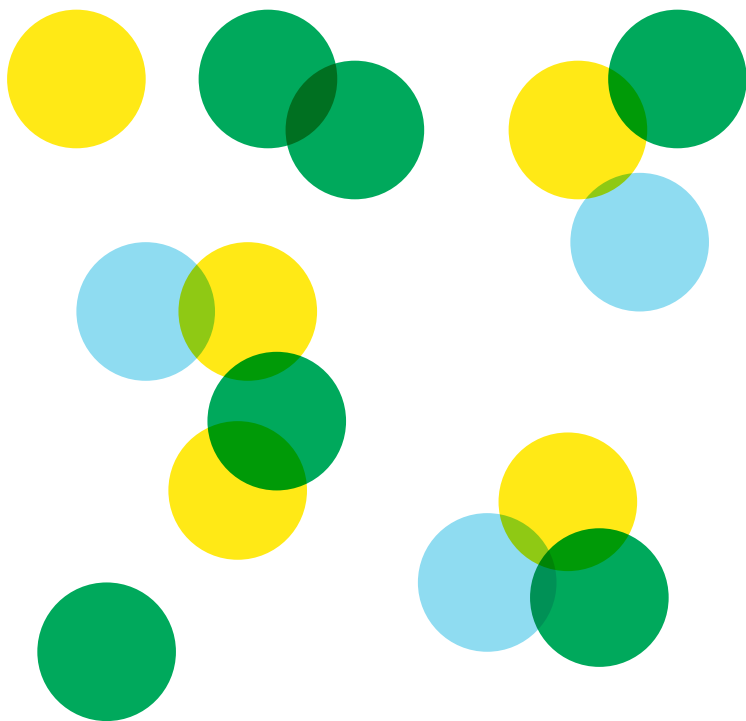


Going places: Touring and shared exhibitions in the UK

*A report exploring the current landscape for developing
and sharing exhibitions among museums, galleries and
other cultural organisations*



Foreword

Historically, the UK's museums, galleries and cultural organisations have found myriad ways to work together and to share exhibitions at every scale, from single-object loans to co-commissioning new work, from mobile galleries to international blockbusters.

The pandemic has had an enormous impact on exhibitions and touring, and not only in the short term; many venues are reimagining how they share collections, co-produce exhibitions and develop new projects for the long term. This report, commissioned by Art Fund in partnership with Creative Scotland, offers an overview of current practice and future potential, the benefits of hosting or curating touring exhibitions, and the barriers to success as described by more than 200 museum and gallery professionals across the UK.

Many of the themes echo findings in Art Fund's other reports on the impact of Covid-19, and demonstrate the commitment, resilience and ingenuity of the

museum and gallery sector. It's likely that more exhibitions will need to be developed in collaboration or become more collections-based. But, rather than narrowing horizons, this is seen as an opportunity to create new kinds of partnerships, using different models of working to jointly address global concerns such as the climate emergency and racial justice.

Partnerships can create opportunities to respond to the local context by involving communities in the co-production of exhibitions and the reinterpreting of collections. For the curators and other staff involved, this can lead to a deeper engagement with audiences and the opportunity to share skills and knowledge with peers across the country, including across borders. Partnerships can also be an effective way for museums and galleries to work collaboratively to explore and address issues of underrepresentation and marginalisation, a key priority for the sector.

Another critical consideration is sustainability and the carbon footprint associated with international blockbusters and long-distance visitor travel. Regional tours that focus on the diversity of local audiences and the quality of experience could help organisations move towards carbon neutrality.

Many see increased collaboration as vital to the sector as it recovers from the Covid-19 crisis. The effort that many museums and galleries are putting into digitising their work and the normalising of online networking should make it easier for potential partners to find each other, but support is still needed to establish relationships and to deliver collaborative projects well.

Art Fund and Creative Scotland are advocating to make permanent the Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief, currently extended until 2024. Hiring or curating touring exhibitions can be prohibitively expensive for many organisations and finding and accessing funding extremely challenging. Tax relief allows museums and galleries to recover significant costs where budgets are stretched thinnest.

The report contains many examples of ambitious, imaginative and impactful exhibition-making and touring, and the last two years have shown more than ever that collaborations between cultural organisations are good for the sector and good for audiences. More joined-up and straightforward support, with greater funding, could empower museums and galleries to share their collections and exhibitions more effectively and help establish a new era of creative partnerships.

As well as informing our own work Art Fund and Creative Scotland will use this report to advocate for the benefits of collaboration and co-production in the sector, and work with other funders and partners to strengthen support for this activity across the UK.

Sarah Philp
Director of Programme and Policy,
Art Fund

Amanda Catto
Head of Visual Arts,
Creative Scotland



Simeon Barclay, *As a Precursor to Folly*, 2021. © Simeon Barclay. Installation view, British Art Show 9, 2021-22, Aberdeen Art Gallery. A Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition organised in collaboration with galleries across the cities of Aberdeen, Wolverhampton, Manchester and Plymouth. Photo © Mike Davidson

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About this report

Who is behind this report?

Art Fund, in partnership with Creative Scotland, commissioned cultural insight consultancy Wafer Hadley to consider how UK museums, galleries and other cultural organisations, such as libraries, work together to share collections and programme temporary exhibitions through partnerships and other forms of collaboration.

The project was steered by an advisory group of leaders working across the museum and gallery sector. Art Fund and Creative Scotland would like to warmly thank the following individuals whose invaluable advice and perspectives helped develop and inform the research and final report: Beth Bate, Dundee Contemporary Arts; Brian Cass, Hayward Gallery Touring; Ceri Lewis, Tate and National Galleries of Scotland; Professor Christopher Breward, National Museums Scotland; Emma Nicolson, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; Jason Williamson, Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums; Dr Nick Merriman, Horniman Museum and Gardens.

What is its purpose?

Art Fund and Creative Scotland asked us (Wafer Hadley) to conduct an independent assessment of the landscape, based on new evidence drawn from the sector. The intention is to inform the development of programmes of support and build a stronger UK-wide policy framework.

Defining our terms

Throughout this report we refer to 'hosting', 'touring' and 'shared exhibitions'.

By **hosting** we mean receiving an exhibition from another organisation.

By **touring** we mean any exhibition that has been, or will be, hosted at multiple venues.

By **shared** or **partnership exhibition** we mean an exhibition where the content has been developed by two or more organisations working together.

Geographical context

We have looked across the four nations of the United Kingdom to try to understand the shared and specific issues related to touring and partnership exhibitions. We have touched on international touring and referred to it, but this has not been the primary focus of our research.

Methodology

This report is grounded in primary research and consultation with a wide range of organisations, operating at different scales and over a broad geographical area. Over 200 individuals from the museum, gallery and wider heritage sector have contributed to the research, including funders and other sector-support organisations. Our process has involved:

- a literature review
- an online survey for organisations
- an online survey for sector-support organisations
- in-depth interviews with individuals from a wide range of organisations
- a roundtable discussion with representatives from a number of museums
- a focus group with organisations in Northern Ireland
- case study development

Interviewees and survey participants were assured of anonymity to encourage honest feedback. The research has been overseen by a steering group made up of senior figures in the sector.



Jason Wilsher-Mills, *The Corby PIP Princess*, 2018, part of the touring exhibition *Jason and his Argonauts*. © Courtesy of the artist and 20-21 Visual Arts Centre. Photography: Jules Lister

Setting the scene



Andy Holden and Peter Holden, *Natural Selection*, 2017.
Installation view, Leeds Art Gallery, 8 June – 2 September 2018.
Courtesy the Artangel Collection. Photo: Simon Warner

There is a range of organisations in the UK that provide touring and partnership exhibitions as part of a mixed programme of activity. Many of these are national collections. Additionally, many independent and non-national museums and galleries offer touring exhibitions or exhibition partnerships to a greater or lesser degree.

There are also organisations without permanent collections that initiate and tour exhibitions. This is increasingly achieved via collaborative partnerships with venues around the UK.

Commercial touring exhibition providers generally offer shows of an ambitious scale, often operating internationally, with hire fees that may be beyond the financial reach of much of the UK museum and gallery sector.

Touring and shared exhibitions come in all shapes and sizes. It is difficult to analyse actual costs of touring shows because some organisations already have a dedicated level of core support (staffing and programme budget) which itself might be provided by external revenue funding bodies. In these cases, additional funding requirements will focus on covering the specific implementation costs of projects including dedicated outreach and learning programmes.

Other less well-resourced organisations may need to secure funding that contributes to the core costs of employing a specialist curator, technical or marketing support in addition to the project-specific costs of assembling the exhibition. Tour venues may themselves need to raise funds locally to cover their partnership costs or for activities that are additional to the core project.

In 2016 the Touring Exhibitions Group (TEG) published their [Economics of Touring Exhibitions Survey Report: An Analysis of Touring Exhibitions Practice in the UK](#) (funded by Arts Council England). With responses from 222 contributors, this found that:

- 32 per cent of touring exhibitions were free (there was no hire fee)
- The average budget for a UK touring exhibition was £62,500 although many organisations were producing exhibitions with budgets of under £5,000
- 25 per cent of organisations used 90-100 per cent core funds to develop touring exhibitions
- 46 per cent of organisations covered 50 per cent or more of their touring exhibition costs from external sources (not including hire fees)
- 20 per cent of organisations covered 100 per cent of their touring exhibition costs through external funding sources
- 67 per cent of organisations recouped less than 50 per cent of their touring costs through hire fees
- 51 per cent of organisations were not confident to fundraise to support their touring activity

It is worth noting that since TEG's report was published, we are aware of one long-standing provider of UK touring exhibitions that will cease to offer any new exhibitions beyond those currently in progress as the organisation adopts a new strategic focus.

There are many ways to develop shared exhibitions. Some models have been honed over many years while others are evolving in response to changing needs. Given the range of scales and types of organisation in the sector, this breadth is essential and no single approach will suit all. We expect to see further innovation in this area in the coming years. In Appendix 1: Sector Approaches we offer some examples of current and recent practice.



Benefits and barriers

Cecilia Charlton, *Eternal myth and the poetry of the cosmos [fate, future, suture] (triptych)*, 2021. Commissioned for Jerwood Art Fund Makers Open. Installation view at Jerwood Space. Photo © Amaal Said / Art Fund 2021

The benefits of touring and exhibition partnerships

Through our research we found that **Hosting** exhibitions can allow organisations to:

- Access high-quality and ambitious work
- Increase and diversify audiences
- Interpret collections in new ways
- Give staff breathing space between originated shows

'Bringing the work of a world-renowned artist to a rural setting'

Local authority gallery, Wales

Where organisations chose not to host exhibitions it was because it was not within their remit or they lacked a dedicated space.

