

Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund

Information for Applicants

What is the Purchase Grant Fund?

The Purchase Grant Fund provides funding towards the purchase of objects relating to the arts, literature and history by museums, galleries, record repositories and specialist libraries in England. It is operated by the V&A with a grants budget from Arts Council England's National Lottery funding. Through the acquisitions it supports, the Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund helps to develop and strengthen the quality and standards of regional collections for the understanding and enjoyment of the public.

Before you apply

Who may apply?

Museums, galleries, record repositories and specialist libraries in England and Wales which

- exist for public benefit
- maintain a permanent collection housed and cared for to professional standards
- have an acceptable constitution and financial basis
- are staffed by suitably qualified personnel
- provide a high degree of regular public access and an appropriate range of visitor services
- are not funded by central government.

As a basic requirement, museums and galleries should be accredited under the Arts Council England scheme and record repositories and libraries be accredited under the Archives Accreditation Scheme or have formal "working towards" status. Eligibility is assessed on the first application and continues to be monitored.

What is supported?

- Objects, collections or archives of any date relating to the arts, literature or history. This includes archaeological and ethnographical material; objects illustrating social and popular culture, decorative and fine art; rare books; documents and letters with good historical content, maps, writers' manuscripts and archival photographs.
- The minimum purchase price is **£500** and the maximum **£500,000**.
- If buying at auction, buyer's premium, agent's commission and artists' resale right are considered part of the eligible costs.

Exclusions

We are unable to help with the following:

- Applications from nationally-funded organisations, friends' organisations or other third parties. A list of those nationally-funded organisations which are ineligible for support is available from the Purchase Grant Fund office
- Objects which have already been purchased. There must be no financial commitment to buy until an offer has been made
- Artificial grouping of objects individually priced at less than £500
- Items intended for circulating exhibition services, loan schemes or handling collections

- Reproductions, facsimiles, current publications, museum or library equipment
- Conservation costs
- Associated costs such as delivery, framing or valuation charges
- Value added tax where this may be reclaimed by the applicant.

How much money is available?

- The budget for 2018-19 is £724,000.
- The exact level of grant is subject to a number of factors such as the availability of funds, the comparative strength of the argument made for the acquisition, whether the object is considered to be reasonably priced and the level of support from other sources.
- The maximum grant is 50% of the purchase price.
- No applicant is likely to receive more than £50,000 in any one financial year.
- Local financial commitment is essential. Grants are calculated on the level of local contribution. **Up to £10** of grant aid may be given for each **£1** of locally-raised funding. Local sources might include the applicant's own funds, special appeals, contributions by friends' organisations, local business or private donations. The balance may be sought from other nationally-administered grant giving bodies such as the Art Fund, the Friends of the National Libraries, the Beecroft Bequest, the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Contact the Purchase Grant Fund office if you are unsure as to the exact nature of any potential fund source.

How often may I apply?

- You may apply as often as you like although we will want to see that you are taking a strategic approach to developing your collection.
- We are aware that several opportunities to make good acquisitions can arrive at the same time. If you would like to submit multiple applications, please contact us to discuss the best way for us to consider these applications. If there are no time deadlines, we would generally advise that you stagger your applications. As always, you will need to explain how each purchase is a priority for your organisation and complements your collection development policy.

Making an application

- You must contact the Purchase Grant Fund office by telephone, email or letter for an application form and for an initial discussion on the potential purchase, timing and funding, as necessary. We will email you an application form after our conversation and you should return your completed application by email.
- We will assess the eligibility of new applicants and will ask existing applicants for details of any changes or organisational developments at this stage.
- Competition is very strong and not all deserving cases will be successful. Your acquisition statement must therefore, fully answer all the questions. It is essential that you establish the significance of the proposed purchase in the context of your collections and how it will help to further your activities and objectives. We will look to support museums and record offices that want to acquire items which enable them to better reflect and respond to their audiences through their collections.

- You must provide good quality photographs of the object(s) or a representative sample of a collection to enable us to consider your application. JPG, TIF, PSD or EPS formats with a minimum resolution of 150dpi are acceptable. You may email them, send them by WeTransfer or supply a disk; if the latter, please include a printed version of the images. Please note that the V&A email system has a maximum capacity. You may, therefore, need to send the application and images separately.
- We use the images for record, reporting and publicity purposes. You must therefore ensure that the appropriate copyright clearance has been obtained. We don't normally need images for manuscript purchases, where a listing and condition report should suffice but you should clear this with us before submitting the application.
- You must have seen and verified the item(s) and not merely, for example, chosen them from a catalogue.
- You should check the possible interest of other relevant organisations in accordance with your declared collecting policy.
- We don't normally ask you to bring the objects to the V&A for assessment but should our advisers need to examine the object, we will ask you to make the object available for inspection and to meet associated costs.
- You are expected to have established that the price is reasonable and are responsible for providing valuations and condition reports when required. It is our policy not to encourage the purchase of unduly expensive material and we expect you to negotiate a museum discount wherever possible and investigate a reduction in price through any [tax exemption scheme](#).
- We usually give decisions within four weeks of receipt of all the necessary information, apart from purchases costing over £50,000 for which we normally give decisions within 2 months. See below for auction timescales.

