Arts Council
Become a Panel or Committee Member
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What are the Panels and Committee?

Making sure that our public collections – held in organisations of many types and sizes across the nation – are developed, cared for and celebrated so they can be enjoyed by as many people as possible, is hugely important.

The Arts Council supports collections and opportunities to engage with them in a number of ways, some of the most important being through the Acceptance in Lieu Panel, the Designation Panel and the Accreditation Committee.¹

The **Acceptance in Lieu Panel** makes recommendations on items offered through the Acceptance in Lieu scheme, and the more recently introduced Cultural Gifts Scheme. In the last five years, over £200 million worth of significant cultural property has entered public ownership for everyone to enjoy, through these schemes.

The **Designation Panel** identifies outstanding collections around the country, assessing and making decisions on applications to the Designation Scheme, a mark of distinction that helps raise the profile of these vital collections and encourages people to safeguard them.

The **Accreditation Committee** oversee the Accreditation scheme, the UK industry standard for museums and galleries.² The scheme helps everyone involved in running a museum by providing a framework and standard to guide their approach on how the organisation is run; how collections are managed and how the museum engages with its communities.

Appointed members serve for up to three years, with the possibility of reappointment. These are voluntary roles, with UK expenses reimbursed for travel, accommodation and subsistence incurred while on Arts Council business and according to the Arts Council’s expenses policy.

We are delighted you are considering applying to be a Panel or Committee member, and hope, that the following information helps you understand the schemes and what the roles involve.

¹ The Arts Council also work with the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, which advises the Secretary of State for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) whether a cultural object intended for export is a national treasure, helping to keep these items in the UK for the benefit of the public. Recruitment for the Reviewing Committee is managed by DCMS.

² The Accreditation Scheme is managed as a UK Partnership between Arts Council England, the Welsh Government, Museums Galleries Scotland and Northern Ireland Museums Council.
We champion creativity and culture across the country, develop talent in every corner of the nation, and support artists, practitioners and cultural organisations to work in partnership and to be world-leading.

We believe creativity and culture not only inspire us, but they bring us together and teach us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, they make life better.

We support combined arts, dance, literature, music, theatre and visual art, as well as museums and libraries.

Our strategy for 2020-30, Let’s Create, is an invitation to those who share our beliefs to come together and create new opportunities for everyone across the country to get creative and enjoy brilliant culture.

You can find out more about our Strategy and read our previous annual reviews and accounts on our website.

Photo © Oxford University Museums. School visit to see ‘The High Street, Oxford’ by JMW Turner, which was accepted by HM Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum in 2016.
Who we’re looking for

These Panels make a significant contribution to supporting and developing cultural objects and collections.

We are looking for people with a mix of relevant skills, knowledge, experiences and perspectives, based throughout the UK.

The roles can help make sure that more people experience our brilliant cultural objects and collections – so we want to attract a wide range of candidates, who reflect the communities we serve.

Acceptance in Lieu Panel

What does it do?
The Acceptance in Lieu Panel, which has a UK-wide remit, advises the Secretary of State for DCMS, and the Ministers in the devolved governments, on items offered under the Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Schemes.

It also advises HM Revenue & Customs on cultural objects for which a claim for Conditional Exemption is made.

The Panel recommends whether or not objects offered through AIL and CGS are of sufficient importance to meet the eligibility criteria (pre-eminence or association with a significant building), in acceptable physical condition and offered at a fair market value. It also advises on where an object might be allocated, except for manuscripts offered under AIL\(^3\), taking into account any wishes or conditions of the offeror.

The Panel seeks specialist, expert advice—generally from museum curators, scholars and members of the art trade—on objects offered through the schemes and claimed for Conditional Exemption.

Who is on the Panel?
The AIL Panel is made up of:

1. the Chair, who is appointed by the National Council in consultation with the Secretary of State; and
2. at least 6 and no more than 24 members appointed by the Arts Council (following an open recruitment process and taking into account advice of the Chair), including one who is a serving member of the National Council.

Why apply to join?
Museums, galleries, libraries and archives can support wellbeing, drive local economies and serve as hubs of creativity, education and research.

As a member of the AIL Panel you will play an important role in enhancing public collections

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3 The National Archives advises the Secretary of State or the relevant minister in the devolved nations on allocations of manuscripts and archives offered in lieu.

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around the country; you will be part of a process that brings fantastic objects into public ownership so that they can be enjoyed now and by future generations.

