



Reimagine grants

Guidance for applicants

Art Fund_

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Art Fund_

Reimagine grants are funded by Art Fund with support from generous trusts and individuals.



Family workshop © The Foundling Museum

1. About

The Reimagine programme is designed to inspire creativity and increase resilience in the sector. It supports organisations to develop or refresh their work in response to their current situation.

Through Reimagine, we can provide grants of up to £50,000 for projects that are:

- Innovative
- Context-specific
- Impactful
- Engaging

With a few exceptions (described later in this document), Reimagine grants are comprehensive and pragmatic; they should cover most costs associated with delivering creative projects. The funding provides space to experiment with new ideas and approaches, or to revisit important work that has been put on hold. It also grants permission to 'fail', encouraging organisations to apply what they've learned through Reimagine to future activity.

This guidance document describes the programme in detail; it will help you to decide if these grants are right for you and your project.

As a funder, our approach aims to be straightforward and flexible. If you have any issues when applying for a grant, please email programmes@artfund.org for assistance.



Visitors at The Box, Plymouth, August 2021 © Janie Airey/ Art Fund 2021

2. Background

Our Reimagine grants are shaped in consultation with the sector; we are grateful to you for taking part in conversations and contributing to research. Since 2020, the programme has evolved to provide a swift response to the most pressing needs, offering emergency support during the pandemic, rebuilding audiences post-pandemic, diversifying and sustaining the workforce, and developing strategic partnerships.

Our 2024 survey of museum directors captured the significant challenges facing the sector. Museums and galleries were grappling with rising costs, direct cuts, failing infrastructure, workforce pressures and funding shortfalls. Organisations reliant on local authority support were under particular strain. Many directors told us the situation was untenable.

In order to maximise impact and address the most urgent issues in a constructive way, Reimagine grants were ringfenced for local authority-reliant museums and galleries in 2024. We were thrilled to support [20 organisations across the UK](#) to reimagine their approach to partnerships, enabling them to innovate, boost their efficiency and resilience, and better advocate for themselves in society.

As evidenced by these projects, the sector continues to demonstrate ambition, strength and an entrepreneurial spirit in the face of continuing, multifaceted pressures. The [directors' survey report](#) details the scale of the challenges facing museums and galleries, but it also points to signs of hope and highlights key opportunities for development. Art Fund's role is to champion and add value to the sector, offering direct support while also working to identify larger-scale solutions.

This year, the Reimagine programme will focus on collections, exploring how objects can contribute to audience and skills development, organisational resilience, shared learning, and greater recognition for the sector. Given our emphasis, the grants will be available to organisations that hold permanent collections. The funding is no longer restricted to local authority-reliant museums and galleries, although you are of course welcome to apply.

Please read on for more information.



Collective Edinburgh, Collective Observations: Lisa Williams, Respond and Reimagine.
Courtesy Collective Edinburgh

3. Before you apply

What we will fund

This year, there is one key aim for the Reimagine programme. We want to fund projects that will:

- help organisations reimagine their work with collections.

As part of this aim, applications should fall under one or more of these categories:

- Relevance
- Research and rationalisation
- Resilience

Reimagine grants are designed to be broad and flexible; we can support a range of projects under these headings. However, by way of example, we have set out some possible activities below:

Relevance

- working with audiences to uncover objects and stories of local significance
- increasing public access to collections and encouraging a sense of ownership
- recontextualising unknown and/or contested objects
- using collections to shape programming, cultural education and strategic partnerships
- exploring the potential of collections to support placemaking and evidence social impact

Research and rationalisation

- identifying rare or star objects for deeper research and engagement
- uncovering gaps in collections and exploring opportunities for future acquisitions
- revisiting collections management work, taking stock of objects and documentation
- supporting staff to examine approaches to repatriation, restitution or ethical object disposal
- exploring radical approaches or solutions to object transfer, storage and digitisation
- considering environmental sustainability and responsibility in relation to collections

