



Application Guidance

Thank you for not touching the walrus

Key dates:

21 November 2022: Applications open

19 January 2023: Applications close at noon

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About Art Fund Museum of the Year

Art Fund Museum of the Year celebrates excellence and ingenuity across the UK museum and gallery sector. It's the world's biggest museum prize, which recognises outstanding work and projects, and provides a platform to encourage more visitors to engage with museums far and wide.

The prize is judged by an independent panel who shortlist five exceptional organisations and decide one lucky winner to take home the £120,000 prize, specially increased for 2023 and beyond to mark 120 years of Art Fund supporting museums. £15,000 will be given to each of the four other finalists – bringing the total prize money to £180,000.

All shortlisted museums also receive the support of Art Fund throughout the campaign, national press coverage, and other exciting collaborations to help you reach more and wider audiences.

If you think 2023 could be your year, read on to find out more.



What are we looking for in 2023?

2023 marks 10 years of Art Fund Museum of the Year, set within a 50 year history of a national prize for UK museums. Museums have faced many challenges over the years, but none greater than right now. Yet they continue to adapt to a rapidly changing world with creativity and resilience. Through the prize we want to acknowledge and celebrate the exceptional lengths museums go to in order to be welcoming spaces for everyone, and create an environment to nurture professional talent - ensuring a sustainable model for the future.

Art Fund are encouraging applications from museums, galleries and historic houses of all shapes and sizes across the UK, who can **tell inspiring stories and demonstrate the positive impact their work has had on their visitors and organisations**. We are especially keen to hear from those who have adapted their ways of working in any of these areas:

- empowering audiences and communities
- building partnerships and networks in new ways
- embedding sustainable ways of working in all its forms

You can tell us about one or many projects that you undertook across the period of autumn 2021 through to winter 2022, which respond to any or all of these areas.

Whatever you decide to tell us about, we want to see **examples of museums challenging the norm, thinking and doing things differently with confidence** – all while building a positive legacy and demonstrating continued improvement.

As part of your application you will be asked to provide some information about your organisation, and answer three questions:

1. **In what ways has your organisation adapted to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world?**
2. **What positive impact has this had on your venue, organisation and audiences?**
3. **What would being shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2023 mean for your organisation?**

It's important that you can illustrate the impact of your work on your audiences and organisation - this could be shared through visitor demographics, statistics, impact or evaluation reports.

Why should you apply?

There are many benefits for your organisation if you are shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year. Previous finalists and winners have noted a marked increase in attendance and engagement, a strengthened profile and a boost in support from stakeholders. It's the perfect platform to share who you are and what you do to a wide audience.

"It has been an amazing experience... Our profile has been raised significantly, and the value of the sector has been trumpeted loudly by highlighting the variety of work and impact that goes on in museums across the country."

Horniman Museum and Gardens, winner of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022

Not only will the winner receive £120,000, and the other finalists £15,000, but you will also have the continued support of Art Fund throughout the prize and beyond. You'll join our network of over 850 partner venues and work with our marketing, communications and digital teams to share your story widely.

All we ask from shortlisted museums is a willingness to work with and collaborate with us, so that we can help you make the most of being shortlisted, no matter the size of your organisation.

"(The application process) invites organisations of all sizes to apply... The focus on outcomes and impact helps museums understand their purpose and contribution to their locality and the wider museum sector."

Derby Museums, Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill, Art Fund
Museum of the Year 2022 finalist



Derby Museums, Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill, Museum of the Year finalist 2022,
© Emli Bendixen/Art Fund

What happens if you are shortlisted?