Touring can allow organisations to:

- Expand their reach
- Increase their profile
- Support artists' development
- (Potentially) offset costs or earn income

We found that most touring exhibitions included some adaptability to the needs of the host venues, which moves closer to a partnership model.

'Our approach, generally, is to tour to fewer venues by developing partnerships from the start of the exhibition idea, rather than the model of 'one size fits all' with a standard hire fee. This allows us to adjust the tour fee to fit the venue, to take into account transport costs, particularly if [the host venue] is geographically remote, and adapt the exhibition through discussions with our partner organisations.'

National museum, England

Few organisations felt it was possible to earn significant income through touring in the UK. Touring outside the UK seemed a more likely route to this but required a major upfront investment.

Partnership working brings extra benefits, particularly where the costs of developing an ambitious exhibition that resonates deeply with audiences are shared. Expectations of quality, interactivity and levels of engagement continue to rise among visitors and within the sector, yet budgets are not keeping pace. Partnerships can provide a solution.

'Partnership working allowed us to pool resources and gave us the expertise to curate a more ambitious programme'

Independent gallery, Scotland

Other benefits can include:

- Sharing skills and expertise
- Supporting organisational development
- Co-commissioning new work
- Sharing (and conserving) collections
- Addressing the specific needs of diverse audiences
- Encouraging audience cross-over between venues
- Accessing funding

'Access to our partner's exceptional collections'

National museum, England

Partnerships can enable each organisation to bring their local audience engagement expertise to bear and shape the exhibition with local specificity and distinctive elements.

For galleries, partnerships are now a core way of working. In our survey, 94 per cent of galleries said they were working in this way at least occasionally, particularly those programming contemporary art. We also found that this was a small but growing trend among museums, where the driver was to create more relevant exhibitions for target audiences.

Barriers to touring and partnership development

Despite their benefits, partnerships were also recognised as being labour-intensive and demanding to manage. Our research found that the smaller the staff team, the less likely the organisation was to be working in partnership. Lack of capacity is the main barrier to more partnership working.

'Negotiating around two sets of bureaucracies'

Local authority museums service, England

Matchmaking

We found that a very significant barrier to more shared exhibition approaches was the challenge of finding appropriate partners. We heard time and again from organisations that finding potential partners was laborious and difficult. New collaborations were often based on existing relationships, and happenstance played a bigger part than strategy. Some organisations reported rarely or never being offered touring exhibitions or partnership approaches.

'We're keen to work in partnership, but we don't have capacity to initiate the partnership'

National museum, Northern Ireland

Many organisations have lost roles linked to touring and partnership development in recent years. Time and budgets for networking, travel and research are severely limited in many cases, and this extends to funders and other sector-support organisations.

During the pandemic, reliance on face-to-face networking has been thoroughly challenged, with video conferencing now the norm. This has opened up the potential for building new partnership relationships without the cost, inconvenience and environmental impact of travel.

The Touring Exhibitions Group (TEG) has run 'marketplace' events for its members for many years, in which organisations can network, discuss projects and exchange ideas. These are now hosted online, making them much more accessible.

This is a step forward, but there is still a need for a brokerage function within sector-support organisations and museum development bodies, and more specifically the four UK public arts funders, to build new partnerships.

Small and medium-size museums seem to be less well-served for exhibitions than their equivalents in the visual arts. A particular gap was identified in the provision of small-scale exhibitions for museums that are family-friendly and interactive, as well as social history exhibitions that have broad relevance. There were also reported gaps in exhibitions that support the Creative Case for Diversity, as set out by Arts Council England.



Right: Installation view of Pushing Paper: Contemporary Drawing from 1970 to Now, a British Museum touring exhibition. Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea, 19 September – 29 November 2020. Photo: Polly Thomas

Risks

The sector is aware of the considerable risks of touring: these can often deter organisations from getting involved.

Cost

The cost of hiring in or contributing to touring exhibitions is beyond the means of many organisations. The hire fees for just one quality show might outstrip the entire annual budget.

We heard that it was very difficult to fundraise for the costs of hosting an exhibition. Funding might be available for complementary activities, but this can sometimes increase the burden on understaffed organisations.

'The current funding process is too onerous and needs to be simpler to write but also to deliver. You have to do outreach and other add-ons and we are too stretched to offer this. Really small pots of money with a simpler process could really help.'

Local authority museums service, England

The four UK public arts funders and other support organisations are in favour of touring, but it is not always clear how to access relevant funding. The level of detail required on grants applications is often beyond the capacity of many smaller organisations. Organisations told us that if they have fundraising roles on staff, they may not be touring specialists, and researching suitable funds could be a challenge.

A tour originator may have to subsidise or offer a sliding scale of fees to make a tour viable. There are associated benefits to be gained from this, but the negative impact on the bottom line is undeniable.

'Artists love to tour and to see their work disseminated, so there is an impetus to do it, but in contemporary art the economics don't stack up for the tourer'

(Independent gallery, England)

Managing cash flow is a significant issue, with upfront costs for research, conservation and down-payments. Slippage in a tour schedule can mean paying for unexpected storage costs too.

The costs of transporting exhibitions were said to be escalating. These costs can limit the geographical spread of a tour. It has become harder for organisations to hire vehicles of the right size and using a commercial transport company can put the hire fees beyond the means of many smaller venues.

For museums and galleries in Wales, cross-border working can be challenging as the requirement for bilingual text on all exhibitions adds to the design costs when bringing in a show from outside the country.

Time

Staff capacity was the number one barrier to organisations participating in touring and partnership working. With many core infrastructures cut to the bone, taking on additional work was simply impossible. Time to think, network and have creative conversations was in short supply.

'Organising exhibitions is a full time job. In the past we had an Exhibitions and Events Officer but the post was deleted'

Local authority museums service, Wales

'Staff resources: a huge amount of curatorial, conservation, registrar and technical time is needed, often years in advance of the tour actually happening'

Independent museums trust, England

Lead-in times for exhibitions appear to be getting longer, and some shows are exhibited for extended periods, as organisations strive for ways to manage workloads. This allows fewer windows of opportunity for new exhibitions and partnerships to be developed.

Insurance, environmental and security issues

Appropriate environmental conditions, security systems and insurance are a prerequisite for most shared exhibitions. While some issues with historic buildings will be challenging to overcome, there was a feeling that more flexibility in this area could help. Fit-for-purpose loan conditions, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, were suggested in a number of our conversations.

'Increasingly stringent loan conditions – suitability of spaces/display cases/crating/courier costs'

Independent museums trust, Scotland

Some touring organisations had already begun advising less well-resourced organisations on how to make improvements in environmental controls.

The [Government Indemnity Scheme](#) (GIS) provides cost-free indemnity cover to borrowing institutions that meet required security, transport and environmental conditions for loss or damage to art or cultural items on short or long-term loan.

However, many venues cannot secure Government Indemnity because they don't meet national environmental and security standards. As insurance costs have risen, some touring providers have designed shows with insurance costs in mind.

Authorship

In taking a touring show, an organisation can feel that its own authorial voice is compromised. Working in partnership can mitigate this, but even in partnerships there may be a decision-making hierarchy. We heard that this was particularly the case in the visual arts, although financial realities may mean that organisations are becoming more sanguine about such compromise.

'Galleries prefer to originate their own exhibitions – easier to fundraise for'

Independent gallery, England

'[A challenge is] finding partner organisations interested in taking exhibitions – especially in the contemporary art field, where curating is often seen as an authorial act, and therefore receiving touring shows can be perceived as unambitious'

University art gallery, Scotland

For museums, the imperative was often to show their own collections, and local stakeholders may not see the value of engaging in touring and shared exhibitions.

Trust

Working in partnership requires a significant amount of trust between the parties and a project can easily be derailed without it. Trust takes time to develop. Respondents described establishing shared values and objectives at the outset as essential.

We heard how rapid staff turnover had impacted partnership relationships, leaving organisations with a sense of starting over. Further advice and training to ensure smoother handovers between staff would benefit partnerships.



Andy Holden and Peter Holden, *Natural Selection*, 2017.
Installation view, Leeds Art Gallery, 8 June – 2 September 2018.
Courtesy the Artangel Collection. Photo: Simon Warner

Where are we now?



Installation view of the exhibition Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity. Featuring: Hilary Lloyd, *Colin #2*, 1999, Arts Council Collection, © Hilary Lloyd. Courtesy Galerie Neu, Berlin; Sadie Coles HQ, London; Greene Naftali, New York. Monster Chetwynd, *Untitled*, 2015, courtesy the artists and Sadie Coles Gallery. Photo: Birmingham Museums Trust

The pandemic

Covid-19 has brought about many changes in society and in our professional lives. Many of the impacts are yet to be fully understood.

In May 2020, Art Fund carried out [research to explore how the pandemic was affecting organisations in the sector](#). This research was repeated a year later and found that there was still a great deal of uncertainty about the future, with more than half of museums and galleries around the UK worried about their survival.

The pandemic had immediate impacts on existing touring exhibitions, with exhibitions stuck, delayed or cancelled as museums and galleries closed their doors. New ways had to be found to make tactile and interactive exhibitions safe and hygienic, and this may have long-term impacts on the kinds of interactivity offered.

For many museums the focus is now on collections-based exhibitions. But rather than this being a sign of turning inwards, it appears to have focused greater attention on the potential of working collaboratively to make best use of the material and of digital opportunities, and to respond to pressing issues such as climate change, Black Lives Matter, and health and wellbeing. The turnkey exhibition may now be less desirable, and the blockbuster less affordable, but this may herald a new era of collaborative practice.

Research on [The Future of Touring Exhibitions](#), published in February 2021 by the Touring Exhibitions Organisation (TEO), had responses from organisations around the world. The research appears to show a shift towards medium and small-scale exhibitions, with more touring within individual nations and less international touring. Exhibitions in non-traditional spaces, such as shopping centres and outdoor spaces, were predicted to be on the rise. Exhibitions developed through networks of organisations, rather than individual museums or galleries, were also expected to grow.

The 'blockbuster' model of touring exhibitions is under reassessment for several reasons: the economics of a high-cost product at a time when visitor numbers may continue to be restricted or affected by individuals' willingness to travel to city centres, and increasing concerns about the environmental impact of long-distance transport of visitors, objects, exhibitions and curatorial teams.

Mark Wallinger, *According to Mark*, 2010. Installation view, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, 2016. Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth; carlier | gabauer, Berlin; Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna. Photo: Ruth Clark © Mark Wallinger. All rights reserved, DACS 2022



Climate change

As yet we can find no easily available tool that would help exhibition organisers calculate the greenhouse gas emissions of touring exhibitions. Is all long-distance touring bad, or does touring and sharing maximise the use of the carbon footprint embedded in the creation of an exhibition and reduce the impact of visitor travel?