Resilience

- establishing specialist networks or advisory groups to devise and share toolkits or best practice
- exploring the potential of collections to generate income and increase audiences
- bringing in specialist support or facilitation to encourage organisation-wide buy-in to collections work
- delivering training, creating resources or supporting staff and volunteers to boost skills, morale and retention
- increasing staff capacity to tackle collections backlogs and/or to shape longer-term collections care
- equipping organisations to take advantage of Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief

3. Before you apply

In your application, you can tell us in your own words what you hope your project will achieve, and what success or failure would look like for you. In all cases, we expect activities to be accessible and impactful. We also have some priority outcomes that we will be looking to support, which relate to the categories on page 4:

- Growing and engaging audiences
- Increasing capacity and expertise in collections work/workforce
- Encouraging partnerships, shared learning and sustainability in the sector

Reimagine grants offer the chance to trial some different approaches during a challenging time. However, we are not asking you to create entirely new projects. Instead, we would like to hear about ideas you have been considering or developing but have been unable to fund or resource. Alternatively, you might have tested some work with your collections, which you now wish to expand further.

Our aim is to provide you with the time and space to examine pressing issues around collections and to experiment with or identify new solutions. You can include funding for staff members, freelance support, specialist advice and volunteer expenses in your budget.

Through our funding, we want to ensure that the sector develops and thrives over the longer-term. Reimagine grants should not be used to reduce workforce capacity, e.g. by covering redundancy costs, or to help an organisation wind down its operations. We will pay close attention to the need for support and how project outcomes could be sustained once a project has finished.

Unfortunately, we cannot provide funding for:

- Retrospective activity – your project must not have started before you are due to receive a decision from us. Please refer to the dates listed on page 7.
- Large-scale capital work and/or considerable repairs projects.
- Long-term running costs.
- Overheads, unless these are specific to your project.
- Individuals to undertake research or training (if this is relevant to you, you might like to read more about our Jonathan Ruffer grants: artfund.org/supporting-museums/programmes/jonathan-ruffer-curatorial-grants).
- Projects whose principal aims fall outside the priorities for this scheme.

3. Before you apply

Who we will fund

This year, our funding is available to formally constituted, not-for-profit organisations that hold permanent collections. These collections may include fine art, applied art and design, social and natural history, archaeology, and scientific objects. Eligible organisations are museums, galleries, historic houses and university museums. Applicants must be committed to delivering activity that increases public access to collections, has public benefit, and aligns with Art Fund's charitable objectives.

You can apply as a single institution, in a partnership, or with a collective. We will ask you to identify a lead applicant if two or more organisations are applying together.

Organisations without collections, such as contemporary art spaces or professional networks, can be involved in Reimagine projects as partners. However, they will not be eligible to lead on applications in 2025.

Similarly, previous recipients of Respond and Reimagine/Reimagine grants are not eligible to apply this year. If you are a past or current grantee, you can support an application as a partner, but please do not apply as the lead organisation.

Your organisation(s) should:

- Operate to standards of best practice and/or have a strong track record in delivering high quality public activity. You could demonstrate this through accreditation schemes (such as those managed by Arts Council England), endorsement by partners, successful past projects, or awards you have received.

If you are a non-accredited museum, we may seek advice from trusted sector partners (such as MDUK) to better understand your organisation and needs.

We also encourage you to explore what might be available via your local Museum Development or national sector support organisation.

Unfortunately, we are unable to receive applications from:

- Commercial or for-profit organisations, including Private Limited Companies, Public Limited Companies, Unlimited Companies, or Sole Traders.
- General Partnerships, Limited Partnerships, or Limited Liability Partnerships.
- Organisations with a focus on music, drama, dance and art forms outside the visual arts.
- Individuals or unincorporated bodies directly (unless an application is submitted by or with the formal written agreement of an eligible organisation [as described above]).
- Hospitals and places of worship.
- Schools or higher education institutions.

3. Before you apply

Funding available

Through this programme we can offer grants of £10,000 up to £50,000. Generally, Reimagine projects last up to two years.

