

# ARRT UK

Impact  
report  
2022

Inspiring. Empowering. Shared.

## Why we need Art UK

Art UK is the only digital platform of its kind in the world. It makes the wealth of public art across the UK available in one place 24/7. This art is in our museums and galleries, our universities, libraries and civic buildings, our streets and squares. Wherever you live and whatever your background, Art UK gives you free access to all these artworks for enjoyment, learning and research.

Our work enriches the lives of millions and supports wellbeing. For some this may be the development of their existing creative learning, for others it may be the start of a journey to a more creative life.

We unite 3,400 institutions from Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England, in the largest ever institutional arts partnership put together in the UK. At least 90% of the participating institutions would not be able to do what we do for them on their own.

We show their art, write articles about their art, identify the artists behind their artworks, guide them on copyright, encourage visitors to their venues and boost their income via our online shop.

Compelling storytelling, creative schools learning resources and innovative digital

Wherever you live  
and whatever your  
background,  
Art UK gives you  
free access 24/7

initiatives underpin our approach. Want to curate your own online exhibition, solve an art mystery for your local museum or micro-volunteer your time to make paintings more searchable? We help you do it all.

We have many incredible champions and supporters. However, the loss of core funding from Arts Council England puts at risk our exceptional work democratising access to the national art collection.

We hope you will agree that supporting Art UK is of critical importance.

**Kathleen Soriano**  
Art UK Chair



### COVER IMAGE

*Small Blue 2* (detail), 1985–1986, acrylic & oil on wood by Wilhelmina Barns-Graham (1912–2004). © Wilhelmina Barns-Graham Trust. Photo credit: The Maclaurin Trust

### RIGHT

*Noel* (detail), 1934, bronze by Betty Aaerens (1904–1994). © the copyright holder. Photo credit: Manchester Art Gallery

The artist has a full biography thanks to an Art Detective discussion.

## Our progress in 2022

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2022 was a year of exceptional achievements for Art UK. The data on the pages that follow is powerful evidence of our charity's impact on audiences and collections.

But the statistics are only part of the story. We completed the first ever comprehensive photographic record of the UK's public sculptures and were recognised with the Apollo Digital Innovation of the Year prize.

We then laid plans for the digitisation of outdoor murals, the volunteer-centred initiative that will follow. We also launched our Tagger crowdsourcing tool to help make artworks more searchable by subject matter. This is so essential to our mission to democratise access to art.

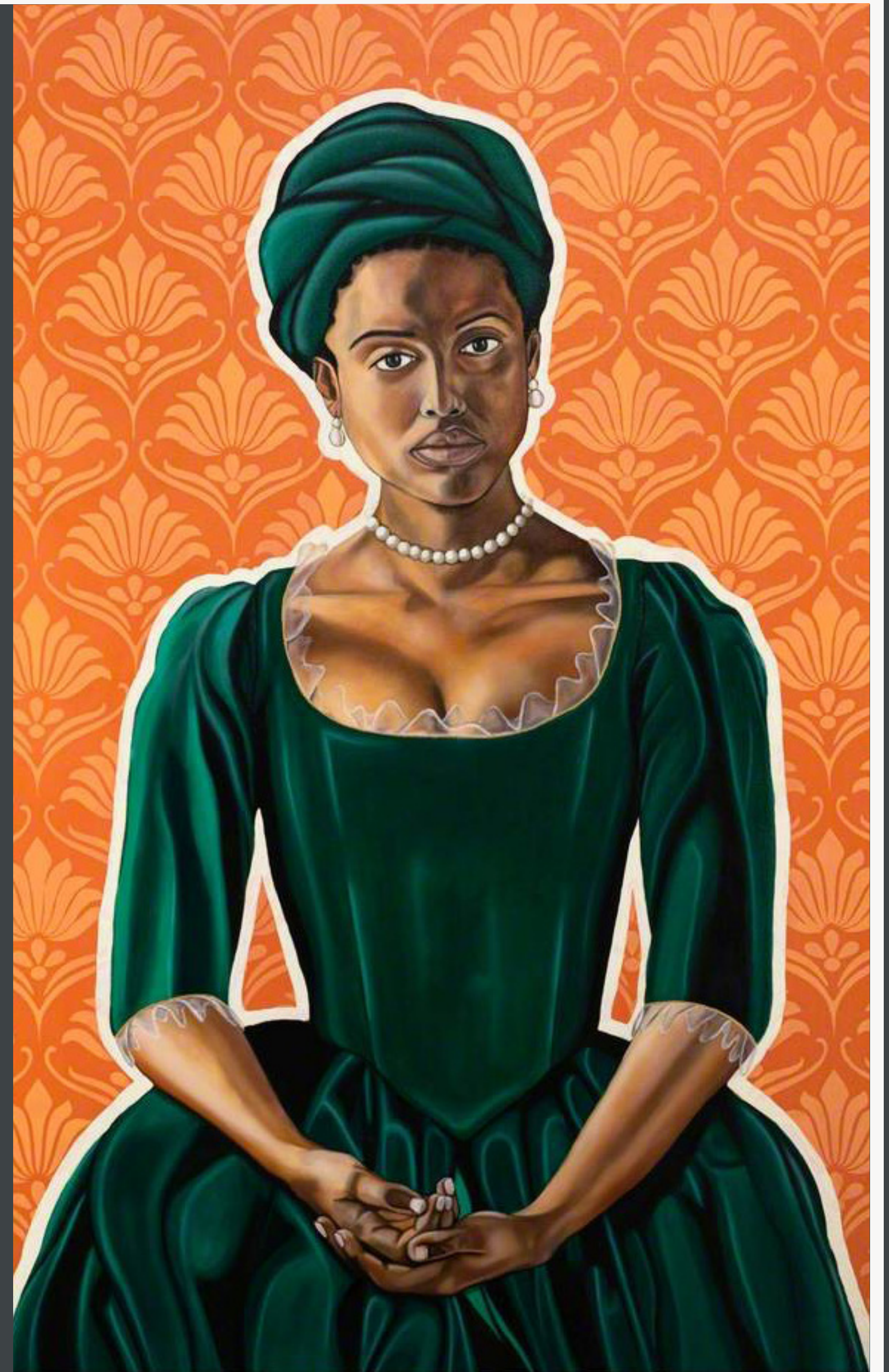
We received funding commitments from Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Freeland Foundation for two transformative projects. The first is the Museum Data Service, a collaboration with the University of Leicester and Collections Trust, to build the digital infrastructure for sharing tens of millions of object records across UK museums whilst growing significantly the number of artworks on Art UK.