A recent report by the charity [Julie's Bicycle](#) puts visitor travel in excess of 70 per cent of most host organisations' annual emissions and recommends developing regional touring exhibition models that do not rely on long-distance visitor travel.

Museums, galleries and other venues are increasingly aware of the need to reduce their carbon footprint and work towards carbon neutrality. For example, Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums has recently appointed a Sustainable Exhibitions Assistant. In recent years, progress has been made in reducing carbon emissions in relation to museum and gallery buildings, but there is more to be done.

Other existing advice encourages museums and galleries to:

- consider extending the duration of exhibitions to three months or longer
- place greater focus on presenting works from their own collections or by artists based locally
- adopt circular design principles that design out waste and pollution and keep products and materials in use
- consider modes of transport, with air freight avoided wherever possible
- move to [remote couriering](#), particularly for international loans and tours

The challenge for organisations is to be able to weigh up the benefits of touring, such as duration and reach and reduced visitor travel, set against the environmental impacts of touring the exhibition itself.

Where are we now?



Installation view of Eleri Mills – Egni: a decade of creativity, Ruthin Craft Centre. Photo © Dewi Tannatt Lloyd

Where are we now?

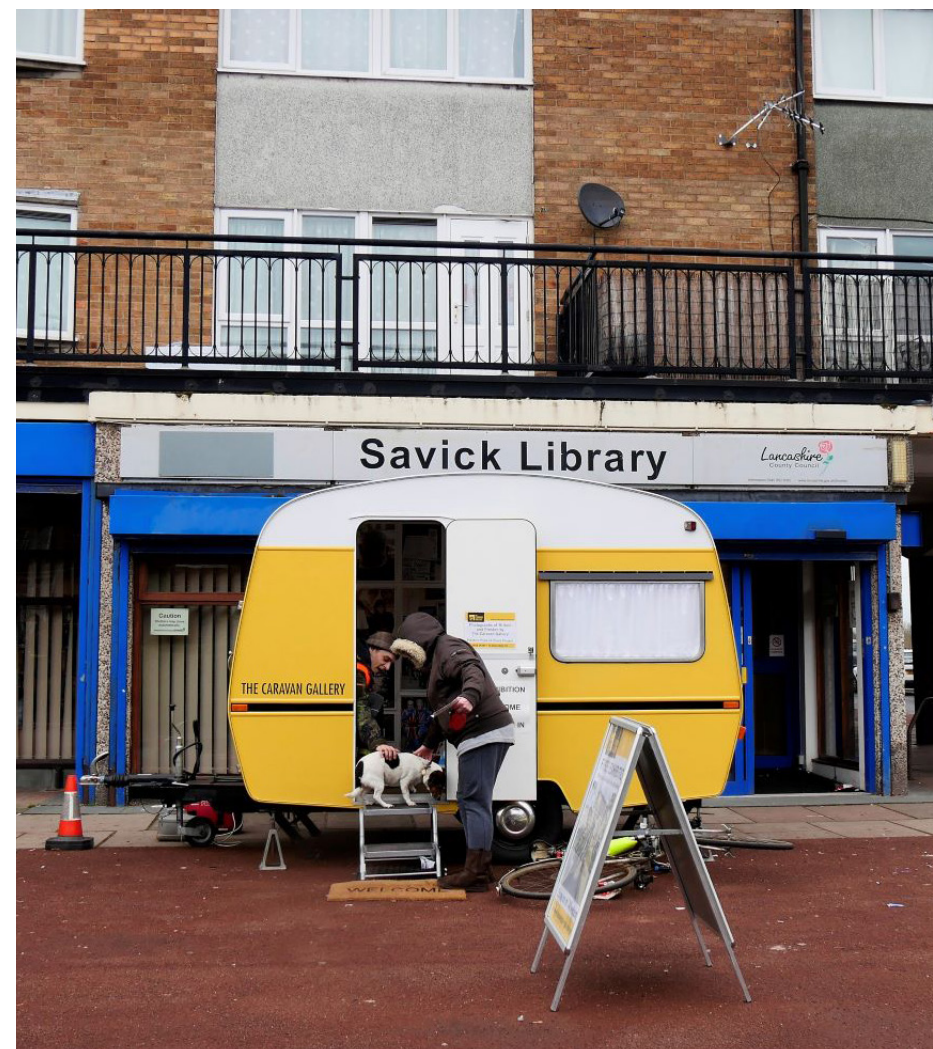
Brexit

The impact of Brexit on exhibition programmes, and on museums and galleries more generally in the UK, is relatively unclear as much may have been masked by the pandemic.

Specific problems have been identified in sourcing materials and equipment for exhibition displays due to Covid-19. Reduced shipping and the volatile pricing of raw materials, such as timber and acrylic, have also had negative impacts. Extended delivery dates for the import of equipment from mainland Europe may also be a result of the combined effects of Covid-19 and new Brexit import regulations.

The need for customs documents, CITES permits, export licenses and staff visas when touring exhibitions into and out of the EU is now much more complex. We heard that the requirements are often unclear. This all adds to the cost and time of working with EU partners.

But Brexit is in particularly sharp focus in Northern Ireland where it is causing significant disruption and uncertainty around lending and borrowing objects and exhibitions. There has already been a reduction in the overall number of loans to and from the region. There are major challenges caused by new customs procedures and a lack of clarity and understanding of required documentation by all parties. The added workload has led to a significant increase in costs, particularly in relation to the use of commercial transport companies, even for exchanges between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.



The Caravan Gallery, Savick Library, Preston, August 2021.
Photo courtesy the Caravan Gallery

The impact on organisations, already under-resourced financially and lacking staff capacity, is that they are struggling to maintain their core object and exhibition loan programmes. Despite these challenges, [museums and galleries in Northern Ireland do not want to be isolated from their neighbours across the UK and Europe](#) and are very much 'open for business': they feel a duty to ensure that the people of Northern Ireland have access to culture from across Europe and that they can share objects, works of art and exhibitions drawn from their collections with other countries.

Immediate improvements could be brought about by:

- standardised customs procedures for art and museum objects and exhibitions
- longer lead-in times for arrangements
- extended loan periods to accommodate potential transport delays
- increased budgets to resource the additional paperwork requirements, couriering and insurance costs

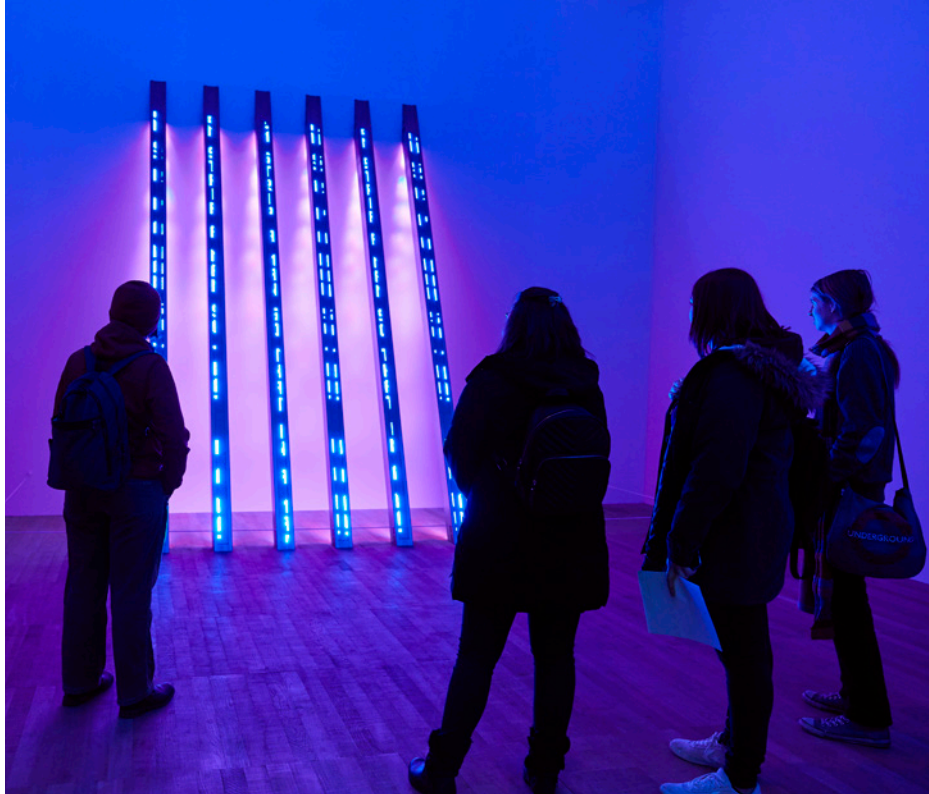
Digital

The pandemic saw a massive shift to digital and a great acceleration in the production of digital content by museums and galleries of all sizes. This change looks set to become permanent, with organisations now taking a more strategic approach, blending the 'real' with the virtual, seeking ways to monetise online content, and continuing to improve digital literacy within their wider teams.

Touring and exhibition partnerships are likely to benefit from the continued ease and cost-effectiveness of digital networking and meeting options. According to Art Fund's most recent sector research, over a third of collections-based institutions are focusing on digitising their collections, and this may facilitate partnership development around shared or complementary collections.

Findings from the [Cultural Participation Monitor digital research](#) show that during the pandemic, 6 per cent of the UK population engaged in a virtual tour of a gallery or art exhibition and 9 per cent browsed an organisation's online collection. 6 per cent of the population engaged with a cultural activity aimed at adults and 4 per cent engaged with activities for children and families. Figures suggest that this online audience could grow to 20-25 per cent of the population.

Digital content currently appeals most strongly to people who are already comfortable with digital technology and, on average, existing demographic inequalities tend to be even more pronounced in the digital audience. Digital content from museum and heritage providers seems to appeal strongly to an older audience (over 55).



Left: Exhibition view of ARTIST ROOMS: Jenny Holzer, Tate Modern, London, 2018 © Jenny Holzer. ARS, NY and DACS, London 2022. Photo: Janie Airey

Exhibitions themselves are likely to include an increasing number of digital elements, whether that be video, digital information resources, engagement activities or the core content itself, such as virtual reality objects. 'Intellectual property only' exhibitions are becoming more common, where digital assets from the originating organisation can be augmented by objects from the hirer's own collections.

Digital also presents an emerging distribution method. Virtual exhibitions, walkthroughs and tours can reach global audiences and be more accessible to those with health and disability challenges that make a museum or gallery visit difficult. They can also extend the shelf life of an exhibition, making it less ephemeral and available as a long-term research resource.