In your application, please tell us about any contributions you can provide, either by way of cash or in-kind support. Similarly, do tell us about additional support from partners and/or other funders.

Funded projects can include:

- support for existing staff members
- the creation of new roles or the reinstatement of deleted/frozen roles
- extended hours or backfill for posts
- contract or freelance support for the duration of the activities.

If you are asking us to provide funding for an existing member of staff, you will need to contribute some money to the post. You will also need to explain how our funding will help you to reimagine your work with collections, and what will happen to the post at the end of the Reimagine project.

If you want to create a new role, you can ask us for up to 75% of the salary in the first year and up to 50% of the salary in the second year.

You will need to include the costs for staff in your budget and link them to the activity you plan to deliver with the funding. We will consider things like impact, legacy and fair remuneration in relation to staffing.

It is important to us that our funding supports inclusive recruitment practices. If you plan on hiring new staff or freelancers, please think about diversity, salary guidelines and transparency around roles. Take a look at the guidelines published by Icon, the Fair Museum Jobs campaign or other benchmarks.

We might offer you a grant that is lower than the amount you applied for. We can discuss with you how that affects your proposed activity and outcomes.

When to apply

There is one funding round in 2025:

- Applications will open on Tuesday 1 July.
- Applications will close on Tuesday 12 August.
- We will aim to share decisions with applicants by the middle of November.

We plan to deliver funding webinars and surgery sessions to support the application process. If you have access requirements that prevent you from attending a webinar, we would be pleased to book in a separate one-to-one telephone call or respond to written questions.

Unfortunately, due to capacity and demand, we will not be in a position to discuss your ideas on an ad-hoc basis. If you have any specific questions relating to the application process, please email us at programmes@artfund.org.

4. Your application

How to apply

We will be accepting all application forms and supporting documents via email. We will not be using the online form due to changes to our system. Please download the templates on our website, complete them, and send them to programmes@artfund.org (with klloyd@artfund.org in the Cc line).

Please ensure the application form remains as a Word file (as opposed to a PDF); this will enable us to process the information more easily.

Completing the application form

In the application form we will ask you to:

- Tell us all about your project or proposed activity, including its purpose.
- Provide a context and rationale for the idea – we will expect your project to be shaped by recent experiences and your current situation.
- Describe why your project is necessary and important.
- Explain how the project will reimagine your work with collections.
- Set out how the various elements will be managed.
- Identify any risks and explain how these will be mitigated.
- Tell us about your intended beneficiaries and how your activity will engage them.
- Share what success and failure would look like for your organisation, and how you will reflect on this.
- Provide a budget that gives a cost breakdown and income sources.

Application checklist and supporting documents

We will require the following documents as supporting information:

- Budget (a template can be found on our website). You can include cash, in-kind support and volunteer time as match funding, although these things are not a requirement.
- Draft briefs or job descriptions for any freelancers or new members of staff.
- A delivery plan that sets out activities, milestones, review periods and dates.
- Letter/s of support from formal partner/s.

Optional supporting documents

If relevant, please also share:

- Up to three letters of support (that demonstrate wider need/demand for this project).
- Up to six images (that help to explain the project).

Please note: if you apply for staff costs, you will need to include a letter of support from your Director or Board to demonstrate wider buy-in from your organisation. You might also wish to provide a link to your organisational strategy to show how the role fits with your longer-term ambitions and direction. As previously stated, applicants must show a meaningful commitment to diversity and sustainability.

5. What happens next

How we assess applications

Once you have submitted your application, it will be allocated to a programme caseworker for assessment.

If your caseworker has any questions about your application, or if they think something is missing, they will contact you for more information.

We expect to receive a high volume of applications. These will take time to process, and we may not have any questions in relation to your application, so please don't worry if your caseworker is not in contact with you. If your application is ineligible, we will inform you of this early in the assessment period. Please read the guidance carefully to ensure your project is a good fit with this programme.

When we assess your application, we will seek to answer several questions. We would encourage you to consider these questions as you develop your idea and complete your form. Please take your time as you write the application, presenting the strongest case for funding that you can. We are likely to receive significantly more applications than we can support; we will need to prioritise the grants in relation to need, quality, reach and impact.

