touch and is an opportunity for you to tell us about the impact that the acquisition has had on your collection and the visiting public.

You will be asked to report against information provided when you originally applied. If there are new or unexpected outcomes stemming from the acquisition, we would love to hear about them. If you have any images of the work in situ or associated activity relating to the acquisition, we would really value receiving these along with any quotes about the impact of the acquisition. We understand that things may have changed since you first applied, so please do not worry and provide an honest reflection on your experiences.

We do not currently ask for any quantitative evidence, however if you are recording this as part of your own evaluation or reporting for other funders, please provide us with this information.

You might be contacted following the submission of the evaluation form for further information to be considered as a case study or to help develop our programme, however for the majority of grants once we have received your evaluation form the grant file will be officially closed.

If the work is likely to be featured in significant activity, such as an exhibition or tour, please let us know as we may be able to highlight this through our channels.

4. Being part of our network

Museum Marketing team

All organisations who have been awarded an acquisitions grant automatically join our partner museum network. If you have been awarded a grant for the first time, a member of our museum marketing team will be in touch to welcome you and explain the full range of opportunities which are available to you.

The team are also the key contacts who you should notify about any changes to information about your opening hours, admission policy or forthcoming exhibitions.

Staying in touch

There are a number of ways you can stay in touch with us.

Museum Bulletin

Sign up to our Museum Bulletin to find out about funding application deadlines, training opportunities, print deadlines, key events and industry news.

Link to sign up: www.artfund.org/professional-newsletter-signup

Contacting us directly

The key contacts page at the front of this document details who you should contact about different things. We are always excited to hear the about what you've got going on, so do let us know about your latest plans and news.

Contact the museum marketing team to let them know about your exhibitions and key anniversaries or major events and we can help promote them to several thousand art lovers each month. Keep us informed about your refurbishment projects, changes in opening times and admission policy so we can make sure your listing on our website is up to date.

Curators' Art Pass – become a member

If you work for one of our partner organisations whether you are a curator, fundraiser, work in marketing or are part of the visitor services or learning teams, you can get 70% off the standard National Art Pass rates. Support our work and enjoy free and discounted entry to museums and galleries across the UK for just £20. Your personal membership will keep you in the loop with your contemporaries, includes a full subscription to our award-winning magazine Art Quarterly, brings discounts in hundreds of museum shops and cafes and should you need it- also offers free or reduced price entry to over 320 cultural venues plus 50% off major exhibitions. To order your Curators' Art Pass log in to your My Art Fund account at artfund.org

Acknowledging your grant

Acknowledging our support for your organisation is a key part of our terms and conditions. We don't receive any government funding and so everyone who buys a National Art Pass directly supports the work that we do. By helping us raise awareness of Art Fund and the National Art Pass you will be helping us provide continued funding and opportunities for organisations across the UK.

Grant acknowledgement

We ask that you acknowledge our support for all acquisitions we have helped fund. Further guidance on how to credit us on your gallery's labels, in print and digital materials, and the use of our logo can be found in our brand guidelines. This document can be downloaded along with our logos here: www.artfund.org/supporting-museums/guidelines-and-resources

Please contact the museum marketing team for sign off on all materials, and allow at least 3 working days for us to respond.

Raising awareness of our work and the National Art Pass

By clearly displaying the admission price on your website and other ticket sales points visitors with a National Art Pass will immediately recognise their ticket options. We want to work with you to offer the best customer service to our membership.

Showing our supporters the difference they make

If your grant offer exceeds £50,000, we ask that your organisation grants us the opportunity to organise an event on the museum's premises. We will meet the additional costs arising from such an event (i.e. warding, catering, production, etc) but must not be charged the hire fee.

Through such events we aim to help promote the strengths of your collections to our supporters and other sector stakeholders.

The exact nature of the activities, position and timings is to be mutually agreed upon between the two parties in advance.

A member of our events team will be in touch if an opportunity for a potential event is identified.

5. Further advice and guidance

A. Other funding

There are a number of other bodies who support acquisitions, and we expect applicants to explore the possibility of applying to all appropriate sources of funding for which they may be eligible before applying to us.

