

Arts Council Collection Collections Access Policy & Procedure

Collections Access Policy

Policy Review Procedure

The policy will be reviewed as part of the annual planning process and at least once every five years as part of a wider business planning cycle.

1 Introduction

This policy sets out the principles that govern access to the Arts Council Collection.

The Arts Council Collection is committed to widening and increasing access to its collection, in line with its Mission Statement and audience development priorities.

The policy is one element of the Arts Council Collection's wider collections management framework.

It should be read in conjunction with the documents contained in the Arts Council Collection Collections Management Policy Framework, which includes the Collections Development Policy, Collections Information Policy, Loan Policy and Collections Information Policy.

2 Mission Statement

The Arts Council Collection is the national loan collection of modern and contemporary British art. Founded in 1946, the Collection reaches the broadest possible audience through long loans to public institutions, exhibition loans, touring exhibitions, and digital and print publications. The Collection supports artists in the UK through the purchase and display of their work, and safeguards it for future generations using the highest possible standards of collections care.

3 Definition of Access

For the purpose of this policy, access is defined as something that is made possible when physical, cultural, social, financial, intellectual, psychological and emotional barriers are removed or reduced.

4 Ethics and Legislation

The Access Policy is informed by adherence to the Equality Act 2010 and the Museums Association Code of Ethics (2015).

5 Access to the Collection

Principal routes of access to the Collection will be through:

- The regular exhibition programme and outreach programme at Longside Gallery.
- Both short- and long-term loans to partner organisations.
- The creation of online learning resources.
- Use by academic researchers and students.
- Promotion through social media, e.g. Twitter, YouTube and Instagram.
- Participation in digital access projects, e.g. Art UK and Google Cultural Institute.
- Providing professional development opportunities to the sector through regular Curators' Days.

6 Guiding Principles

6.1 Arts Council Collection staff will receive diversity training to ensure that they are informed and ready to implement the principles of the Access Policy.

6.2 The Longside Gallery continues to provide full physical access for users.

6.3 Decisions on access to the Collection will always be balanced against any risks this may pose to the long-term care and security of the Collection.

6.4 Photography of works for personal (not commercial) use will be permitted.

6.5 As part of the acquisition process, the Arts Council Collection will ensure that new works can be used/made accessible to audiences.

6.6 The Arts Council Collection will work with partner organisations to maximise access to collections, for example via Art UK and Google Cultural Institute.

6.7 The Arts Council Collection will work to develop digital projects through outreach work with partner organisations and continue to engage with researchers, patrons and friends of partner museums.

6.8 The Arts Council Collection aspires to grow its audience through social media and will aim for a year-on-year increase in numbers of people engaging with the Collection.

6.9 The website will be extended to enhance information and understanding of the Collection.

Access Procedure

This document is split into the following sections:

- Access through Longside exhibition programme, touring exhibition programme and Select exhibitions with accompanying learning programme.
- Short and long-term loans to public organisations.
- Creation of online learning resources.
- Use of the Collection by academic researchers and students.
- Promotion of the Collection via social media.
- Participation in digital-access projects.
- Providing professional development opportunities within the sector through regular Curators' Days.

Section One: Exhibition Programme

Exhibitions at Longside

The Arts Council Collection programmes one exhibition each year at Longside Gallery, Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Longside Gallery is open 11am to 4pm daily during exhibition periods. Visitors do not need to book their visit in advance, but large groups are encouraged by Yorkshire Sculpture Park to get in touch in advance. Yorkshire Sculpture Park contracts and manages the visitor experience team who provide invigilation and manage the operation of the gallery during public opening times. Longside Gallery is closed to the public during winter (usually November to March each year).

When planning and designing exhibition interpretation, the Arts Council Collection curatorial team take care to ensure that the exhibition content is accessible and engaging to the widest possible audience, seeking expert advice and input where required. Interpretive resources generated for exhibitions at Longside Gallery are made available to subsequent tour venues. These include activity sheets, gallery guides, timelines, and response and making activities.

Audience figures are collected and recorded for each exhibition. In addition, a comments book is made available in the gallery for visitors to record comments and feedback. When planning exhibitions and interpretive strategies, this feedback is taken into consideration.

Large-print versions of artwork labels and gallery guides are made available for visitors to use in the space.

An education pack is produced for each exhibition and provides accessible resources for teachers to use with primary and secondary school groups. This is shared with tour venues and on our website.

An engaging public events programme accompanies each Arts Council Collection exhibition at Longside Gallery. The programme is advertised on the Arts Council Collection and Yorkshire Sculpture Park websites, on social media channels and in our print and gallery signage. Attendance figures are recorded, feedback forms provided to each participant, with evaluation taking place after each event.

Alongside the public events, a number of special events are organised each year for a range of groups, which usually include, but are not limited to: Teacher Study Days, National Saturday Club sessions, Discovery Days for secondary schools, higher and further education talks, tours and symposia.