Below is a brief outline of what to expect if your application is taken forward:

Find out more about what happens if you are shortlisted by signing up to our applicants' webinar, taking place on Monday 5 December, 12-1pm. [RSVP here for more information.](#)

Shortlisting

- If your application is long-listed, applicants will be asked to attend a short online interview with the judges.
- Following the interviews judges will agree the shortlist of five organisations, and if you are successful you will be contacted by the Prize project manager to discuss next steps.
- If you are unsuccessful, you will be contacted by email, and have the opportunity to discuss further feedback if requested.
- 3-4 representatives from each shortlisted organisation are encouraged to join an in-person workshop to meet their fellow shortlisted colleagues and the Art Fund team.
- Photography and filming at each shortlisted venue will **take place across late March-early April 2023.**

Public announcement of the shortlist

- Across March-May the Art Fund team will work closely with you to get ready for the public announcement of the shortlist.
- Details of the public shortlist announcement are to be confirmed, but this will **take place in late May 2023.**



Working with you

Summer campaign

- We want to make sure that museums get the most out of their shortlisted status over the campaign period across May-July 2023, so we encourage you to devise your own activity during this time, which we can help support.
- Vitally, during this time the judges will visit the five shortlisted organisations, which helps them to make their final decision on who the winner should be. **This will take place across June**, dates to be determined with the shortlist.

Winner announcement

- This year the award ceremony and winner announcement will take place at a London venue, **in early July 2023**. More details about how the announcement will take place will be confirmed closer to the time.
- Shortlisted museums will be supplied with an event briefing pack to help you get ready for the announcement.

We are aware that being shortlisted creates additional work, which begins swiftly after being shortlisted, and it can require more resource from your team.

However, we want to assure prospective applicants that this should not be a barrier to applying for any size or type of organisation – we are committed to supporting you throughout the process and to exploring ways to make this achievable and worthwhile.



"Our experience of being a finalist was extremely positive and we were thankful for all the support and encouragement from Art Fund."

Tŷ Pawb, finalist for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022

Timeline

Below is an outline of the prize timeline. Please note key dates for your diaries – if your application is successful, we will require spokespeople and key team members from your organisation to attend.



Applicant criteria

To be eligible to apply for Art Fund Museum of the Year please check you meet the following criteria before starting your application:

- Your activity must have taken place from autumn 2021 through to winter 2022.
- You must be able to demonstrate positive change and impact of the activity.
- You must be based in the UK and be either a public museum, gallery, historic house, library or archive which has spaces for the public to visit and experience the visual arts or other object-based collections.
- You must be able to demonstrate that you usually operate to best-practice standards or have a good track record in delivering high-quality public activity.

We would usually expect applicants to be accredited through schemes such as those managed by Arts Council England, or working towards accreditation.

If you are a non-accredited museum, we may seek advice from sector partners such as the Museum Development Network to better understand your organisation and your eligibility to be considered, particularly if you are an organisation we haven't worked with previously.

If you are an organisation that is a visual arts agency or festival, we'd be happy to hear from you providing you can meet the criteria and have a strong visual arts focus.

We cannot accept applications from individuals, artists' groups, commercial organisations, hospitals, places of worship, schools or higher education institutions, or organisations with a focus on music, drama, dance and art forms outside the visual arts.



The Story Museum, Oxford, Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022 finalist, © Emili Bendixen/Art Fund

The judges

Every year we invite experts from across the museum, arts and cultural sector to join the panel of judges for Art Fund Museum of the Year. For 2023 the judges include:



Larry Achiampong

Larry Achiampong is a Jarman Award nominated artist (2021) who works across film, still imagery, aural and visual archives, live performance, objects and sound, to explore ideas surrounding class, gender, cross-cultural and digital identity. He completed a BA in Mixed Media Fine Art at University of Westminster in 2005 and an MA in Sculpture at The Slade School of Fine Art in 2008. In 2020 Achiampong was awarded the Stanley Picker fellowship and in 2019 received the Paul Hamlyn Artist award in recognition for his practice. Achiampong served on the Board of Trustees at Iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts, 2017-2022) facilitating art policies in the UK and internationally and also holds a place on the board of trustees for Elephant Trust. Recent solo exhibitions include Wayfinder, Turner Contemporary/MK Gallery/BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Margate, Milton Keynes, Gateshead (2022-2023).



Mary Beard, historian and broadcaster

Mary Beard is one of the world's best-known classicists. Cambridge Professor and Fellow of Newnham College, she has written numerous books including the Wolfson History Prize-winning *Pompeii*, the best-selling *SPQR* and the thought-provoking *Women & Power*. Mary is a regular media commentator and committed blogger, and has made highly acclaimed television documentaries on the ancient world and the arts. She was awarded an OBE in 2013 for services to classical scholarship and then made a Dame in 2018. Mary is a fellow of the British Academy and trustee of the British Museum. Her latest book is *Twelve Caesars: Images of Power from the Ancient World to the Modern*.