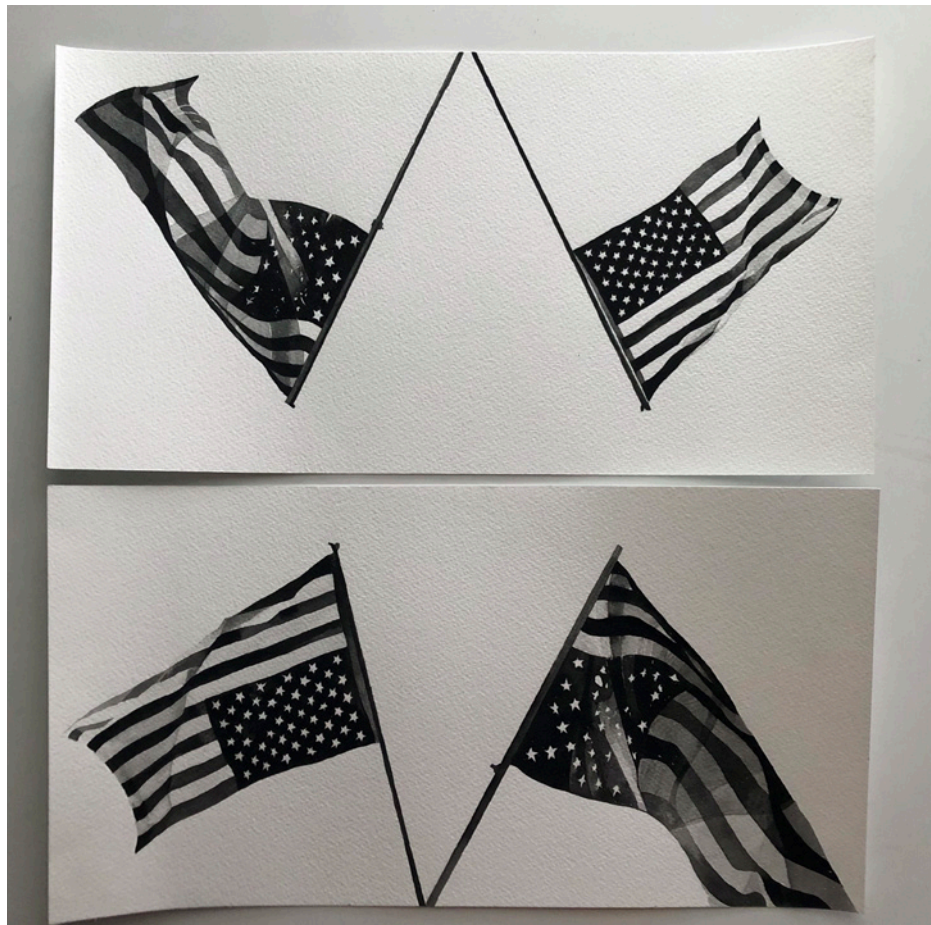
Diversity

2020 was a momentous year in terms of heightened public awareness of issues of inequality and social justice. Museums, galleries and heritage sites have become more proactive in engaging with current political and societal debates. Many heritage sites and country houses, built on the profits of Britain's historic involvement in the slave trade, have started to acknowledge and address their heritage, while simultaneously needing to defend the importance of this work.

Organisations are increasingly working to diversify their boards, staffing structure and programmes. Galleries, in particular, have made progress in achieving better representation of diverse artists within their exhibition and learning programmes, often linked to related audience development activities, such as the co-creation of exhibitions with different communities. However, many museums and galleries are still struggling to change their board and staff profiles.

According to the Art Fund 2021 Sector Research [Looking ahead](#) diversifying audiences is a current priority for almost half of organisations, with a further 29 per cent focusing on workforce diversity. Decolonising practice and responding to Black Lives Matter are of particular concern to national and university institutions.

Many organisations are working with local communities to reimagine or reinterpret their collections and co-curate displays and exhibitions. There are evolving models for how this kind of co-production can be integrated with the process of developing shared and touring exhibitions between museums and galleries.



Left, top: Joy Gerrard, *Sign of Distress, Version 2. Black Lives Matter March. Washington DC. June 4th 2020* (left) *Black Lives Matter March. May 31st. Brooklyn. 2020*. Bottom: Joy Gerrard, *Sign of Distress, Version 1. Black Lives Matter March. Washington DC. June 4th 2020* (left) *Black Lives Matter March. May 31st. Brooklyn. 2020*. Photo © Golden Thread Gallery

Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief

At a time when budgets are under significant pressure, the government's [Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief \(MGETR\)](#) could provide much-needed cash tax credits on eligible exhibition expenditure. Open to charitable organisations and Local Authorities, the credits are unrestricted and can be used as determined by the organisation. Expenditure related to dormant or abandoned exhibitions due to Covid-19 can still be claimed.

Touring and partnership exhibitions receive a higher rate of relief and the value of the credit is capped at a higher level. For exhibition costs to be eligible, the intention to tour must be agreed at the outset with partner organisations. All partners and host venues in a tour can claim. Exhibition-producing networks can also create Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) to make a claim.

Use of temporary spaces for exhibitions can also be claimed under MGETR, allowing organisations to work in off-site or pop-up spaces and to tie in with 'meanwhile use' strategies.

The relief has recently been extended until March 2024, and until March 2023 at increased rates. The Contemporary Visual Arts Network (CVAN) campaigned for its extension, backed up by a [significant piece of research](#) that demonstrates its value to the sector.

Where are we now?



Visitors to the exhibition Bill Woodrow Richard Deacon, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham.
© Amaal Said / Art Fund 2021. Courtesy Woodrow Deacon



Conclusions

The Caravan Gallery, Tile Hill Library, Coventry, August 2021. Photo courtesy the Caravan Gallery

The benefits of touring

- Touring and shared exhibition partnerships are a key way to meet the audience demand for high-quality, accessible exhibitions.
- Touring makes the best use of the original intellectual, creative and financial investment in the exhibition development.
- The biggest contributor to a museum or gallery's carbon footprint is likely to be visitor travel: touring can be a sustainable option if it reduces longer journeys.

The costs of touring

- There does not appear to be a model of exhibition touring in the UK that brings substantial income to the originating organisation. However, tax reclaimed on exhibition expenditure can allow museums and galleries to claw back costs in unrestricted funds.
- There is still a place for the turnkey exhibition, but it will generally need to be heavily subsidised.
- Participating in partnership exhibition work will be beyond the means of many museums and galleries without additional funding to add capacity or backfill posts.

ARTIST ROOMS: Phyllida Barlow at Turner Contemporary, Margate, 2017. Photo © Jason Pay



The outlook for touring

- International touring has been hit by Brexit, the pandemic and demands for lower-carbon options. There are likely to be fewer exhibitions touring internationally in future.
- The era of the 'blockbuster' exhibition may be on the wane.
- IP-only, augmented reality and virtual exhibitions offer opportunities to present work in new ways and in new types of spaces with a lower carbon footprint.
- However, access to real objects and collections still has a significant appeal for visitors.
- Post-pandemic, collections-based institutions are seeking ways to use their collections more.
- As museums and galleries extend the length of their exhibition runs to help manage workloads and cut their carbon footprints, there will be less demand for new exhibition content in the usual places.

Partnerships for touring

- There is significant interest in collaboration and partnership working but there are a number of risks that can discourage involvement.
- Knowing what other museums and galleries hold in their collections, what spaces they have and what they are interested in is essential to the initiation of partnership conversations. It is not as easy as it might be to find this information and it can be difficult to prioritise time and capacity to develop relationships for a single project.
- It takes time to develop the trust on which to build a partnership between organisations. Time is at a premium for many.
- Partnership working is already central to the development of exhibitions among galleries, particularly those working in contemporary art. But it can challenge the gallery's 'authorial voice'.
- Partnership approaches are less well-developed within museums.
- Partnership models that support the development of skills and knowledge are proliferating.

Touring and diversity

- There is unfulfilled demand in museums for small and medium-scale exhibitions that are family-friendly and accessible, as well as affordable.
- Many museums and galleries would welcome exhibitions and partnership approaches that support audience diversification.
- Co-production with target audiences is compatible with partnership working with other institutions, given the right model.
- The needs and interests of disabled visitors seem to be rarely addressed in touring exhibitions.

Touring: Structural changes

- Funding for touring, hosting or partnership development is relatively hard to access. It can be very labour-intensive to secure new funds for each exhibition or touring project.
- Museums and galleries in Northern Ireland have been particularly badly impacted by Brexit and there has already been a reduction in the number of loans and exhibitions going into and out of the region.
- Organisations in Wales appear to be less active in touring and partnership working at present. The need to add bilingual information for exhibitions from outside the country adds to costs.
- If Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief (MGETR) is extended beyond March 2024 the scheme could inject vital cash back into the sector for all the venues or partners in a tour.



Naga Helmet, 1969. From the exhibition Hair: Untold Stories, 2021.
Photo: Horniman Museum and Gardens

Recommendations



Sigalit Landau, *Salt Stalagmite #1 (Three Bridges)*, 2021, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. Part of the augmented-reality exhibition *Seeing the Invisible*. Courtesy of the artist

For funders and other sector-support organisations:

The essentials

- Better joined-up thinking between the four nations to ensure UK touring does not face unnecessary barriers – create a UK-wide touring framework
- Advocate for touring in and out of Northern Ireland
- Advocate for the extension of the Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief (MGETR) scheme and support organisations to access it
- Support research into the greenhouse gas emissions of touring and shared exhibitions to better understand the impact and inform future practice
- Continue to provide funding for capital infrastructure improvements, particularly environmental condition monitoring, air conditioning and cases
- Support matchmaking and provide a brokerage function between organisations
- Support organisations and infrastructure to encourage greater awareness and knowledge of potential partners, current and potential projects, training and mentoring
- Promote good practice, especially that which addresses the Creative Case for Diversity, the needs of families and of audiences with disabilities, to encourage more activity
- Encourage longer-term relationships between organisations and not just one-off exhibitions

The desirables

- Support collaboration and the development of exhibition networks by:
 - Considering a two-stage application process that can first support the development of a viable partnership, the initial costs of developing a touring exhibition project and a detailed funding application – before further costs are accrued as stage two
 - Offering funding to support extra capacity within organisations for a minimum of three years to develop ideas, partnerships and funding applications, and manage the resulting touring exhibition(s)
 - Developing a high-profile UK-wide partnership scheme to support small and medium-scale touring in museums
- Explore different funding models, such as:
 - Offering exhibition originators 100 per cent funding with no need to find match-funding
 - Supporting organisations to buy in exhibitions, including transport costs
 - Offering touring franchises
 - Aligning funders' expectations to the capacity and development stage of the applicant

For museums, galleries and other cultural organisations:

