

Working with national museums: partnerships and collaboration



National museums work in partnership with other museums, collections and historic sites across the UK.

Partnerships are based around the sharing of collections and knowledge in a way that benefits all those involved.

Working in partnership enables museums to reach a much wider audience and discover more about their collection, as well as sharing skills and knowledge, and embracing new opportunities.

Traditional methods of developing partnerships – such as lending objects, touring exhibitions and staff exchanges – remain popular, and national museums work with an increasing number and variety of collections. Partnership galleries, long-term loans and co-produced exhibitions increase access to both national and local collections, whilst placements and subject specialist networks ensure knowledge and good practice is shared across the museum sector.

Nevertheless, the means by which national museums work collaboratively are becoming ever-more numerous and creative, and cover almost every aspect of a museum's operation. Digital technology opens up greater possibilities, as do the

opportunities to work with community organisations, artists and universities. By working collaboratively, all museums are able to make the most of the expertise in both national and non-national museums, through activity like joint apprenticeships, strategic training programmes and joint digital projects.

As the economic, social and technological context within which UK museums work continues to change rapidly, working together is an effective way for museums to retain collections expertise, fully embrace new opportunities and increase access to both national and local collections and the stories these can tell.

Many national museums have a post dedicated to the development and management of partnerships. If you are interested in collaborating with a national museum, it may be best to contact the person listed on the back of this leaflet

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CASE STUDIES

The British Museum

The British Museum tours exhibitions of different sizes across the UK: attracting over half a million visitors in 2015/16. Spotlight exhibitions focus on one star object from the British Museum and place it in different regional contexts. Exhibitions included *Celebrating Ganesha*, *The Lacock Cup* and *The Sikh Fortress Turban*.



National Museums Northern Ireland

National Museums Northern Ireland and Wolverhampton Art Gallery shared their knowledge to co-produce the highly commended exhibition *Art of the Troubles*.



Imperial War Museums

IWM is leading the First World War Centenary Partnership, an international network of organisations commemorating the FWW Centenary.

Museums can join for free at 1914.org/partners and access digital assets, resources and training and networking events.



National Museums Scotland

National Museums Scotland provides targeted knowledge and skills training for Scottish museums in curatorial and other areas, with topics as diverse as managing Egyptian collections, the use of handling objects for learning, pest management and how to bid effectively at auction.



National Army Museum

The National Army Museum commemorated the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo with *Waterloo Lives* – a nationwide programme of events, activities and displays.



National Portrait Gallery

Following the National Portrait Gallery's acquisition of Anthony Van Dyck's Self-portrait in 2014, the painting is touring to six venues where it forms the centrepiece of six unique displays involving a contemporary artist and a public programme.



National Galleries of Scotland & Tate

ARTIST ROOMS is a collection of modern and contemporary art shared with UK institutions through a major touring programme. The Collection was established through the d'Offay Donation in 2008 and is jointly owned and managed by the National Galleries of Scotland and Tate. There have been 147 ARTIST ROOMS exhibitions at 77 museums and galleries since 2009.



Tate

Tate convenes the British Art Network, which brings together professionals working on British art. It contributes to the sharing of expertise, and supports a variety of networking opportunities.

Membership to the network is always open and free.



The National Gallery

The National Gallery's *Masterpiece Tour* sees one of the Gallery's star works go on tour. So far works by Manet, Canaletto and Rembrandt have been displayed in venues across the UK.



V&A

The V&A provides a Photography Curatorial traineeship with Museums Sheffield and Nottingham City Museums. This is a practical training opportunity for two young curators, and an opportunity to improve the public access to photography collections.

MUSEUMS

British Museum

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Imperial War Museums

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