



Connecting you to art

Leading art education charity Art UK seeks new Trustees

INFORMATION PACK

About Art UK

[Art UK](#) is an art education charity and the online home for every public collection of art in the United Kingdom. It is making the UK's national collection of art accessible to everyone online – for enjoyment, learning and research. Art UK brings together art from almost 3,500 British institutions in one of the UK's largest ever arts partnerships and showcases this art to a global audience of 5.5m users per year. Approaching 60% of this audience is overseas.

Art UK provides significant support to museums and galleries in the UK, by providing them with a shared digital platform to showcase their art collections, reach new audiences, and generate income. Most of these collections would not be able to show their art online without Art UK. The Art UK platform is rich in [story content](#), [learning resources](#) for teachers and students, and [public engagement opportunities](#). A shared [e-commerce infrastructure](#) helps collections generate much needed commercial income.

New Trustees sought

We are looking to recruit new Trustees with high levels of interest in the visual arts and how to communicate them to a wide public. Our motivated board, led by Kathleen Soriano, supports a dynamic executive team committed to making the national art collection accessible online and across a number of important initiatives set out in detail below.

Successful candidates will have:

- A love of art in all its manifestations and a strong commitment to arts education
- A track record of achievement, leadership, and innovation in their chosen career
- An awareness of the challenges faced by the cultural sector around financial resources and the need to sustain reliable core income

We believe our Board would benefit in particular from further expertise in four main areas:

- Charity finance and fundraising
- Galleries and museums
- Digital marketing
- Learning and schools education

We are keen to consider people who have not served on a charity's Board of Trustees before if they bring expertise in the specialisms we're targeting. We welcome and encourage applications from candidates who are under-represented in the creative industries, particularly individuals who experience physical, mental, or social barriers to accessing the arts.

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for ensuring Art UK follows a strategy that delivers public benefit in accordance with the charity's Articles of Association. The Trustees ensure that the charity acts responsibly with regard to the management of risk and financial control, and in accordance with the law.

The new Trustees will join a dynamic and entrepreneurial organisation, and a dedicated and passionate Trustee Board. In a friendly environment, the new Trustees will be able to make a substantial contribution towards improving the financial sustainability of public art collections across the UK as well as Art UK itself, whilst also supporting the charity's mission to open up access to the UK's national art collection in imaginative and compelling ways.

The Board currently comprises the following Trustees:

Chair: Kathleen Soriano, *Independent curator, art historian and broadcaster*

Vice-Chair: George Entwistle, *former senior executive at the BBC*

Hasan Bakhshi, *Director, AHRC's Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre*

Carola Boehm, *Professor, School of Digital, Technologies and Arts, Staffordshire University*

Tom Davies, *CEO, Machroes Holdings and active investor*

Catherine Holden, *Scotland-based independent culture and heritage consultant*

Thomas Marks, *Writer and critic, and former Editor of Apollo magazine*

John Stack, *Director of Digital Innovation and Technology, National Gallery*

Kim Streets, *Chief Executive, Museums Sheffield*

The artist **Bob & Roberta Smith** is the 2024 Patron of the charity.

The Board delegates certain responsibilities to a Finance Committee and a Nominations Committee; and decision-making to two executive committees staffed by senior management with Trustee oversight.

High regard is paid by Trustees and Management to external guidance as evidenced by our range of [advisory bodies](#). Unlike the Board of Trustees, these bodies do not have governance responsibilities. The most senior is the Advisory Board. There are also a small number of Steering Panels providing expert guidance on aspects of the charity's work, which are made up, typically, of project stakeholders. Finally, there is a Philanthropy Board comprising Trustees and external appointments who focus on individual giving.

Terms of appointment

Length of Term

An initial term of four years, with the possibility of a second four year term.

Time commitment

Trustee Board meetings take place quarterly. The meetings are usually in-person in London with at least one meeting a year in Stoke-on-Trent, but are held on occasion via Zoom if circumstances do not allow for in-person meetings. Trustees have the option to dial in if they cannot attend an in-person meeting. Board meetings are accompanied by relevant reading material that is provided in advance.

Outside these meetings there will be contact from time to time with the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Trustees and members of the senior management team. Trustees are also invited to attend a selection of the events run by the charity during the year.

Compensation

This is an unpaid role, but Trustees are reimbursed for all necessary travelling expenses.

More about Art UK

The UK holds one of the greatest public collections of art in the world, yet at least 80% is not on display, being in store or in buildings without routine public access. By digitising this art, placing it online and telling the stories behind the art, Art UK enables a global audience to learn about the UK's national collection. On one digital platform we unite collections large and small – including museums, universities, hospitals, council buildings and collections such as those of the National Trust, Government Art Collection and British Council – and bring their artworks to millions of people. Currently the platform shows 310,000 artworks by 54,000 artists.

Art UK currently has two significant initiatives underway. The [Museum Data Service](#) is a collaboration with the University of Leicester and Collections Trust, to build digital infrastructure for sharing tens of millions of object records across UK museums whilst growing significantly the number of artworks on Art UK. As more artworks are added to Art UK, this will unlock the potential for thousands more stories to be told about the art in UK public collections. This is being funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the AHRC. The second is the national roll-out of [The Superpower of Looking](#). Using the world of art and images, Superpower will give primary school teachers resources and confidence to teach the Art and Design curriculum and sharpen their pupils' visual literacy. In short, Superpower will endow children with invaluable life skills, helping them to observe, question and understand the world around them, while also encouraging a love of art. This initiative is being funded by the Freelands Foundation.

The charity was launched in 2003 under the Public Catalogue Foundation name and adopted Art UK as its operating name when the Art UK website was launched in 2016. The brand is therefore relatively young. The small organisation is entrepreneurial and dynamic. Its team of 32 FTE is distributed across England, Scotland and Wales with everyone mainly working from home. The charity has a modest HQ in Stoke-on-Trent.

In the last financial year Art UK's total costs were £1.7m. We receive no regular public funding but are in receipt of public money through project grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Welsh Government and Creative Scotland and we have received generous funding from Arts Council England in the past. The majority of our funding comes from the private sector with leading supporters being Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Deborah Loeb Brice Foundation and Freelands Foundation, with other funding from a wide range of grant-giving trusts, individuals and corporates. We are setting up the American Friends of Art UK given 23% of our audience resides in the USA. A proportion of collections (the 'Partner Collections') pay Art UK an annual subscription fee in return for using our e-commerce infrastructure.

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.

Application process

Please send a CV and covering letter/email to Lauren Colley, Art UK's Head of People and Culture, lauren.colley@artuk.org who will then share applications with the Nominations Committee of Trustees. Applications should be sent to Art UK by 9am on Tuesday 4th June.

The Nominations Committee will read all applications and choose a shortlist of candidates for interview. Successful candidates will then follow a short induction process before attending their first Board Meeting.

If you would like to discuss this role with an existing Trustee, or the Chief Executive or receive additional information, this can be arranged through Lauren Colley.

Art UK – May 2024