- Consider how touring and partnership working can, or could, meet strategic needs
- Explore different models of practice in the sector
- Share exhibition ideas at an early stage to build strong partnerships
- Seek partners with similar values
- Consider joining or building networks for exhibitions development
- Review the environmental impact of touring and partnership work and adopt circular design principles and remote couriering, and minimise transport distances and visitor travel impact
- Share evolving models of practice with the sector

Recommendations

Drag and Draw event, part of the public programme for Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, a touring exhibition conceived by National Museums Liverpool in partnership with Birmingham Museums Trust, © Andy Smith



Recommendations



Going Places in numbers: a summary

Thelma Hulbert Gallery's Creative Cabin public programme, travelling around East Devon in 2020, part of ARTIST ROOMS: Richard Long. Photo © Simon Tutty, 2020/21

Going Places in numbers: a summary

1 report, commissioned 2019,
completed 2020, updated 2021

More than 200 individuals in
the museum, gallery and wider
heritage sector consulted

3 reasons to tour an exhibition

- Expand your reach
- Increase your profile
- Support artists' development

4 reasons to host a touring exhibition

- Access high-quality and ambitious work
- Increase and diversify audiences
- Interpret your collections in new ways
- Take a breathing space between your own shows

7 reasons to collaborate on exhibitions

- Achieve ambitions
- Address audience needs
- Share collections
- Share skills and expertise
- Support organisational development
- Co-commission new work
- Access funding

8 challenges the sector faces in
this area

- Lack of capacity – time, staff, money
- Touring in the UK is rarely a major source of income generation
- Inappropriate environmental conditions, security and insurance
- Finding the right partners
- Finding and navigating funding
- Risk – financial, managerial, reputational
- Balancing the environmental impact of touring exhibitions
- The fallout from Brexit and the pandemic – cost increases, delays, import regulations



Gregorio Vardanega, *Disc*, c1960, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2022. Photo: My Linh Le / Art Fund 2021

11 approaches to touring and shared exhibitions

- National organisations working in partnership with regionals to share collections
- Touring a single object
- Smaller, specialist organisations taking the lead
- Splitting exhibitions across sites
- Co-commissioning new work
- Starting with an award
- Combining community co-production with touring
- Developing an exhibition network
- Going digital-first
- Touring beyond gallery walls
- Taking exhibitions out on the road

8

main take-aways

- Touring and partnerships can help to meet visitors' growing expectations of exhibition quality and interactivity
- Touring exhibitions can contribute to ambitions related to diversity, accessibility and engagement with families
- Support is needed for dedicated roles
- Galleries are way ahead in developing exhibitions in partnership, but museums are keen to catch up
- Matchmaking and brokering are essential to shared exhibition development
- There are opportunities to think outside the (museum or gallery) box
- Striking a balance between ambition of the exhibition and environmental sustainability is critical
- Digital technologies may in time revolutionise how touring exhibitions are created and delivered

Visitors to Mit Jai Inn, 'Dreamworld', Ikon Gallery, Birmingham © Amaal Said / Art Fund 2021



Appendix 1:

Sector approaches



Mark Wallinger, *Self Portraits*, 2007-14. Installation view, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, 2016. Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth; earlier | gabauer, Berlin; Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna. Photo: Ruth Clark © Mark Wallinger. All rights reserved, DACS 2022

National organisations working in partnership with regionals

ARTIST ROOMS is a collection of modern and contemporary art owned jointly by the National Galleries of Scotland and Tate. Since the touring programme began in 2009, over 85 associate venues have held solo artist exhibitions from the collection.

In recent years, an increasing number of smaller and more diverse cultural venues have been involved. Many of these are in areas of low cultural engagement. Time-intensive collaborations have paid off in the experience, confidence and recognition gained by associate venues, and the programme has supported organisational learning.

A key aim of the programme is the involvement of young people aged 13-25 with the collections and the artists in a meaningful and enjoyable way, and **ARTIST ROOMS** offers extensive learning resources to support this.

Supported by Arts Council England, Creative Scotland and Art Fund

National Museums Scotland is keen to share its collections across Scotland while also building the capacities of museums across the country. Touring exhibitions tend to draw on research by both national and local partners. '**Discovering Ancient Egypt**' was a tour of ancient Egyptian material from the National Collection supplemented with one display case showcasing local collections at each host venue. Through the project, partners were also enabled to upgrade their venues to meet the requirements for borrowing and displaying National Collections.

Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Hugh Fraser Foundation

The British Museum's touring exhibition '**Pushing Paper: Contemporary Drawing from 1970 to Now**' started out as an open call for partners. The four selected partners in Durham, Orkney, Swansea and Barnsley each worked on one of the themes in the exhibition and contributed to the catalogue. It has been an opportunity for skills development and has offered good peer-to-peer support. The 56 works from the British Museum have been augmented by works from the host venues' own collections, creating a unique experience at each location.

Supported by the Bridget Riley Art Foundation



Visitors to the exhibition *Pushing Paper: Contemporary Drawing from 1970 to Now*, in Durham. Photo: Matt Jaworski

Touring a single object

The National Gallery's [Masterpiece Tour](#) has supported the tour of a number of single Old Master paintings across the UK in recent years. The current Masterpiece Tour model offers three museums and galleries the opportunity to partner with the National Gallery for three years and to display one different major work each year. The current partners are Oriol Davies Gallery and Carmarthenshire Museum in Wales and the Beacon Museum in Cumbria.

The first painting to tour to these museums will be Jean-Siméon Chardin's *The House of Cards* (c1740-1), alongside which Oriol Davies is showing two new commissions, creating a dialogue between the historic and contemporary works. In years two and three of the tour the selected works will be chosen jointly by the partners and the National Gallery.

Supported by Christie's

Visitors at the National Gallery, London, 31 July 2020, after the gallery reopened following the first Covid-19 lockdown, © Andy Smith / Art Fund 2020



Visitors view *Soldier* by Alison Baskerville at Impressions Gallery's No Man's Land exhibition, at Bristol Cathedral, © Anna Barclay, Courtesy Impressions Gallery

Smaller, specialist organisations taking the lead

Impressions is a specialist photography gallery in Bradford. For a number of years it has led the way in supporting a wide range of venues (arts and non-arts) to show [photography exhibitions](#), many for the first time. Venues have the option to be touring partners at the inception of an exhibition's curation or can simply hire the exhibition once it has been realised. Partners are mentored on skills such as interpretation, press and marketing. Through its annual Curators' Lunch, Impressions continually builds new partner relationships.

Impressions is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. Each individual tour is funded through a mix of venue hire fees, trust and foundation grants and sponsorship. When possible the gallery works with venues in the early stages of planning a tour, with partnership fees supporting exhibition production costs and artists' fees.

'Heroes' is an exhibition by **The JORVIK Group** (which is part of York Archaeological Trust). The exhibition draws on historical and archaeological evidence to help explore the idea of heroism in the Viking Age and allows visitors to discover some of the real-life hero 'celebrities' of the Viking world. It is a full exhibition package with all the content developed, provided and installed by staff of the JORVIK Group. 'Heroes' has toured for many years and remains popular. Over time it has been enhanced with new elements to reflect new work, for example working with a forensic artist on a facial reconstruction. With York Archaeological Trust's associate specialist knowledge, technical team, marketing and education support, the exhibition can offer added value to organisations with little core capacity. Working with the host venue, a local interpretative panel is always included, and venues can add their own relevant objects.

For over 25 years, **Ruthin Craft Centre** in North Wales has collaborated with other galleries in Wales, Scotland, England and the Republic of Ireland to tour and exchange contemporary craft exhibitions. These have often been monographic shows of works by living makers supported by a high-quality publication, display cases and engagement materials as appropriate. This conventional touring model worked well up until recent years when the gallery found it more difficult to secure funding for this type of touring exhibition. Ruthin has now adopted an 'enabling' model, where they will allow other galleries to present essentially the same exhibition using the materials developed such as display units, information panels and labels. The exhibitions are not branded as a Ruthin Craft Centre Touring Exhibition and receiving venues do not pay a hire fee, but are expected to cover all transport costs and pay appropriate exhibiting fees to the maker(s) presented.

Right: Florence Peake, *CRUDE CARE*, 2021, © Florence Peake. Installation view, British Art Show 9, 2021-22, Aberdeen Art Gallery. A Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition organised in collaboration with galleries across the cities of Aberdeen, Wolverhampton, Manchester and Plymouth. Photo © Mike Davidson

Split sites

Approximately every five years since 1979, **Hayward Gallery Touring** (part of the Southbank Centre) has initiated and toured a major survey exhibition of contemporary art in the UK, the British Art Show (BAS). It was one of the first touring projects of its kind to present a single exhibition across multiple venues in a city or location, supporting neighbouring venues to work together in ways that they may not have done previously. The exhibitions are of a scale and level of resource that is beyond the means of most of the individual host venues.

Over the years, the BAS model has evolved and is much more a collaboration between Hayward Gallery Touring and the partner galleries. Collaboration starts with the selection of the curators of the exhibition, who determine the emerging themes and shape the exhibition and wider programme, allowing it to reflect the diversity of contemporary Britain. It accommodates participation by a diverse range of venues.



Hayward Gallery Touring supports the host venues to build expertise and develop existing relationships with key communities. BAS promotes new models of curatorial working and the development of new artists' projects. The current edition of BAS is a show that shares common themes but includes works specific to the local history, collections and conditions of each city. The [BAS 9](#) website has become a fifth venue that includes digital works by artists and installation images of the exhibition.

Supported by Arts Council England

Discovering a shared connection with the artist Mark Wallinger, Edinburgh's [Fruitmarket Gallery](#) worked with [Dundee Contemporary Arts](#) to bring his work to Scotland for the first time. The exhibition, 'Mark Wallinger Mark', was originally shown at Serlachius Museums in Finland, a gallery with very large spaces. In Scotland, the exhibition was split between the two cities and shown simultaneously, with both galleries as equal partners in the collaboration. The two galleries had worked together previously and this partnership covered not only the selection and presentation of the work, but also the publication, marketing, staff training, learning projects and public programme.

Supported by Creative Scotland and The Ampersand Foundation

Co-commissioning

The exhibition '[Natural Selection](#)' marked the culmination of a five-year collaboration between artist Andy Holden and his father, the well-known ornithologist Peter Holden. Their work took the visitor on an ornithological journey: from building nests to the collecting of eggs. Featuring objects, sculptures, videos and animation, the exhibition was conceived to celebrate an astonishing diversity of natural forms and embrace different ways of looking. Host venues were able to include items from local natural history collections. 'Natural Selection' was co-commissioned by [Artangel](#), [Towner Eastbourne](#), [Bristol Museum and Art Gallery](#) and [Leeds Art Gallery](#). It subsequently toured to other venues in England and Scotland.