## 4.7 MILLION users visited Art UK in 2022

The second is the national roll-out of The Superpower of Looking. Using the world of art and images, Superpower will give primary school teachers resources and confidence to teach the art and design curriculum and sharpen their pupils' visual literacy. In short, Superpower will endow children with invaluable life skills, helping them to observe, question and understand the world around them, while also encouraging a love of art.

The Art UK brand and platform is still young. Our small team brims with start-up dynamism and creativity, and we provide exceptional value for money. The potential for Art UK is huge and is only matched by our ambition. We are grateful to all the farsighted funders who have made Art UK what it is today. With your continued support and that of others we will realise that potential.

**Andrew Ellis**  
Art UK Director



RIGHT

*Dido Belle (1761-1804)*,  
2021, oil on canvas by  
Mikéla Henry-Lowe  
(b.1993) © the artist.  
Photo credit:  
Historic England Archive

# Reaching more people

- ▶ The total number of unique visitors to our website was **4.7million**, that's a growth of **19%** year on year in 2022
- ▶ Our percentage of users by age:
  - 18 - 24 years....**20%**
  - 25 - 34 .....**19%**
  - 35 - 44 .....**17%**
  - 45 - 54 .....**16%**
  - 55 - 64 .....**14%**
  - 65+ .....**14%**
- ▶ Our top 5 countries by percentage of total users were:
  - UK ..... **45%**
  - USA ..... **23%**
  - Canada ..... **3%**
  - Australia ..... **2%**
  - Germany ..... **2%**
- ▶ Our social media channels achieved **25%** year-on-year growth taking us to **152,569** followers
- ▶ **24,524** people subscribed to our weekly newsletter





## Supporting artists

- ▶ A total of **53,700** artists were listed on Art UK by December 2022
- ▶ **58%** of these remain in copyright
- ▶ **97%** of in-copyright artwork images are available to view on Art UK
- ▶ In 2022 we received image reproduction consent from over **700** artists and estates
- ▶ We have now received over **11,800** signed agreements from artists and artists' estates since the project began
- ▶ We link to over **4,700** artist websites through our artist profile pages

**'It is so incredibly important for these works to be digitised and no longer solely be in elite spaces. This means they can reach a wider audience alongside helpful contextual information'**

*Yinka Shonibare RA,  
Art UK Patron 2019*



## Our projects

- ▶ **12,890** new artwork records were added to Art UK including works on paper, oil paintings, sculptures and some major photographic archives
- ▶ This took the total number of records to over **300,000**
- ▶ **25%** of images are freely available for reuse under a Creative Commons licence or have been made available Open Access by the collections
- ▶ We saw the culmination of our five-year sculpture digitisation project with a total of over **51,000** artwork records being reached - including outdoor sculptures and those held in collections
- ▶ **59** new public sculptures were unveiled in 2022 and digitised by Art UK