You

- Are you eligible to apply for this funding?
- Are you new to the Reimagine programme?
- Are you applying in partnership with anyone else?

Your project

- Where has your idea come from and is it relevant to your current situation?
- Why is this project necessary and important, who will benefit from it, and what is the likely impact?
- Is your project closely aligned with our programme aim? Have you presented this in a clear and compelling way?
- Who do you want to benefit, and how will you go about this?
- How well do you know your beneficiaries?
- Have you considered what equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) looks like in relation to your project? Does your proposal demonstrate a strong and deliverable commitment to EDI?
- Have you considered the environmental sustainability of this project? How have you demonstrated this in your proposal?

Planning and management

- Are your activities well planned and resourced?
- Is your timetable realistic and achievable?
- Is your organisation in a position to manage this activity?
- Who will deliver the activities, and do they have the relevant skills and experience?
- What are the main risks associated with this project and is there a plan to mitigate these?
- How has your organisation demonstrated its commitment to this project?

5. What happens next

Evaluation and legacy

- What do you hope to achieve and/or learn through your project?
- How will you identify and measure success and failure, and how will you capture, use and share learning from this?
- What will be the legacy of this project?
- If the project or post is to continue beyond this funding, how will it be sustained?

Costings

- Is your budget accurate and reasonable?
- Does this project represent good value for money?

Moderation/balancing

Once the caseworkers have completed their assessments, we will also go through a process of moderation or balancing to determine the highest priorities for support. We are likely to consider things like need; risk; the type, size and funding history of the organisations who have applied; the location and beneficiaries of the projects, and the range of activities that have been proposed.

Decision-making

Grants will be approved by a panel of Art Fund staff and trustees.

If your application is unsuccessful, we will explain the decision and offer brief feedback.

Confirmation of grant offer

If your application is successful, we will send our offer paperwork to you by email. This will include:

- a letter confirming your grant offer
- information about project evaluation
- a link to our grant contract, which can be signed digitally.

Depending on the nature of your project, we might add some grant conditions that will be monitored.

5. What happens next

How to claim your grant

Bank details

Our finance team may need to confirm your bank details with you before paying a grant.

Payment schedule

Grants will be paid in the following way:

- At the beginning of your project, you can claim 90% of the grant up front.
- When you have finished delivering the project activity, you can submit a payment claim for the final 10% of the grant.

We expect that most grant-holders will claim the first 90% within three months of our grant offer. If you are unable to take up the grant, please let us know as soon as possible, as we expect the funding available to be oversubscribed.

If your costs or intended activities change, just let us know. If you need to reconfigure your budget or timings, please get in touch with your caseworker to discuss the changes. Given the ongoing circumstances, we aim to be as flexible as possible.

To claim the first 90% of your grant:

- Sign our digital contract.
- Complete our evaluation template/s.
- Provide an invoice or a payment request to Art Fund for 90% of the grant amount.

To claim the final 10% of the grant, please submit:

- a final statement of expenditure, which shows how you spent the grant.
- an evaluation and any images that connect to your project.
- an invoice for the balance.

Evidence of expenditure for costs above £1,000 (e.g. invoices, receipts) may be requested by your caseworker, so please do keep this information safe until the grant is closed.

In most cases, we expect the funding to have been fully committed within two years of the grant offer. Final reports can be submitted to Art Fund shortly after this.

Evaluation

We understand that you are working under pressure and that completing reports for funders is not your priority. We are continuing to refine our evaluation model to ensure it is straightforward, light-touch and informative for all involved.

As a funder, we are interested in learning from the breadth of projects. We will seek to evaluate what can be learnt from the successes and failures you may encounter in trying to achieve your aims. We are likely to use the [Failspace](#) model as part of our evaluation framework.

We want to encourage curiosity, openness and reflection through this programme, based on the principle that we all learn best when we acknowledge successes and failures.