UK-wide

The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) will offer assistance towards projects that conserve, enhance and increase access to and understanding of the nation and its communities' heritage. This funding can include support for an acquisition as part of a wider project. NLHF works to its own decision making timetable, and we would always recommend applicants call their regional office to discuss potential applications in the first instance.

www.heritagefund.org.uk

The National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) is able to act quickly as a fund of last resort to save British heritage at risk. If you think a potential acquisition may qualify for assistance from the NHMF, please visit their website for more information and contact details.

www.nhmf.org.uk

The Beecroft Bequest, administered through the Museums Association, can assist smaller museums and galleries with the purchase of pictures and works of art, furniture and textiles not later than the 18th century in date. Aid is restricted to museums and galleries with an annual gross revenue expenditure of £1million or less. The maximum available in a single grant is £10,000.

www.museumsassociation.org/funding/beecroft-bequest

The Friends of the National Libraries help libraries in the UK to acquire books, manuscripts and archives. www.friendsofnationallibraries.org.uk

England and Wales only

The ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund gives support, advice and grants for acquisitions of objects relating to the arts, literature and history to regional museums, record repositories and specialist libraries in England and Wales.

www.vam.ac.uk/info/the-ace-va-purchase-grant-fund

The Headley Museums Treasure Acquisitions Scheme has been established by the Headley Trust, one of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts. The Headley Scheme helps institutions acquire Treasure.

www.headley-archaeology.org.uk/information.html

Scotland only

The National Fund for Acquisitions is administered by National Museums Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government and offers support for acquisitions for museums, libraries and archives in Scotland.

www.nms.ac.uk/about-us/services-and-expertise/national-fund-for-acquisitions

Northern Ireland only

The Northern Ireland Museums Council (NIMC) offers funding towards acquisitions for Accredited local museums based in Northern Ireland who are also members of the NIMC. www.nimc.co.uk/grants

B. Vat and tax remission

Understanding the ability of your organisation to reclaim VAT, plus whether the item you are seeking to acquire is eligible for any tax remission schemes administered by Arts Council England, is key to identifying the cost payable to your organisation.

As a funder we expect you to explore all relevant options which may reduce the price payable to ensure that our available funding can support as many organisations and acquisitions as possible.

If your organisation can reclaim VAT and you are acquiring the work from a dealer, it is important to clarify whether the work is being sold within the antique trade special scheme. If it is you should enquire about the possibility of acquiring outside the scheme, which may enable you to reclaim the VAT. For further information please see www.gov.uk/vat-margin-schemes

For works being sold at auction guidance is provided regarding VAT and the margin scheme under [Section 5.C](#)

Tax remission

If you are acquiring an object from a private, UK based vendor you should explore whether or not any tax remission might be applicable. Under schemes administered by Arts Council England, qualifying objects or works of art may be offered to your organisation at a substantially reduced rate due to incentives based on the vendor's tax obligations.

There are two main schemes:

The Acceptance in Lieu scheme enables taxpayers to transfer important works of art and other important heritage objects into public ownership while paying Inheritance Tax, or one of its earlier forms. The taxpayer is given the full open market value of the item, which then becomes the property of a public museum, archive or library.

A Private Treaty Sale is the purchase by a public museum or gallery in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (listed on Schedule 3 of the Inheritance Tax Act 1984) of an item that has been granted Conditional Exemption from capital taxation (or one of its predecessors), at a price that is beneficial to both public purchaser and private vendor.

Further details about both schemes can be found on the Arts Council website and they should be contacted in the first instance to see if the acquisition might be eligible. www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-collections-and-archives/cultural-property

C. Bidding at auction

If bidding for a work at auction for the first time it can feel like a daunting process, but it needn't be. If at any point you have any questions about the process or terms used, let us know and we'd be happy to give informal advice.

Where works are being sold at auction it is very important that somebody views the work on your behalf to confirm condition. This includes works which are being sold internationally.