Abadesi Osunsade, Founder & CEO of Hustle Crew and Art Fund Trustee

Abadesi Osunsade is Founder & CEO of Hustle Crew, a diversity-in-tech community providing inclusion education to employers. She's also the author of *Dream Big Hustle Hard: The Millennial Woman's Guide to Success in Tech* and co-host of the Techish podcast. Abadesi has been awarded accolades including Computer Weekly's Most Influential Women in Tech, Financial Times list of Top 100 Influential Leaders in Tech and Tech Nation's 50 most prominent and influential voices in Tech. Her work has been featured in TechCrunch, BBC, Forbes, Bloomberg and The Times.



Laura Pye, Director, National Museums Liverpool

Laura Pye joined National Museums Liverpool in August 2018. Born in Liverpool, Laura returned to the city following several years as Head of Culture for Bristol City Council. Prior to moving to Bristol, Laura was interim Heritage and Culture Manager for Warwickshire County Council, covering a similar mix of services to Bristol including Museums and Archives, Arts, Archaeology and Ecology teams. Laura's early career in museums was focused mainly on museum education, and she has a wealth of experience working in the North of England, across Liverpool, Yorkshire and Lancashire.



Jenny Waldman, Director, Art Fund, and chair of the judges

Jenny Waldman joined Art Fund in April 2020. She was previously Director of 14-18 NOW, the UK's official arts programme for the First World War Centenary, where she commissioned over 100 new works from leading contemporary artists and new works by John Akomfrah, William Kentridge, and Rachel Whiteread. She was Creative Producer of the London 2012 Festival, the finale of the Cultural Olympiad for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, working in partnerships with arts and heritage organisations across the UK, and from 1999-2011 she was Public Programmes Consultant to Somerset House Trust. She has also commissioned large-scale performing arts events for Tate Modern and Tate Britain. She was awarded a CBE in the 2017 New Year Honours for services to the arts.



Derby Museums, Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill, Museum of the Year finalist 2022,
© Emli Bendixen/Art Fund

How to apply

Before applying please carefully read this pack and look at the application questions document. If you have any remaining questions, please contact Emma Mills, Art Fund Museum of the Year project manager, for an informal chat by emailing emills@artfund.org.

Please also sign up to our applicants' webinar to hear more about the prize, application process and what happens if you are shortlisted. The webinar will take place on Monday 5 December 2022, 12-1pm. RSVP [here](#).

To apply you will need to complete an application form through our online application portal by logging into or creating an account with My Art Fund, located at artfund.org/museum-of-the-year-apply.

To complete your application, you will also need:

- a letter of support from your director or Chair confirming their wish for the organisation to be considered for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2023, and agreeing to our terms and conditions.
- up to three (optional) pieces of additional supporting material to evidence your answers to the application questions.
- 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 three, 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 noon, Thursday 19 January 2023.



People's History Museum, Manchester, Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022 finalist, © Emli Bendixen/Art Fund

Terms & conditions

As with all our programme activity, we ask applicants to agree to certain terms and conditions, as part of their application.

We ask longlisted organisations to:

- Be present at an online interview to meet with the judges 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 judges' visits in June and winner announcement event in July 2023.
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. Work collaboratively with the other finalists to support each other and raise awareness of each other's work.
7. Work with Art Fund to evaluate and provide 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.





For any questions about applying for Art Fund Museum of the Year, please contact the prize project manager, Emma Mills, on emills@artfund.org.

For more information about the prize and Art Fund's wider work supporting museums, visit artfund.org/museum-of-the-year.

For more information about joining Art Fund's network of museums please visit artfund.org/supporting-museums/national-art-pass-network

Art Fund_

The team of The Horniman Museum, Winners of Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022, pictured after the winners announcement at Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022 award ceremony held at the Design Museum, © Janie Airey/ Art Fund 2022