It’s important that the nation’s public collections are varied and diverse; new acquisitions through AIL and CGS play an important role in achieving this.

As a Panel member you have the opportunity to contribute your knowledge about the cultural sector in a way that will have an immediate positive impact on people’s lives.

**About the role**

As a member of the AIL Panel you will:

- Contribute to discussions about the importance of cultural property and measure it against the eligibility criteria;
- Make judgments about the open market value and physical condition of the items offered;
- Evaluate information about the proposed allocation, contributing to decisions about which institutions will acquire the items; and
- Evaluate information on significance and value provided by specialist advisers.

We are looking for a broad range of people who are passionate about public collections. Members will have experience working with museums, galleries, libraries and/or archives, and an understanding of current curatorial and collections practice.

For example, you may have worked or be working in a museum, as an academic, in the art market or as an artist.
**Time commitment**

The AIL Panel meets every month, except August, for 2-3 hours. On occasion members are expected to visit and inspect objects that are considered at meetings.

Additional time will be required to study the papers, which can be lengthy and are sent before each meeting. In total, a time commitment of up to 15 days a year is estimated.

The Panel has been meeting virtually since April 2020. When circumstances allow the Panel may return to meeting in person, although the option to join virtually will continue.

**Conflict of interests**

Following appointment, an AIL Panel member must be prepared to declare and manage any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. Whenever a matter arises in which the member has an interest, which might be perceived to conflict with those of the AIL Panel and the Arts Council, they will need to declare it.
What does it do?

The Designation Scheme recognises cultural collections of outstanding importance based on their quality and significance – collections that help deepen our understanding of the world – held in non-national museums, libraries and archives across England. These vital collections are located in rural and urban centres right across the country, from Cornwall to Suffolk, and the South Coast to Cumbria.

The Designation Panel members, who work across the fields of arts, cultural heritage and historical research, meet twice a year to consider applications for Designated status.

The responsibilities of the Panel are to:

• decide the outcome of individual applications for Designated status for identified collections;

• objectively assess applications to ensure that the Designation criteria are interpreted consistently and correctly; and

• give credibility to the Designation scheme through their involvement and expertise.

Who is on the panel?

The Designation Panel is made up of:

• the Chair; and

• eight Panel members each with expertise in museum, special library or archival collections.

The Panel assess applications by:

• considering whether sufficient evidence has been provided by the applicant, together with assessments by advisers, to enable a robust decision to be made on each application;

• ensuring that all material facts that are available and relevant are considered; and

• ensuring that decisions are consistent over time, and that new policy issues raised are resolved before a decision is made on a particular application.

Designation Panel members get a fascinating peek into the material culture of our nation.

Horniman Museum and Gardens. Photo: @ Andrew Lee.
Why apply to join?

“We’re looking for applications from people with wide experience of working with collections, whether in a curatorial role or through research projects that have been rooted in museum, library and archive collections. We would also welcome applications from individuals who have been involved in promoting England’s cultural history with reference to material culture. We are keen to hear from people who have a breadth of perspective when it comes to engaging with collections, understanding the value of public engagement with collections, and the positive impact that the Designation scheme makes to the cultural sector.” **Dr. Stella Butler, previous Chair of the Designation Panel**

As a member of the Designation Panel you will have the opportunity to use your knowledge and experience to award significant collections Designated status.

This mark of distinction means their importance can be further recognised by funders, researchers and the public, helping to ensure these collections are safeguarded and developed for wider enjoyment, learning and research.

About the role

As a member of the Designation Panel you will:

- Consider applications sent in advance of each Designation Panel meeting;
- Attend and participate in each Designation Panel meeting;
- Make decisions on whether to award Designated status to collections; and
- Act as ambassadors for the Designation Scheme and help Arts Council England protect and build the Scheme’s reputation.

We’re looking for applications from people with wide experience of working with collections, whether in a curatorial role or through research projects that have been rooted in museum, library and archive collections. We would also welcome applications from individuals who have been involved in promoting England’s cultural history with reference to material culture.

We are keen to hear from people who have a breadth of perspective when it comes to engaging with collections, understanding the value of public engagement with collections, and the positive impact that the Designation scheme makes to the cultural sector.

Time commitment

It is likely that the Panel will meet for a maximum of 2 days a year; the role requires a commitment of approximately 5 days each year, in order to read papers, prepare for and attend Panel meetings and attend occasional events. Meetings will take place in various locations in England, with most meetings taking place virtually where possible.