The terms of sale including the proportion of 'buyer's premium' charged on a lot should be detailed in the auction house catalogue, which is published prior to sale. Be sure to read this information carefully. The buyer's premium is an additional sum the buyer pays on top of the final bid price or 'hammer price' of each lot purchased.

The buyer's premium is calculated as a percentage of the hammer price. This percentage differs from auction house to auction house and can be applied on a proportional scale to the hammer price, or winning bid. The total cost payable will be tied to the final hammer price. You should base your funding package in an application to us on the calculation of your maximum total bid plus all additional costs, including the buyer's premium, VAT charged on the buyer's premium (if this cannot be reclaimed), Artist Resale Right if incurred, import tax (if acquired overseas) plus any fees agreed with a bidding agent.

Reclaiming VAT and the margin scheme

If you are awarded a grant for a work coming up at auction and can reclaim VAT, please remember to indicate that you would like to bid 'outside the margin scheme' when you register to bid. Lots sold outside the scheme will have VAT payable on the hammer price and buyer's premium however this will be itemised on the invoice so that it can be reclaimed. For lots sold under the margin scheme the VAT is payable on the premium only, but is not shown separately on the invoice and therefore cannot be reclaimed.

Bidding at the sale

We advise that you should arrange to bid in person at the sale or by telephone. We do not recommend that you leave reserve bids with the auction house. If bidding online through online auction sites, please be aware that they sometimes charge additional fees for bidding through their website.

After the sale

Please let us know whether your bid was successful as soon as possible after the sale. Once the auction house has invoiced you, please send a copy of this to us so we can calculate our grant. Please ensure that you contact our press team before making any announcement about your success at auction.

Please also be aware that the auction house will have a period by which you need to pay them to make the acquisition. As you arrange for all of your funds to be in place you may need to contact them to see if there is any flexibility in their deadline for payment to ensure you don't incur any late payment or storage charges.

D. Provenance and due diligence

We require applicants to submit a full account of the object's previous history with the application, including, where appropriate, evidence that it was legally exported from its country of origin. The ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund has collated very clear best practice guidelines on the above which they have kindly let us share.

Potential acquisitions should:

- have, as far as can be traced, a full history of ownership, especially for the years 1933–45.
- not be the subject of a claim by anyone else and, if appropriate:
- have been exported legally from its place of origin and imported legally into the UK have been legally excavated/removed from their place of origin

This can be determined by:

- acquiring documentary proof that the vendor has legal title and has the authority to transfer it. If no documentary proof exists, (for example, if an object has been handed down through a family) a signed statement from the owner confirming these points should be obtained
- In the case of any material from church buildings and churchyards that the appropriate faculty has been obtained for its removal and disposal
- checking that the item has not been stolen by:
 - seeking from the vendor, or other relevant sources, such as the Art Loss Register or Commission for Looted Art in Europe, confirmation that to the best of their knowledge and belief there are no third party claims, actual or anticipated, on the object
- obtaining the fullest possible history of the ownership of the object, particularly (if appropriate) for the years 1933–45 by:
 - requesting full information in writing and copies of any documentation on the history of the item from the vendor or executors

- checking whether the item has ever been published or exhibited checking the Art Sales Index or other relevant records for details of the item going through auction salesrooms
 - obtaining documentary proof that the necessary export documentation is in place and no law has been contravened in the export of the object from its country of origin. If appropriate, obtain documentary evidence that the item was imported into the UK before 1970. (As agreed under the Unesco Convention on the means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970) February 2012.
- checking that archaeological material was recovered legally by:
 - obtaining written confirmation from the landowner of permission for the right to search and to dispose of the object
 - obtaining details of the findspot
 - obtaining evidence that the find was reported to the appropriate authorities as necessary
 - checking that there is no indication that the recovery involved deliberate destruction or damage to a known archaeological site or ancient monument

Please note that this advice is not exhaustive nor should it be used as a substitute for legal advice. We would hope that all acquiring organisations would be undertaking lines of enquiry to ensure that any acquisition passes internal due diligence checks and is considered legally and ethically sound.

If provenance information is not complete we will expect that you undertake searches on databases such as the Art Loss Register. Please note that Art Fund cannot contribute towards any costs incurred through running such checks.