Supported by Arts Council England, Spike Island, Bristol Green Capital 2015, Henry Moore Foundation and Artangel's Guardian Angels

Starting with an award

[Jerwood Art Fund Makers Open](#)

is a biennial award offering five major new commissions to early-career artists and makers in disciplines from ceramics to glass, textiles, wood and beyond. For this edition the awardees, selected by an expert panel, each receive £10,000 to develop their ideas independently and experiment over a 12-month period, with curatorial and production support from the Jerwood Arts team. The resulting exhibition will be on display at [Jerwood Space](#) in London before going on tour to [Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange](#) in Cornwall and [Aberdeen Art Gallery](#), the latter hosting a dedicated curatorial role to support the project.

Supported by Jerwood Arts and Art Fund

Vicky Higginson, *Coping Mechanism: for things left unsaid*, 2021.
Commissioned for Jerwood Art Fund Makers Open. Photo ©
Amaal Said / Art Fund 2021



Combining co-production and touring

Co-curation with local audiences often involves a high degree of local specificity and may not be suitable for wider touring. But some approaches have integrated local engagement with a shared collection component. Conceived by the [Walker Art Gallery](#) in Liverpool in partnership with [Birmingham Museums Trust](#), '[Coming Out: Sexuality, Gender and Identity](#)' drew on work selected from the Arts Council Collection and the partner galleries' collections as part of the National Partners Programme. Local work with target groups developed a unique engagement programme, which changed the look and feel of the show in each location.

Supported as part of the Arts Council Collection's National Partners Programme by Arts Council England

Jason Wilsher-Mills is a disabled digital artist. He works with disabled communities around the UK to tell their stories, alongside his own biography, in a wide variety of work that includes large-scale inflatables, fibreglass sculptures and light box digital paintings. His work includes augmented-reality experiences which allow visitors to interact with them and to unlock additional content such as films and videos about the work. The exhibition '[Jason and his Argonauts](#)' opened at [20-21 Visual Arts Centre](#) in October 2021 and will then tour.

Supported by Arts Council England



Visitor at the exhibition Jason and his Argonauts.
© Courtesy of the artist and 20-21 Visual Arts Centre.
Photography: Jules Lister

Touring exhibitions can become the focus of greater activity with audiences in hyper-local areas. **New Art Exchange** in Nottingham, whose mission is to 'stimulate new perspectives on the value of diversity in art and society', was the lead partner and project manager for the exhibition '[Sounds Like Her](#)' (2019-20) developed with York Art Gallery and Gallery Oldham. The exhibition set out to broaden existing approaches to sound art, and to contest Eurocentric and patriarchal frameworks that have informed sound art practice. It included works by eight women artists from around the globe and provided an opportunity to commission a new participatory work or audience development project at each partner venue in response to their local context, with an emphasis on hard-to-reach audiences.

Supported by Arts Council England

An exhibition network

MAGNET (the [Museums and Galleries Network for Exhibition Touring](#)) is a newly established network of 11 museums and galleries. Led by the Horniman Museum and Gardens, the rest of the network partners are based outside London. The aim of MAGNET is to make a series of co-curated exhibitions with high-quality interdisciplinary content designed to tour nationally. It intends to bring organisations together to create something which is more than the sum of its parts and share experiences and learning at a curatorial or exhibitions level rather than a director level, challenging the way some partnerships have worked in the past.

MAGNET has a part-time Co-ordinator who is responsible for involving all the partners in the co-development of the materials, models and protocols for exhibitions through a series of workshops. The role also manages the touring of 'Hair', the network's inaugural exhibition. Taking learnings from this exhibition, the network hopes to create a replicable model of co-curation and a toolkit which can be used within the group and beyond.

Supported by Art Fund

Staff at the Horniman checking Asian Yao Priest's hat made from hair. Part of the exhibition *Hair: Untold Stories*, 2021. Photo: Phil Sofar. © Horniman Museum and Gardens



An approach to sustainable touring

'[Bees: A Story of Survival](#)' is a new immersive touring exhibition, combining art and science, being developed by **National Museums Liverpool** in collaboration with artist Wolfgang Buttress. It draws on the significant entomology collections held by Liverpool's World Museum. The aim is to create a touring exhibition that explores the importance of bees to our natural world and human existence; revealing their decline as a symptom and a reflection of the environmental crisis we are facing and imagining a hopeful future where we take action to save them.

The exhibition will take visitors, children and adults alike, on a dramatic journey that will connect them to the wonder of bees but also to their plight. Artist Wolfgang Buttress will use sound and light technology and large-scale sculptural structures in the exhibition. Both an art and a science exhibition, the show's interpretation will focus more on memorable experiences – hearing and seeing like a bee – reducing the need for text labels. Launching at Liverpool's World Museum in 2023, the exhibition will be toured sustainably, using lightweight reusable structures, recyclable materials and technology that reduces power consumption, from 2024 onwards. It is a model of how National Museums Liverpool will endeavour to tour exhibitions sustainably in future, reducing the number of objects transported and ensuring that the exhibition build can be re-used in other projects.

Visualisation of interactive entomology wall, for the exhibition *Bees: A Story of Survival*, © Wolfgang Buttress / National Museums Liverpool



Digital first

A number of national organisations have started to develop 'Intellectual Property only' tours, where the originating organisation licenses a strong concept, and the host organisation takes only core loans or assembles objects to populate it. The **Science Museum Group's** ['Blueprint Packs'](#) are an example of this and involve sharing content, concept, designs and research via a digital package that host venues can adapt to their spaces and use to showcase objects from their own collections. This reduces the typically high cost of transportation and insurance, as well as significantly reduces the carbon footprint. This model supports collaborations with local stakeholders such as universities, research institutes, government and local industry and allows host venues to build the exhibition in line with available budgets. The duration of the exhibition is flexible and not bounded by the fixed schedule of a traditional touring exhibition. The downside is the need for increased legal input into the contract.



The pandemic increased people's desire for outdoor experiences and has also been a major catalyst for digital innovation. ['Seeing the Invisible'](#) is an example of both. An augmented-reality exhibition of contemporary art, it sees existing and newly commissioned work presented simultaneously at 12 gardens around the world, including Cornwall's **Eden Project** and the **Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh**. For some of the artists, this is the first time they have developed work in AR.

Planning commenced in autumn 2020 with the exhibition launching in Australia, Canada, Israel, South Africa, the UK and the USA in autumn 2021. Visitors to the gardens access works by artists via an app downloadable on their smartphone or tablet. The participating gardens all present the same exhibition, but as the works of art are augmented into the unique surroundings and context of each garden, the exhibition is experienced differently against the varied backdrops of each location. The exhibition addresses the themes of nature, environment and sustainability, and explores the boundaries and connections between art, technology and nature.

Supported by Outset Contemporary Art Fund

Ori Gersht, *Forget Me Not*, 2021, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. Part of the augmented-reality exhibition *Seeing the Invisible*. © Ori Gersht. All rights reserved, DACS 2022

Exhibitions beyond the gallery walls

During the pandemic, Belfast's [Golden Thread Gallery](#) found itself closed, with plans for future exhibitions and international collaborations curtailed. In response, the gallery re-envisioned an international touring exhibition for the strange new world in which we found ourselves.

Eight local artists were commissioned to create entirely new works that would fit inside a glass bottle for a unique touring exhibition called '[Not Alone](#)' that could work within travel restrictions and quarantine rules as well as isolation measures. The works toured to curators in Bologna, Rome, Amsterdam, North Holland and back to Derry, and were exhibited in curators' own homes. Each curator documented the exhibition's arrival, installation process and the display on Instagram, as well as wrote a new exhibition text to accompany the exhibition, before posting the exhibition on to the next recipient.

Supported by Arts Council Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council and Art Fund

Cornwall's [Newlyn Art Gallery](#) worked with a local primary school to select 10 works from the Arts Council Collection to be exhibited in the school for a year. The 10 works have now been 'lent' back to the gallery by the school for a virtual exhibition entitled '[Palace of Culture](#)'.

The model is now being rolled out, with eight additional primary schools in rural Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly being supported to create their own in-school gallery. The works will be drawn again from the Arts Council Collection, as well as the Cornwall Council Schools Art Collection. The programme offers teachers comprehensive training in drawing, printmaking and 3D construction, along with thinking and talking about art, enabling them to harness the full potential of art across their curriculums.

Supported as part of the Arts Council Collection's National Partners Programme by Arts Council England and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Teacher Development Fund



Graham Gingles, *Glass Tower*, 2020. Part of the exhibition *Not Alone*. © Golden Thread Gallery

Mobile exhibitions

Since 1978, **Travelling Gallery** has been taking contemporary art to communities throughout Scotland in a [specially designed bus](#). Working in partnership with local organisations, the gallery visits schools, community centres and libraries, and hosts public days in town centres and high streets. Two exhibitions tour each year, bringing together work by both established and emerging artists and incorporating a creative learning programme. The current exhibition, 'Shapes of Water', is part of Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters and includes commissions in response to the theme from three young artists.

*Part of Museums & Galleries
Edinburgh, supported by Creative
Scotland*



Travelling Gallery near Ullapool.
Photo courtesy Travelling Gallery

The **Caravan Gallery**, set up in 2000 by artists Jan Williams and Chris Teasdale, is a mobile exhibition space that engages with people and places that static museums and galleries find challenging to reach. Touring all over the UK and beyond, the main medium, colour photography, is used to create accessible but thought-provoking images which frequently celebrate overlooked and occasionally bizarre aspects of everyday life. The caravan is both a gallery and a social space for communities to engage with work focused on their locality, and on occasion has found itself the centrepiece of an exhibition. A national 'Pride of Place Project Tour', supported by Arts Council England, was delivered in partnership with six museum and gallery partners around the UK, all of which hosted '[extraordinary! – Photographs of Britain by the Caravan Gallery](#)', a participatory off-site project in an empty shop to create a portrait of each locality and its inhabitants, and a mobile tour of the area in the Caravan Gallery.