Offer and payment of grants

- We make our grant offers in writing, stating the exact level of grant and the terms of grant offer and send them with the Declaration (grant claim form). (For auction sales see below.)
- The vendor may then be paid.
- Once you have taken safe delivery of the object, you claim the grant by returning the Declaration together with a copy of the receipted invoice or alternative proof of payment showing the item(s) bought, breakdown of the price and the date paid. All our grants are reimbursements.
- The Declaration sets out the terms and conditions attached to the grant. Its return constitutes a formal contract. It must therefore, signed by a member of the governing body or the officer with financial responsibility for museum purchases and the authority to enter into such agreements.

Acknowledging our support

- You must clearly acknowledge the assistance of the **Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and National Lottery** in all publicity surrounding the purchase and in all forms of documentation and display information **including online catalogues**. Details are available from the Purchase Grant Fund office and on the website.

Auction sales

- In the case of auction sales, you must telephone Purchase Grant Fund staff **immediately** to discuss potential interest. **Don't wait** until the final decision to proceed or other details have been confirmed.
- You should contact us at least 10 days before the auction.
- You should email your completed application to us by the deadline we give you. This will be at least a week before the auction.
- Your application must include a link to the catalogue entry (or a scan of it), an independent note or report of condition (unless we agree that this can be sent on later) and detailed images as necessary, particularly if the auction house is outside London.
- You, or your agent, must inspect the object(s) for condition and verification before the sale.
- We will telephone you with the decision before the sale.
- Our grant offer will be expressed as a percentage up to an agreed maximum bid. If the lot is secured at less than £500 including premium (the minimum eligible price level) it will no longer qualify for grant aid.
- You must tell us the outcome of the auction as soon as possible after the same, whether or not the bid was successful.
- If you are successful, we will write confirming the exact level of grant aid and send you the Declaration in the normal way.

Commissions

- We are unable to consider applications in respect of commissioned items. These are covered by Arts Council England's Grants for the Arts scheme. Please visit www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/grants-arts/ for more information.

Complaints

We are committed to being as clear to you as possible, including being clear about how we assess your application and make funding decisions.

- If you are unhappy with the way your application has been processed, please contact the Purchase Grant Fund office on 020 7942 2536 or email purchasegrantfund@vam.ac.uk
- If this does not resolve the problem, we'll send you a guideline on making a complaint. Written complaints will be assessed by a senior member of V&A or Arts Council England staff unconnected with the original application. We will respond within 21 days.

Continuing interest in items acquired with grant aid

We retain an interest in the items, we have helped you to acquire. We monitor compliance with the terms of grant aid from time to time. Should you be unable, at any time, to meet the grant conditions or eligibility criteria, including the loss of accreditation status, we are entitled to reclaim any grants made.

Organisational change

- You should tell us about any change in the constitution or status of your organisation, management arrangements for the collections (devolved to trust status, for example) or

change in premises, staffing structure etc which might have an impact on collections care or public access.

Housing objects

- You must keep grant aided objects permanently in secure and environmentally acceptable conditions. The permanent location should be as described in the grant offer letter because that is the location whose eligibility we have agreed.
- Venues for the short term loan of grant-aided material should be able to provide conditions comparable or superior to your own in terms of environment and security and be fully accessible to the public.

Disposing of objects

- Deaccessioning in certain circumstances is a valid collections management tool, provided it is carried out within the terms of an acceptable collections management policy and recognised professional guidelines.
- In signing the Grant Claim Form, you undertake not to dispose of the grant-aided acquisition without the Fund's prior written approval. If the issue of disposal or transfer arises, you should contact us immediately to discuss the options and procedures.
- You should abide by the relevant Accreditation guidelines with regard to the disposal of collections.
- If you intend to sell objects purely to generate funds for revenue purposes, you will seriously prejudice their prospects of receiving grant aid in the future.
- If we agree to a disposal, the Purchase Grant Fund is entitled to repayment of the grant or, if greater, a sum equal to the percentage of the grant from any monies received.
- Objects purchased with grant aid should not be mortgaged or pledged as security in any way.
- Transfer of items from core collections to handling collections (which are outside the Fund's remit) is deemed to be disposal.

Long term loan or transfer of ownership

- Grants are awarded because you have successfully demonstrated how the acquisition complements your existing collection and helps you respond to the needs of your audiences. Should the situation change and a different home be considered more appropriate, you should consult the Fund at an early stage. In the case of transfer of ownership, if the proposed recipient is an organisation which meets the Fund's eligibility criteria, we may consider transfer of the award; if not, the Arts Council England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund is entitled to repayment of the grant or, if greater, a sum equal to the percentage of the grant from any monies received.

Loss or damage to objects

- You must tell us immediately if an item acquired with grant aid is lost, stolen or irreparably damaged.

- In the event of a total loss, the Purchase Grant Fund is entitled to repayment of the grant or, if greater, a sum equal to the percentage of the grant from any insurance claim or compensation.

Data Protection

- We will use the information provided in your application to administer the grant application. This includes sharing details with assessors from the V&A, other national museums and The National Archives and preparing anonymised statistical information. Please ensure that you have permission to share other people's data (e.g. the vendor) for this purpose.
- It is important that the personal data we hold about you is accurate and current. Please keep us informed at purchasegrantfund@vam.ac.uk if your personal data changes during your relationship with us.
- More information on the V&A's privacy policy can be found here: <https://www.vam.ac.uk/info/privacy-policy>

Visit: www.vam.ac.uk/purchasegrantfund for more information.

Contact: purchasegrantfund@vam.ac.uk

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