Useful publications:

Statement of Principles and Guidelines on the spoliation of works of art during the Holocaust and World War II period, 1933–45, National Museums Directors' Conference, 1998

Code of Ethics, Museums Association, 2015

Ethical Guidelines: Acquisition, Museums Association, 2004

Stealing History: The Illicit Trade in Cultural Material, Neil Brodie, Jenny Doyle and Peter Watson, The McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2000

Buying in the market: a checklist for Museums, Museums Association, 2000

Useful contacts:

The Art Loss Register
First Floor, 63–66 Hatton Garden
London EC1N 8LE
020 7841 5780

or

Bath & West Buildings
Lower Bristol Road
Bath BA2 3EG
01225 788 780
www.artloss.com

The Metropolitan Police's London Stolen Arts Database
www.met.police.uk

Commission for Looted Art in Europe,
Catherine House
76 Gloucester Place,
London W1H 4DQ
www.lootedartcommission.com

Unesco conventions can be found on the Unesco website
www.unesco.org

CITES conventions can be found on the CITES website
www.cites.org

SPECTRUM 5.0, the UK collections management standard gives further guidance on due diligence
www.collectionstrust.org.uk/spectrum/procedures

E. Treasure

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, all finders of gold and silver objects, and groups of coins from the same finds, over 300 years old, have a legal obligation to report such items under the Treasure Act 1996. Prehistoric base-metal assemblages found after 1 January 2003 also qualify as Treasure.

For further details about the Treasure system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland please see the Portable Antiquities website: www.finds.org.uk/treasure

The Treasure Act 1996 does not apply in Scotland and the Portable Antiquities Scheme does not operate there. Scotland operates under the Treasure Trove system and further information can be found on their website: www.treasuretrovescotland.co.uk

For Treasure applications we require additional information to be submitted in support of your application which is detailed above under Section 2.

If you do not have the information needed, contact the Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure at the British Museum (for finds from England, Northern Ireland and Wales) and Treasure Trove Scotland based at National Museums Scotland (for finds from Scotland).

F. Accreditation and collection care standards

What is 'Accreditation'?

We require all applicants to be either provisionally or fully Accredited under the Arts Council England Accreditation Scheme, managed in partnership with the Welsh Government; Museums Galleries Scotland and the Northern Ireland Museums Council.

The Accreditation Scheme sets nationally agreed standards for UK museums.

To qualify, museums must meet clear basic requirements on how they care for and document their collections, how they are governed and managed, and on the information and services they offer to their users. There are currently just under 1,800 museums participating in the scheme, demonstrating their commitment to managing collections effectively for the enjoyment and benefit of the public. For more information see www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/museums-accreditation-scheme

The National Archives have recently launched an Accreditation scheme for archives. We would be pleased to receive applicants from eligible organisations who are Accredited under this initiative or who are seeking Accreditation. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archive-service-accreditation

For organisations who may not be eligible for Accreditation, e.g. libraries, we ask that you provide us with supporting information which demonstrates how your organisation meets good collection care standards.

G. Loans and tours

We actively encourage organisations to loan objects that have been purchased with our help. We expect, however, that any loans will only be to venues which can provide good levels of physical and environmental security as with the permanent location for the work or object.

Our support for the acquisition must be acknowledged in full on the label when on loan to another institution or in a temporary exhibition. You may not loan objects to institutions outside the United Kingdom, except for temporary exhibitions lasting for a maximum period of one year at any one venue.

If your acquisition is going on loan or tour we'd be delighted to hear about it so please do let us know so we can help share this news more widely.

H. De-accessioning and transfer of objects

In signing our grant conditions you agree to not sell, pledge, charge or otherwise dispose of objects acquired with our help without our prior written consent, which will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Should you decide at any time that another venue would be a more appropriate home for the object you should consult us as soon as is possible.

For full details on our policies in regard to the above, and loss or damage to Art Fund assisted objects please see our full [terms and conditions](#)

If your organisation is transitioning to a new organisational status or restructuring please also let us know in case this impacts our historic and current grant contracts with your organisation.