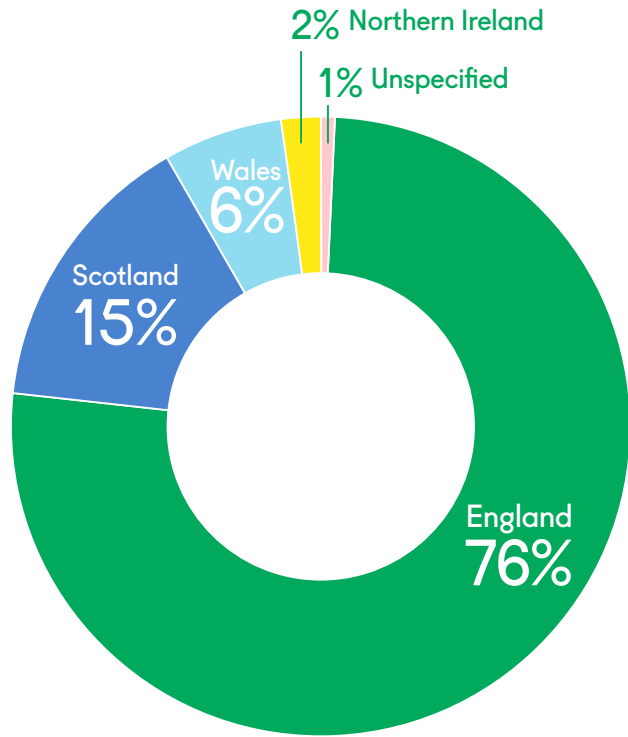


Appendix 2:

Data from original survey of organisations

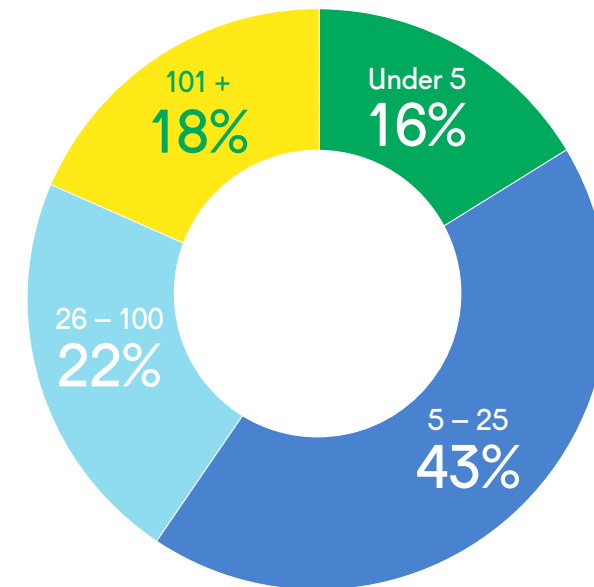
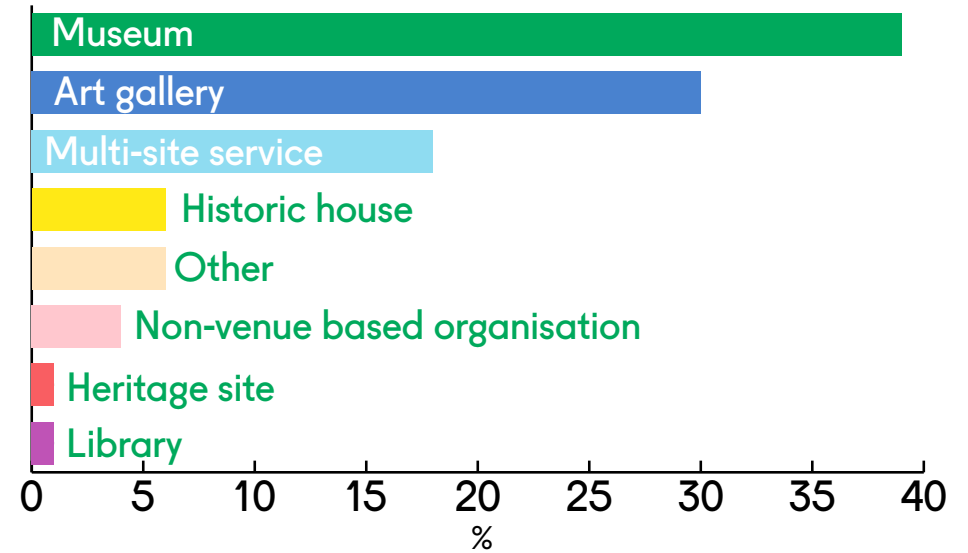
Installation of the exhibition Hair: Untold Stories, Horniman Museum and Gardens, December 2021 © Eric Aydin-Barberini / Art Fund 2021

A survey was available to organisations online from 4 October to 7 November 2019. It was distributed by Art Fund and Creative Scotland to their relevant networks and through the network of sector-support organisations. 166 organisations responded.



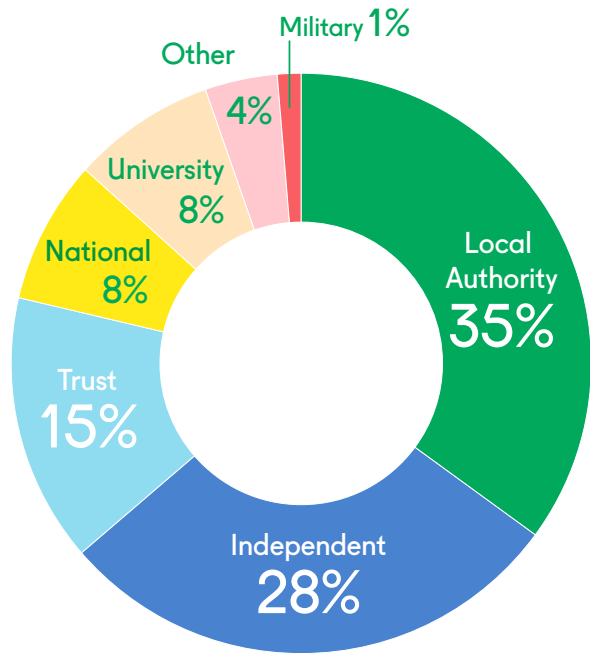
Responses by nation

Responses by type of organisation



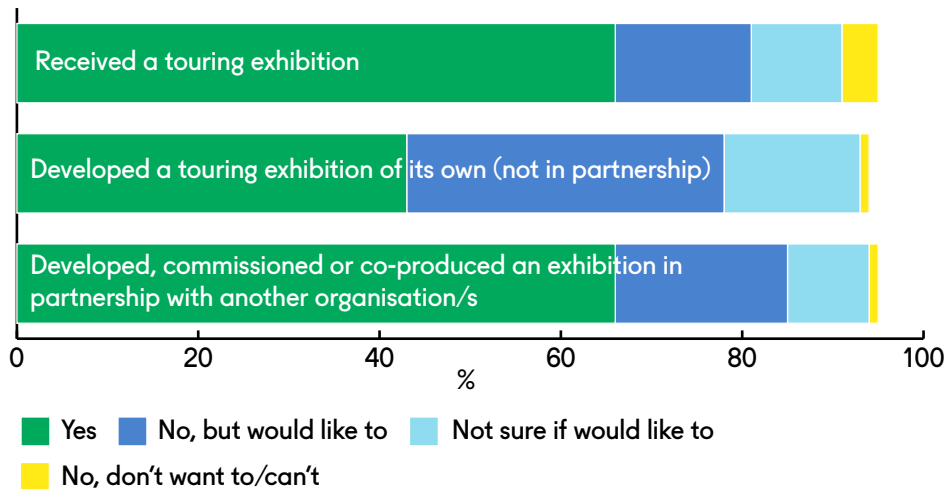
Responses by number of staff

Please note, pie charts are to 99% due to rounding of figures

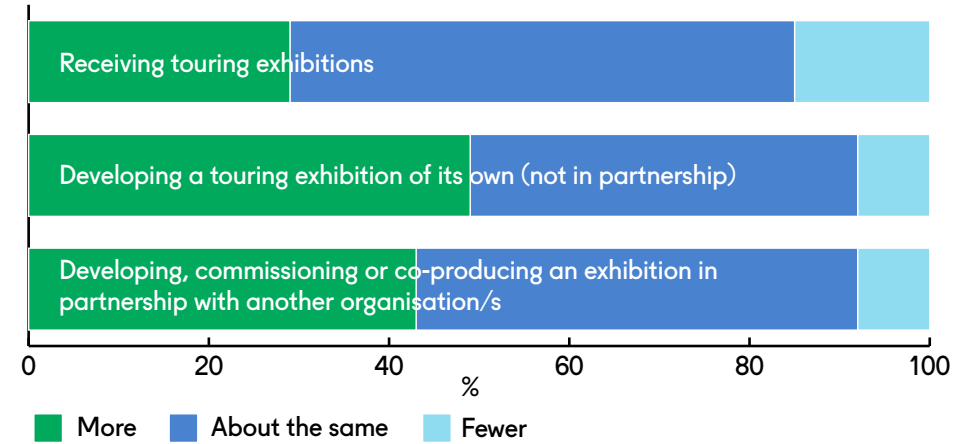


Responses by management type

In the past 5 years has your organisation...



Compared to 5 years ago, how often is your organisation...

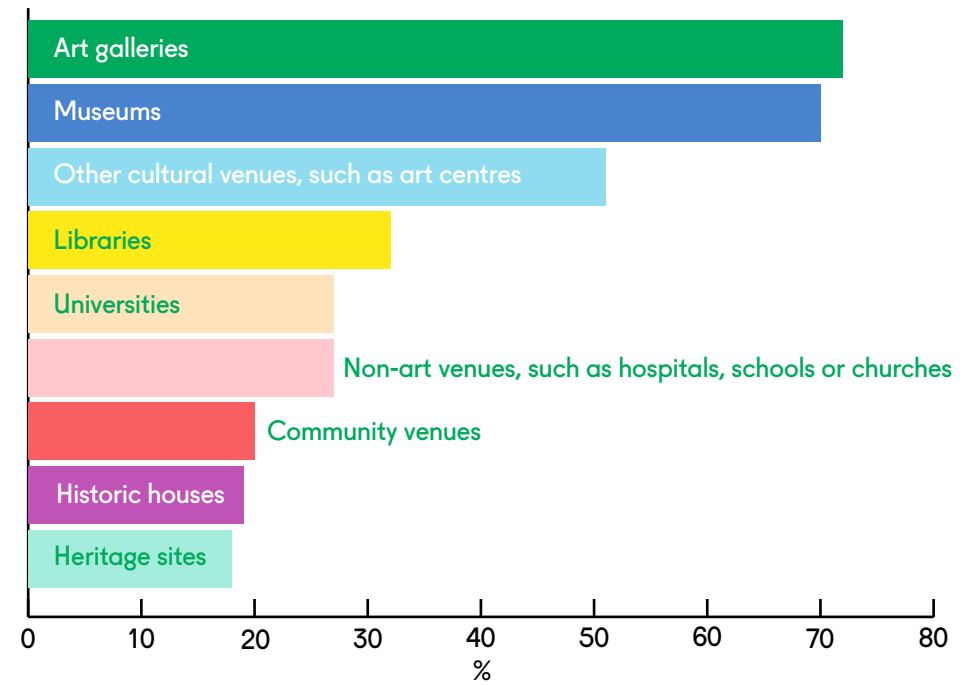


What are your reasons for hosting touring exhibitions?	All reasons (multiple) %	Main reason (single) %
To provide our audiences with access to high-quality work/ collection	87	26
To diversify our programme	79	13
To enable more ambitious programming	75	19
To increase audience numbers	67	6
To diversify our audiences	65	3
To make new connection to, or interpret, our own collections	57	12
Our organisation has limited programme budgets to originate exhibitions	51	10
To broaden the range of learning and related events we offer	40	1
To give us access to specialist curators and help build our own expertise	34	2
Touring exhibitions are easier to mount than developing an exhibition ourselves	31	3
To support other museums and galleries	25	0
To increase income through entrance fees	23	5
To attract external funding	16	0
Other		