Touring Exhibitions

The Arts Council Collection curates a programme of touring exhibitions to promote and encourage engagement with the Collection around the country. All touring exhibition proposals are brought to the Curatorial Planning Meeting for consideration. The Arts Council Collection works with experienced learning professionals to create learning packs designed for specific audience groups. The Arts Council Collection aims to develop evaluation models to assess and improve our learning packs.

Select Exhibitions

Through the Select exhibition programme, curators from institutions across the UK can apply to curate exhibitions from the Collection. This increases the respective institution's audience and its access to the Collection. Each exhibition is branded as being in partnership with the Arts Council Collection, thus increasing the visibility of the Collection.

Section Two: Short and Long-Term Loans to Partner Organisations

The Arts Council Collection lends works on a short-term and long-term basis to public organisations. A major consideration when assessing a loan

request is the borrowing organisation's ability to ensure that the work(s) can be seen by a wide audience. Please see Loans Procedure.

Loans will be considered to venues where public access is limited, such as offices, on the condition that borrowers allow the public reasonable access to view the works.

When assessing a loan request from a museum or art gallery, consideration is given to the type of access offered by the organisation, for example whether the venue is open to visitors by appointment only, or if they keep regular public opening hours. Access is assessed alongside other considerations, such as security and environmental controls at the venue. The Arts Council Collection seeks partnership opportunities to extend the reach of the long loans programme with organisations such as Paintings in Hospitals. Please see Loans Procedure.

Section Three: Creation of Online Resources

The Arts Council Collection website is a key resource for increasing access to our collection. All Arts Council Collection works are listed and new acquisitions are updated at the beginning of each financial year. The Arts Council Collection aims to have a low-resolution photograph of each work on the website, where permissions allow.

The website hosts a number of initiatives designed to engage our online visitors. They include, but are not limited to:

- Artist of the month.
- Extended captions.
- Blog (launch summer 2017).
- Education packs.
- Downloadable publications.
- Films.

The Arts Council Collection uses Google Analytics to measure engagement with these resources. The Arts Council Collection's Digital Strategy contains a rigorous plan for website updates, increasing navigability and access to information.

Section Four: Use of Collection by Academic Researchers and Students

Both the Longside and Winchester House stores can be accessed by members of the general public wishing to view a work for research purposes.

Entrance to Longside Gallery is free, however parking charges apply at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The park is served by the number 96 bus from Wakefield and Barnsley. The nearest mainline train station is Wakefield Westgate. Longside Gallery is a 25-minute walk from the main visitor centre, and is also served by a free shuttle minibus, which runs a half-hourly service during opening times. The minibus is operated by Yorkshire Sculpture Park. There is limited blue badge parking adjacent to the gallery entrance.

Winchester House is in a central London location around 10 minutes' walk from Oval Tube Station.

Researchers, students and members of the public are welcome to make an appointment to view works from the Arts Council Collection. Initial enquiries received by the Arts Council Collection team are directed to either the Collection Curator, Senior Curator or Collection Coordinator – Longside, depending on the 'home' location of a particular work. If a work is currently on public display, the relevant details will be passed on so that the person making an enquiry can organise a self-directed visit.

For works that are not currently on display, an appointment can be made to view a work. Viewings may only take place in the 'home' location of a work and cannot be shuttled between stores for this purpose.

The enquirer will be asked to complete a short research-request form giving details of their research interests, contact details and availability. Following this, a mutually convenient viewing date and time will be booked. Visitors are expected to make their own travel arrangements and the Arts Council Collection will not reimburse visitors for any costs incurred in travelling to view works in the Collection.

Following the research visit, the Arts Council Collection asks that researchers share with us any findings and documentation.

Section Five: Promotion of the Collection via Social Media

The Arts Council Collection is present and active on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. These platforms increase the potential reach of the Collection by bringing our activity directly to people's computers and mobile devices.

As well as responsive content, the Arts Council Collection has a regular social media programme to increase access to the Collection, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging with trending hashtags.
- Creating content around national holidays or days of note e.g. Black History Month.
- #ACCWorkisinFocus posts, which give more information about an Arts Council Collection work, including details of the artist's biography and working process
- Exhibition opening and closing dates.
- Related National Partnership events.
- Exhibition photography.

Section Six: Participation in Digital Access Projects

Arts Council Collection has a number of partnerships with digital organisations to develop online learning opportunities, including partaking in the Google Art Project and ArtUK.

Section Seven: Providing Professional Development Opportunities within the Sector through Regular Curators' Days

The Arts Council Collection organises six Curators' Days each year. Each event focuses on a different topic that is relevant to current curatorial practice in the UK. Curators' Days are free to attend, but have limited capacity, and delegates are responsible for covering the cost of any travel, accommodation and subsistence.

The Arts Council Collection aims to document each Curators' Day through filming, blogging and photography to make the discussions and topics of each event available to a broader audience via our website and social media channels.

The events are advertised through the Arts Council Collection's e-mailing list of museum and gallery professionals. Any member of staff at a museum or gallery, as well as freelance curatorial staff, can join this mailing list by request.