**'Art Detective is an amazing service. It's like employing an additional staff member'**

*2022 Art UK Collections survey*



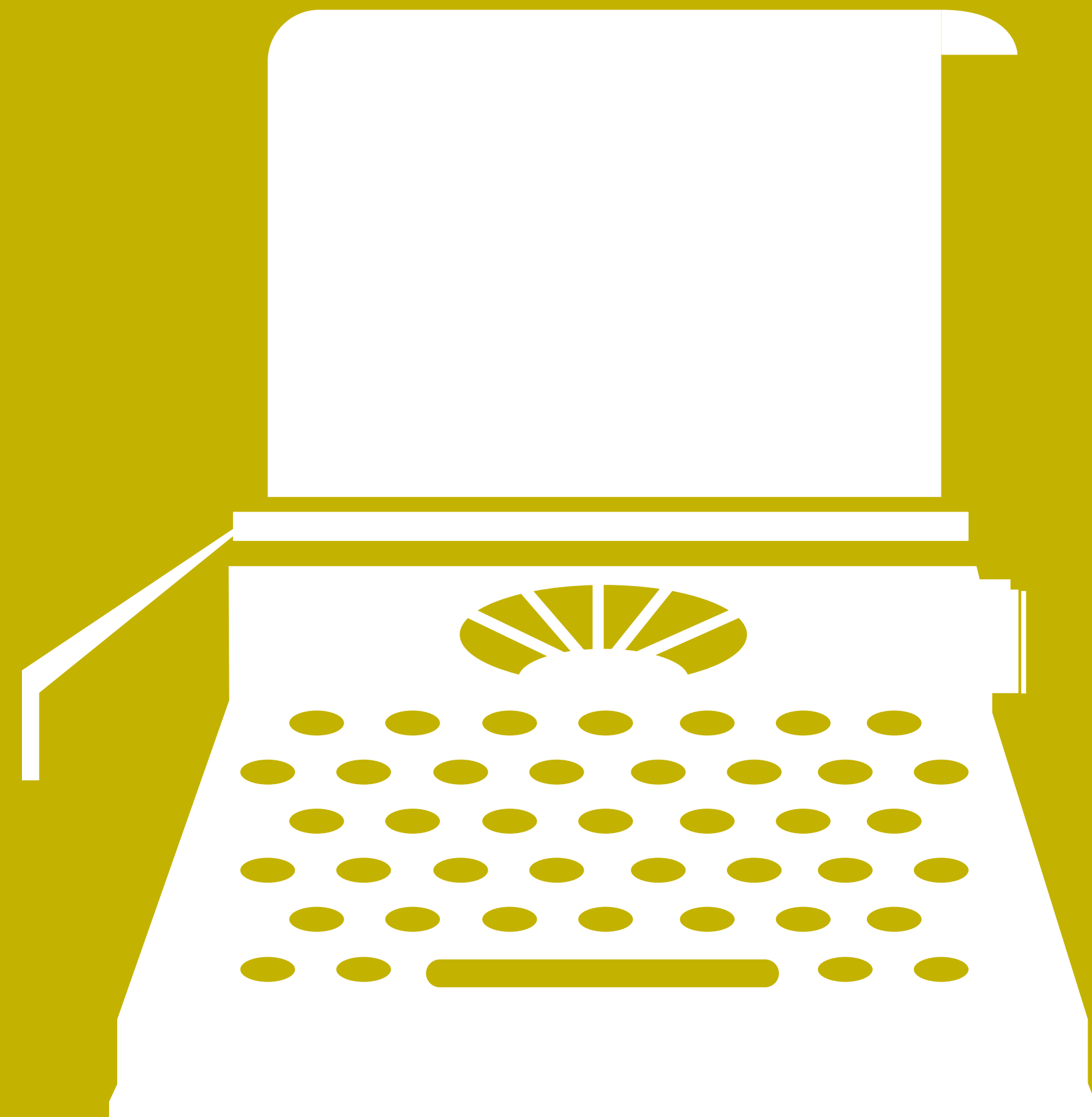
## Telling the stories behind art

- ▶ **240** stories about art and artists were published in the past year. This took the total number to **1,843** stories
- ▶ This content was read by **1,086,337** unique users, an increase of **22%** on the previous year
- ▶ Story page views reached **1,764,721** showing an increase of **13%**

**'The idea of bringing the nation's art collection together on a single platform is one of those very simple and very brilliant ideas that really makes a difference – to education, to accessing art, and to the sheer fun of exploring the cultural heritage. It's a big job, but the site is mind-blowing already'**