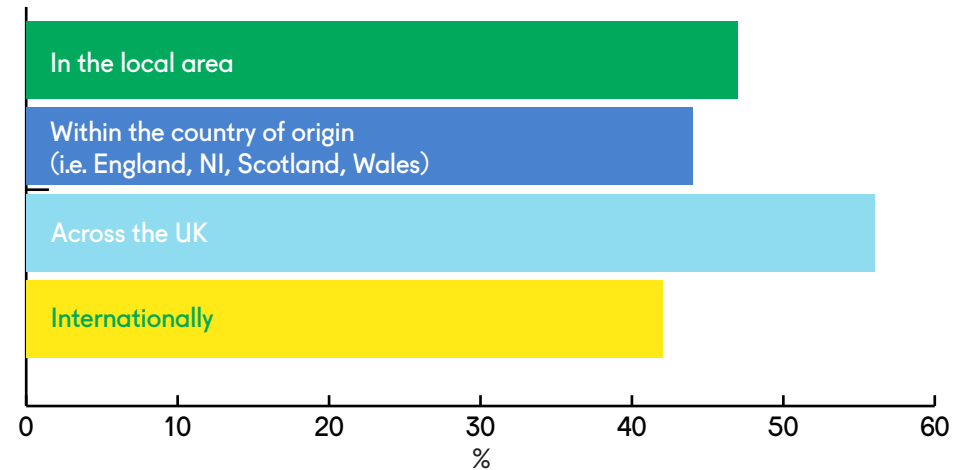
What are your reasons for <u>not</u> hosting touring exhibitions?	All reasons (multiple) %	Main reason (single) %
We don't have the space for touring exhibitions	55	36
We don't have the budgets to take touring exhibitions	52	9
Our galleries don't provide the right environmental/security standards for most exhibitions	38	9
It's not our mission/remit to do so	31	24
We don't have the resources and/or staffing to manage an incoming exhibition	29	2
We don't have the time to manage an incoming exhibition	26	2
We've never been offered a touring exhibition	24	5
We cannot find touring exhibitions with subject matter appropriate to us	21	7
Current touring opportunities are too inflexible	12	2
We wouldn't know where to find an appropriate exhibition	9	5
We don't have contacts with other museums and galleries to be part of a tour	7	0
The quality of touring exhibitions available is not high enough	2	2
We've had negative experiences of taking touring exhibitions in the past	0	0

What are your reasons for developing touring exhibitions?	All reasons (multiple) %	Main reason (single) %
To develop local, regional, national or international partnerships	86	27
To develop our profile	86	20
To increase the audience for the original exhibition	73	11
To diversify the audience for the original exhibition	69	4
To share national/important collections or art works more widely	58	15
To maintain/grow our exhibition programme	55	1
To increase our earned income	51	10
To offset the costs of developing the original exhibition	50	7
To increase our knowledge of collections or art form practice	24	1
Our stakeholders expect it	23	3

To which kind of venues do you tour?

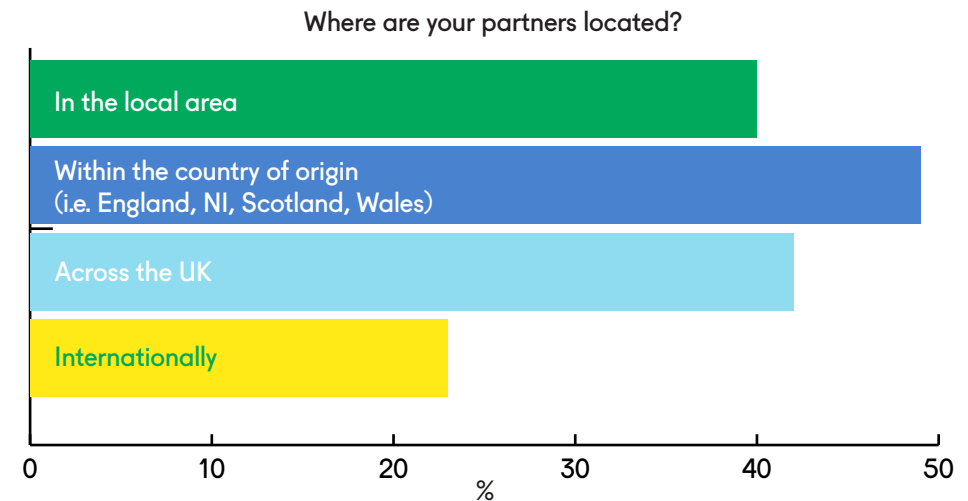
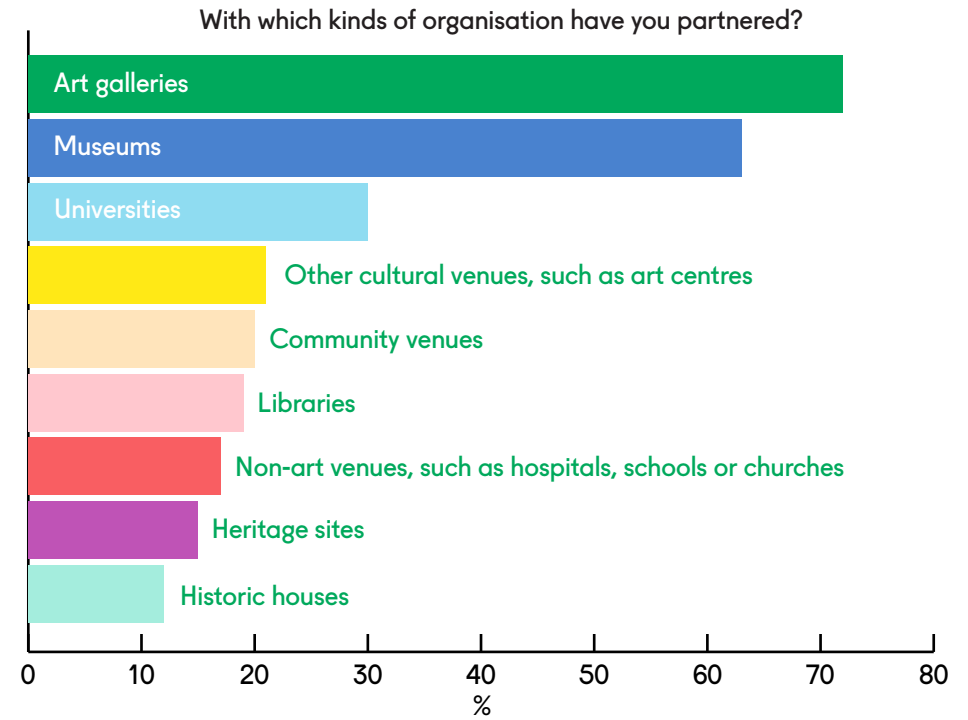


Where do you tour your exhibitions?



What are your reasons for <u>not</u> creating your own touring exhibitions?	All reasons (multiple) %	Main reason (single) %
We don't have the time or capacity to develop a touring exhibition	90	68
We don't have the budgets to develop a touring exhibition	78	12
Funding application processes are too onerous	50	7
Lack of specific funding streams to apply to	20	0
It's not within our remit to do so	19	8
Lack of clarity about funding sources available	19	1
We don't have the content or collections to do so	17	7
We don't have sufficient subject specialist knowledge or expertise	9	0
Our stakeholders would not support our involvement in creating touring exhibitions	6	1
We've had negative experiences of developing a touring exhibition in the past	1	0
We have had a funding application/s for touring rejected	0	0

What are your reasons for developing shared exhibitions in partnership?	All reasons (multiple) %	Main reason (single) %
To realise an ambitious exhibition that we could not do alone	71	50
To share the costs of developing an exhibition	71	15
To diversify our audiences	64	5
To increase our audience numbers	57	5
To share knowledge within the sector	56	2
To support our organisational development	55	2
To create more relevant exhibitions	48	8
To encourage audiences to cross over between partner venues	45	7
To give us access to specialists	45	0
To support other museums and galleries	43	4
In order to apply to a specific funding stream	23	1
To increase income through entrance fees	8	1



What are your reasons for <u>not</u> developing shared exhibitions in partnership?	All reasons (multiple) %	Main reason (single) %
We don't have the time or capacity to develop a shared exhibition	81	61
We don't have the budgets to develop a shared exhibition	64	14
It's not within our remit to do so	25	14
Funding application processes are too onerous	19	2
We don't have the collections to do so	13	4
We don't have contacts with other museums or galleries to be part of a partnership	13	2
We don't have sufficient subject specialist knowledge or expertise	11	0
Our stakeholders would not support our involvement in developing shared exhibitions	8	2
We have had a funding application/s for shared exhibitions rejected	0	0
We've had negative experiences of developing a shared exhibition in the past	0	0

Where do you think support is most needed to help organisations to develop and/or receive touring exhibitions?	All reasons (multiple) %	Main reason (single) %
Increased funding resources for touring	82	39
Clearer information about sources of funding available	65	3
More touring exhibitions available for smaller-scale organisations	64	25
Improved networking opportunities for potential partners	59	7
Simpler funding application processes	55	2
Improved training and professional development opportunities around touring	55	5
Marketing and PR support for touring exhibitions	53	1
More exhibitions relevant to our organisation	46	10
More examples of successful touring and partnership exhibitions	36	3
Increased support from stakeholders	29	5



Visitors to the No Man's Land exhibition at Impressions Gallery, Bradford, viewing work by Mairi Chisholm
© Anna Kornatovska courtesy Impressions Gallery

About Art Fund

Art Fund is the national charity for art.

We help UK museums and galleries to build and share collections, do more for their visitors and support the curators of the future.

To keep up to date with our initiatives, funding schemes and news, subscribe to our monthly Museum Bulletin at artfund.org/bulletin

artfund.org/supporting-museums

About Creative Scotland

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland distributing funding provided by the Scottish Government and The National Lottery. Further information at creativescotland.com. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Learn more about the value of art and creativity in Scotland and join in at ourcreativevoice.scot

About Wafer Hadley

Established in 2006, Wafer Hadley is a strategic insight consultancy working across arts, heritage, and culture. Our associates Jennifer Hallam and Eric Hildrew worked with us on this report.

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