



Supported by

**Bloomberg
Philanthropies**

PRESS RELEASE

London 7th April 2021 EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 on 7th April 2021

Art UK and Bloomberg Philanthropies Announce Major Partnership to Enhance Free Digital Access to UK's Public Art Collections

Art UK and Bloomberg Philanthropies today announce a major partnership that will strengthen and improve digital access to the UK's national collection of art while encouraging broader engagement with local museums and art galleries. With this multi-year collaboration, Bloomberg Philanthropies will become one of Art UK's leading supporters, helping Art UK deliver substantial benefits to over 3,000 public art collections across the UK.

Building on existing support from Arts Council England and Art UK's individual donors, corporate supporters, and grant-making trusts, this important collaboration will enable the leading cultural education charity, Art UK, to grow its impact on society and share more of the UK's cultural riches with diverse communities at a time of significant challenge for many.

Bloomberg Philanthropies' support will amplify Art UK's impact across its four key areas of focus:

1. Providing free online access

The [Art UK website](#) brings together the national collection of art – including art by 50,000 artists – onto one platform, providing free access to an audience at home and abroad of currently over 3.3 million annual users. 2021 will see the completion of the digitisation of the nation's [sculpture](#) collection, funded principally by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Art UK's focus now is to accelerate the volume and pace of uploading already digitised artworks such as works on paper and photography. Support from Bloomberg Philanthropies will enable Art UK to grow its audience and boost its impact.

2. Telling the stories behind the nation's art

A key strategic focus for Art UK is to build engagement, interest and understanding by telling the stories behind the art. This includes a particular emphasis on lesser-known artists and diverse subject matter whilst providing insights into history, philosophy and the natural world. There are already over [1300 articles](#) publicly available and users are invited to [curate their own digital exhibitions](#) on Art UK. [Art Detective](#) supports this goal by enlisting global expertise to help collections solve the mysteries behind their artworks, identifying sitters and places as well as unknown artists.

3. Growing learning resources for schools

Art UK and Bloomberg Philanthropies believe that all children should benefit from a high-quality arts education which teaches them the skills they need to think critically and creatively. Building on learning resources created during the National Lottery Heritage Fund-funded sculpture project, Art UK recently launched its [schools learning portal](#). This innovative tool enables teachers across the UK to access online lesson planning and resources generated by Art UK and its partners, including Oxford University Press and Partner Collections, and will build on the work of Bloomberg-supported educational platforms such as Sutton Trust online.

4. Showcasing art and generating income for collections

Most public collections could not showcase their art online without the support of Art UK. Art UK brings together over 3,000 public collections on one shared, economically efficient platform, allowing them all to reap the benefits of scale and technology in one of the largest arts partnerships put together in the UK. Art UK's Partner Collections have access to the Art UK [Shop](#), enabling them to generate income without making any capital investment or taking any risk.

Art UK on the Bloomberg Connects App

A free digital guide to cultural organisations around the world, Bloomberg Connects makes it easy to access and engage with arts and culture from mobile devices, anytime, anywhere. The app offers the ability to learn about current exhibitions at a portfolio of participating cultural partners through dynamic content exclusive to each organisation. Features include expert commentary, video highlights, pinch-and-zoom capability and exhibition and way-finding maps. To download the free Bloomberg Connects app, visit the Apple App or Google Play stores and search for 'Bloomberg Connects'.

Art UK hosts world-class resources which digital technology can make accessible to diverse communities around the world. That's why, as part of the partnership, Bloomberg Philanthropies and Art UK will launch an Art UK guide on the Bloomberg Connects app in June 2021, and will support Art UK's Partner Collections to start joining from later in the year. The collections will benefit from free technical infrastructure and support and will become part of a growing international community of world-famous art collections including the Frick Collection, the Guggenheim Museum and the Serpentine Galleries.

Oliver Dowden, Culture Secretary, said:

'Digital access to arts and culture during the pandemic has been very important giving enjoyment and educating millions. Art UK's innovative online collection has brought art into the homes of people not only across the UK, but across the globe. I am so pleased that this new partnership will enhance digital access and continue to develop this vital resource.'

Sir Nicholas Serota, Chairman of Arts Council England, said:

'This partnership is an exciting development not only for Art UK, but also for the whole network of institutions they work with. Having followed Art UK from their creation in 2003, I know this announcement is a major milestone in their mission to make art accessible to everyone and look

forward to seeing the work they do over the coming years in partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies.'

Jemma Read, Global Head of Corporate Philanthropy at Bloomberg LP said:

'At Bloomberg, we believe that art can inspire change and raise aspirations. Art UK represents a phenomenal range of collections and captures our artistic heritage in a truly unique way. We're delighted to collaborate to share these national treasures with communities across the world.'

Mary Beard, 2021 Patron of Art UK, said:

'This is absolutely wonderful news. Art UK is already bringing collections to very wide audiences. This support will enable them to go even wider and do even better. Many thanks to Bloomberg Philanthropies. Their generosity will make a real difference.'

Andrew Ellis, Art UK's Director, said:

'Bloomberg Philanthropies is a major and generous supporter of the arts globally. But it is their belief that digital technologies can widen and enrich cultural participation that particularly resonates with Art UK. We are absolutely delighted and very proud to be entering into a partnership that will have such significant benefits for audiences and public collections. We so look forward to working with them in the years to come.'

###ENDS###

Notes to Editors

About Art UK

Art UK is a cultural education charity on a mission to make the art in UK public collections accessible to everyone, for enjoyment, learning and research.

The organisation enables global audiences to learn about the nation's art collection. It does this by digitising artworks, telling the stories behind the art, and creating exciting opportunities for public interaction with art, both online and offline.

Over 80% of the nation's art is not on public view, and until Art UK started its work much of this art had not been photographed. The charity's work is helping to radically change this, making what is publicly owned, publicly accessible – to anyone, anywhere.

Art UK plays a major role supporting public art collections by improving their accessibility and sustainability. The platform currently shows over 270,000 artworks by 50,000 artists and is an ambitious collaboration between 3,300 institutions, making it one of the largest arts partnerships put together in the UK. Art UK does not have an equivalent anywhere in the world.

Art UK is the operating name of the Public Catalogue Foundation, a charity registered in England and Wales (1096185) and in Scotland (SC048601). For more information, please visit artuk.org.

www.artuk.org

Follow Art UK for your daily dose of art:



[@artukdotorg](https://twitter.com/artukdotorg)



facebook.com/artukdotorg



instagram.com/artukdotorg

About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Through innovative partnerships and bold approaches, the Bloomberg Philanthropies arts programme works to increase access to culture and strengthen arts organisations. Through a wide range of dynamic partnerships with visual, performing and literary arts organisations, Bloomberg Philanthropies is committed to supporting the arts. The philanthropy works in over 170 countries and focuses on creating lasting change in five key areas: the Arts, Public Health, Environment, Education and Government Innovation. For more information, please visit bloomberg.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#) and [TikTok](#).

For more information please contact:

Andrew Ellis – Director, Art UK

07766 197418 andrew.ellis@artuk.org

Fabia Stocken – EMEA Philanthropy, Bloomberg LP

fhorsley3@bloomberg.net