Occasionally Panel members are asked to attend events to celebrate successful awards or projects, and are expected to act as advocates for the Scheme more broadly.

Conflict of interests

Panel members that have an interest that might be perceived to conflict with those of the Designation Panel and Arts Council England must declare these interests following their appointment, to ensure that the appropriate declaration of such a conflict is registered and acted upon.
Accreditation Committee

What does it do?

Accreditation for museums and galleries in the UK is the industry standard, giving confidence to people running museums and to stakeholders, that a museum has an ethical approach and a stable foundation from which to develop, with plans and policies in place.

The scheme is run in partnership across the UK by Arts Council England; Museums Galleries Scotland; Northern Ireland Museums Council and the Welsh Government.

The Accreditation Committee has oversight of the Accreditation scheme, meeting annually to review the running of the scheme over the previous year, and to reflect and discuss related points of policy, including proposals put forward by the UK Accreditation Partnership.

Sub-committees form Panels which decide on the Accreditation status of museums by reviewing assessments of their applications, at meetings – either in person or online – several times a year.

Who is on the committee?

• the Chair, who is appointed by the Chair of Arts Council England (following an open recruitment process guided by the UK Accreditation partners); and

• Ten to twenty members appointed by the Arts Council (again following an open recruitment process guided by the UK Accreditation partners).

An excellent way to increase your knowledge of museums
Why apply to join?

“An excellent way to increase your knowledge of museums and to gain understanding of UK-wide partnership working. You will expand your professional networks and make new friends. A great opportunity to give something back to the museum sector. Surprisingly good fun. Really!”

Accreditation Committee member

Being a member of the Committee is a way to support your professional development and an opportunity to give back to the sector. You’ll network with fellow professionals and understand how museums and galleries are achieving their outcomes, demonstrating impact and meeting their challenges.

We cover a wide variety of museums, galleries and heritage organisations across the UK, so you’ll find out more about the sector in a UK context. You’ll be an advocate for Accreditation and help us celebrate the achievements of museums of all sizes, from volunteer-run organisations to the biggest national museums.

About the role

Whether you’re an experienced leader and/or a mid-career professional we would like to hear from you. Applicants can be currently employed in museums, galleries and heritage sites or recently retired, but will apply as individuals – rather than on behalf of their organisations.

Freelancers and consultants working with museums, galleries and heritage sites, as well as current Accreditation mentors, are also welcome to apply. If you offer sector support in a wider capacity, for example within umbrella and networking organisations, strategic partnership bodies or other organisations that support the museums sector, you are eligible to apply if you can demonstrate how your experience meets the person specification.

Museum, gallery and heritage professionals who haven’t worked within the sector for more than three years are not normally appointed to the Committee, unless they have remained involved in some way.

Time commitment

The whole Accreditation Committee meets once a year, with members joining a rota for Panel meetings throughout the year (approximately 3 hours) to decide on the Accredited status of museums. This will involve reading assessments in advance. In total the time commitment should not exceed four to five days per year.

Conflict of interests

Individuals employed or sub-contracted by any of the regional Museum Development providers in England are not eligible to become members or Chair of the UK Accreditation Committee. The nine Museum Development programmes in England are grant-aided by Arts Council England to deliver Accreditation advice within their role as Sector Support Organisations and membership of the Accreditation Committee (a sub-Committee of Arts Council England) could be seen as a conflict of interest.

If you are currently contracted for Accreditation assessments by one of the UK Accreditation partners assessing organisations you may still apply but would not be able to continue in both roles.
For more information about the schemes, and our work supporting museums and collections, visit our website at:

- www.artscouncil.org.uk/acceptance-in-lieu
- www.artscouncil.org.uk/designation-scheme
- www.artscouncil.org.uk/uk-museum-accreditation-scheme
- www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/supporting-museums

Apply by the deadline indicated in the job advert. If you would like to discuss the roles further before applying or have any questions about the application process please email:

- Acceptance in Lieu Panel: AIL.Panel@artscouncil.org.uk
- Designation Panel: Designation.Panel@artscouncil.org.uk
- Accreditation Committee: Accreditation.Committee@artscouncil.org.uk

**We also want to make sure that our recruitment process is as fair as possible:**

- Let us know if you would like to receive this document or other recruitment materials in a different format or have other access requirements you would like to discuss with us.

- If you are disabled and your application meets the minimum criteria for the post, we offer you a guaranteed interview.

- If you are successfully appointed and need additional adjustments or assistance to enable you to do it, we will work with you to put them in place.