We may ask individual grant holders to participate in follow-up telephone calls or workshops to promote peer learning. If this is the case, we will get in touch with you directly.

5. What happens next

How we will use the information you share with us about your grant and activity

We advocate for the sector and work collaboratively with other bodies to promote best practice and support positive change. We may share information and insights gained from funded projects in order to encourage new and better ways of working.

We may ask you to be involved in sharing your experiences with our members, donors and the wider public through channels such as social media, www.artfund.org and our magazine, Art Quarterly.

As part of the #opengrants movement, we may publish details of all Reimagine projects to the 360 Giving platform. This data source is useful for funders, so we can see where the money is going, but also for grant applicants, so they understand the types of things different funders will support. You can find out more and search the database here:

Grantnav.threesixtygiving.org

Announcement and press

We want our Reimagine grants to showcase the vital role that museums and galleries play in society. We will work with you when planning press announcements and promote news connected with your project through our communications channels.

Please contact Zosia Gamgee, Communications Manager, on ZGamgee@artfund.org to coordinate plans.

You can also email media@artfund.org with general queries.

Images

We may be in touch directly during your project to request images that illustrate the Reimagine grants. Otherwise, the only other time we ask for images is when they are submitted along with your evaluation once your project or activities have concluded.

If you have any queries about supplying images, how they will be used, or copyright, please contact images@artfund.org.

6. Being part of our network

Acknowledging Art Fund

To get the most from our partnership, we ask that you reference Art Fund in all relevant promotional material connected to your grant.

When you acknowledge our support, you are:

- Thanking our National Art Pass members and donors for making it possible.
- Introducing more people to what we do.
- Helping to attract more visitors to your exhibitions and events, whether in person or online.

Further guidance on how and where you should credit us is available to download from this webpage:

<https://www.artfund.org/professional/promote-your-venue>

The credit line for this grant is: 'with Art Fund support'.

For example: 'This project was made possible with Art Fund support.'

Please contact the Museum Marketing team at museums@artfund.org for sign-off on all materials, allowing at least 3 working days for us to respond.

We would also like to speak to you about joining our National Art Pass network of 900+ partner venues across the UK. By offering a benefit to visitors with a National Art Pass, you can reach a new audience of culture seekers, increase your visitors and revenue, and access a range of free services designed especially for museums and galleries. You can find out more about growing your audience with Art Fund [here](#).

Please contact Jennie Jiricny (jjiricny@artfund.org) if you would like to join the network and maximise marketing opportunities with our 135,000 members. We will also get in touch with further details when arranging your offer paperwork.

7. Terms and conditions

The following conditions are attached to Reimagine grants (the Grant):

1. APPLICATION OF THE GRANT

The Grant must be used only for the project or activities you have detailed as benefitting from the Grant on your Grant application form (the Project) and for no other purpose whatsoever (costs for staffing must relate to the Project).

2. VAT

The Grant is not a consideration for any taxable supply for VAT purposes.

- 2.1. You acknowledge that Art Fund's obligation does not extend to paying any amounts in respect of VAT in addition to the Grant.
- 2.2. If you are registered for VAT, or you subsequently become liable to register for VAT, you must keep proper and up-to-date records and you must make those records available and give copies to Art Fund when requested.

3. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Grant will be paid to you in the following stages:

- 3.1. 90% upon your returning to us a signed contract, a completed evaluation template and an invoice for the amount being claimed.
- 3.2. 10% upon receipt by us of the evaluation report referred to in clause 4 below, a summary of expenditure (evidence of expenditure for amounts above £1,000 may be requested) and an invoice for the amount being claimed.

4. EVALUATION AND REPORTING

- 4.1. You will attend an evaluation workshop and complete an evaluation template prior to claiming the first 90% of your grant and submit an evaluation report when claiming the final 10%.
- 4.2. When we evaluate this programme, we may request your participation in telephone interviews, survey activity or peer workshops.
- 4.3. We may publish and share data connected to your grant on 360 Giving as part of the Open Grants movement, this is in addition to our own channels.
- 4.4. We may agree a reporting schedule with you, which will require you to update us at regular intervals against the outcomes of your Project and expenditure against the Grant.

5. ACKNOWLEDGING OUR SUPPORT

Our contribution to the Project must be acknowledged in all literature and/or other materials generated by you to publicise the Project including (but not limited to) press releases, webpages, e-communications, promotional film or video, press advertisements, posters, leaflets and brochures about the Project. You will make all reasonable endeavours to ensure any partner organisations do likewise.

6. Our contribution to the Project must be acknowledged through correct use of the credit line 'with Art Fund support' and, where possible, Art Fund's logo. All uses of the logo must be submitted to us for approval prior to publication/printing. You agree to maintain on any web pages that you host in relation to the Project a link to Art Fund's homepage at www.artfund.org. You will make all reasonable endeavours to ensure any partner organisations do likewise.

7. Terms and conditions

7. You will not use Art Fund's name or logo in a way which may adversely affect the image of Art Fund or cause any negative publicity or otherwise damage or injure our reputation and standing.
8. You will arrange for our membership literature and display panels to be prominently displayed at all times in the main foyer of the museum, the size, design and location of the display panels to be mutually agreed. Supplies of our membership literature must be requested from us whenever necessary.
9. PUBLICITY AND IMAGES
 - 9.1. You agree to work with us in good faith in order to showcase and promote the Project throughout the Project Period. Such activities might include (but are not limited to): facilitating visits for our supporters; online activity (including, for example, online blogs and interviews), and features in our magazine Art Quarterly.
 - 9.2. We each agree that all press releases, web or press copy or related publicity relating to the Project will be submitted to the other for prior written approval in advance of publication. We may publicise the amount and purpose of the Grant in whatever way we think fit, although we will consult with you in advance.
 - 9.3. If requested, you also agree to provide us at regular intervals throughout the Project with a representative selection of high-resolution digital images illustrating the Project. These images must be suitable for publication and copyright cleared for use by us (where copyright is owned by a third party). Where copyright is owned by you, you agree to grant us a royalty free, irrevocable licence to use the images for all Art Fund purposes.
10. COLLECTIONS

You may need to sign Art Fund's additional terms and conditions for any projects where works of art or objects are acquired or commissioned with support under the Reimagine grants programme if we so wish.
11. PERSONAL DATA

Art Fund may collect your personal data, please see Art Fund personal data policy for grant giving in our privacy and cookies policy on Art Fund's website <https://www.artfund.org/policies/privacy-policy>
12. TERMINATION

Art Fund will not be liable or responsible to you for any failure to perform, or delay in performance of, any of their obligations under these conditions that is caused by events outside their reasonable control (a "Force Majeure Event"). The obligation for performance under these conditions will be deemed to be suspended for the period that the Force Majeure Event continues, and you will have an extension of time for performance of the Project, if appropriate. Art Fund will each use their reasonable endeavours to bring the Force Majeure Event to a close or to find a solution by which their obligations may be performed despite the Force Majeure Event.
13. If any of the conditions set out in these conditions are breached in a material respect and (if capable of remedy) such breach is not remedied within 60 days, we reserve the right at our sole discretion to require that all or some of the Grant is repaid. We shall exercise this right by specifying in a notice in writing to you the amount of the Grant which is to be repaid. Any sum which is specified in the notice and is not repaid within 60 days of the date of the notice will bear interest charged on a daily basis at the then base rate of our clearing bank.

Reimagine grants are funded by Art Fund with support from generous trusts and individuals.

This programme and our COVID-19 Impact: Museum sector research report have been made possible with the support and guidance of Wafer Hadley consultants

Cover: *Visitor with As a Precursor to Folly* (2021) by Simeon Barclay, on display at British Art Show 9, 2021-22, installed at Wolverhampton Art Gallery. A Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition organised in collaboration with galleries across the cities of Aberdeen, Wolverhampton Manchester and Plymouth, supported by Art Fund. © Simeon Barclay. Photo: Janie Airey/Art Fund 2022