*Mary Beard, classicist*

*Art UK Patron 2021*



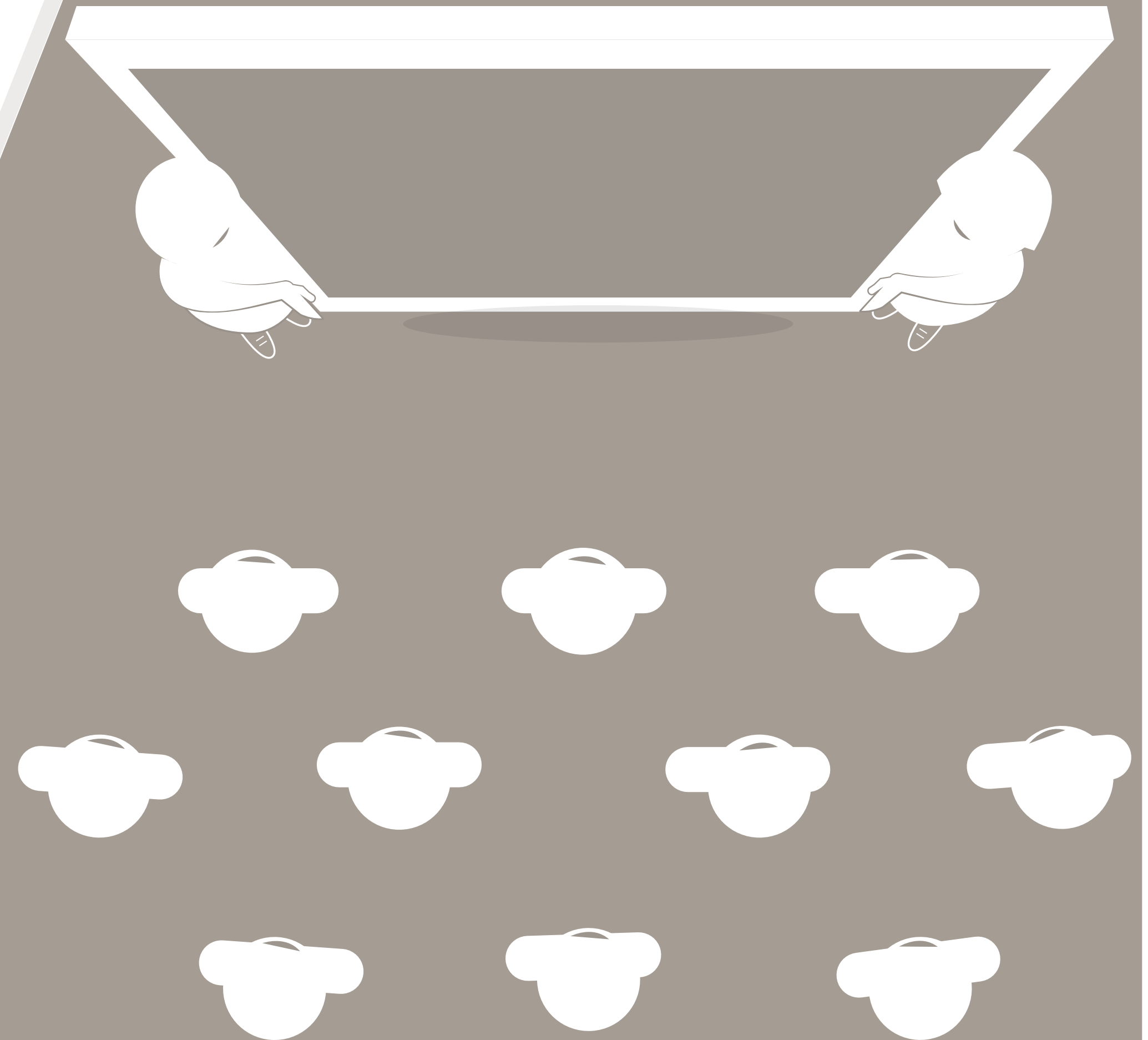


# Supporting learning and creativity

- ▶ Our learning pages were used by **65,797** people over the course of the year, an increase of **41%**
- ▶ Page views saw a **21%** increase
- ▶ Our database of free-to-use schools learning resources, which can be filtered by home nation curriculum, grew to **182** curriculum-based activities
- ▶ There was a **24%** increase in teachers accessing these, with **5,787** referred users viewing a resource
- ▶ Over **600** teachers were signed up to receive our schools newsletter by the end of 2022

**'A particular strength is the opportunity for teachers to access relevant resources that are easy to find and all in one place – a key requirement. The portal as a whole stands out as being of particularly high quality'**

*Independent evaluation of Art UK learning resources 2022*

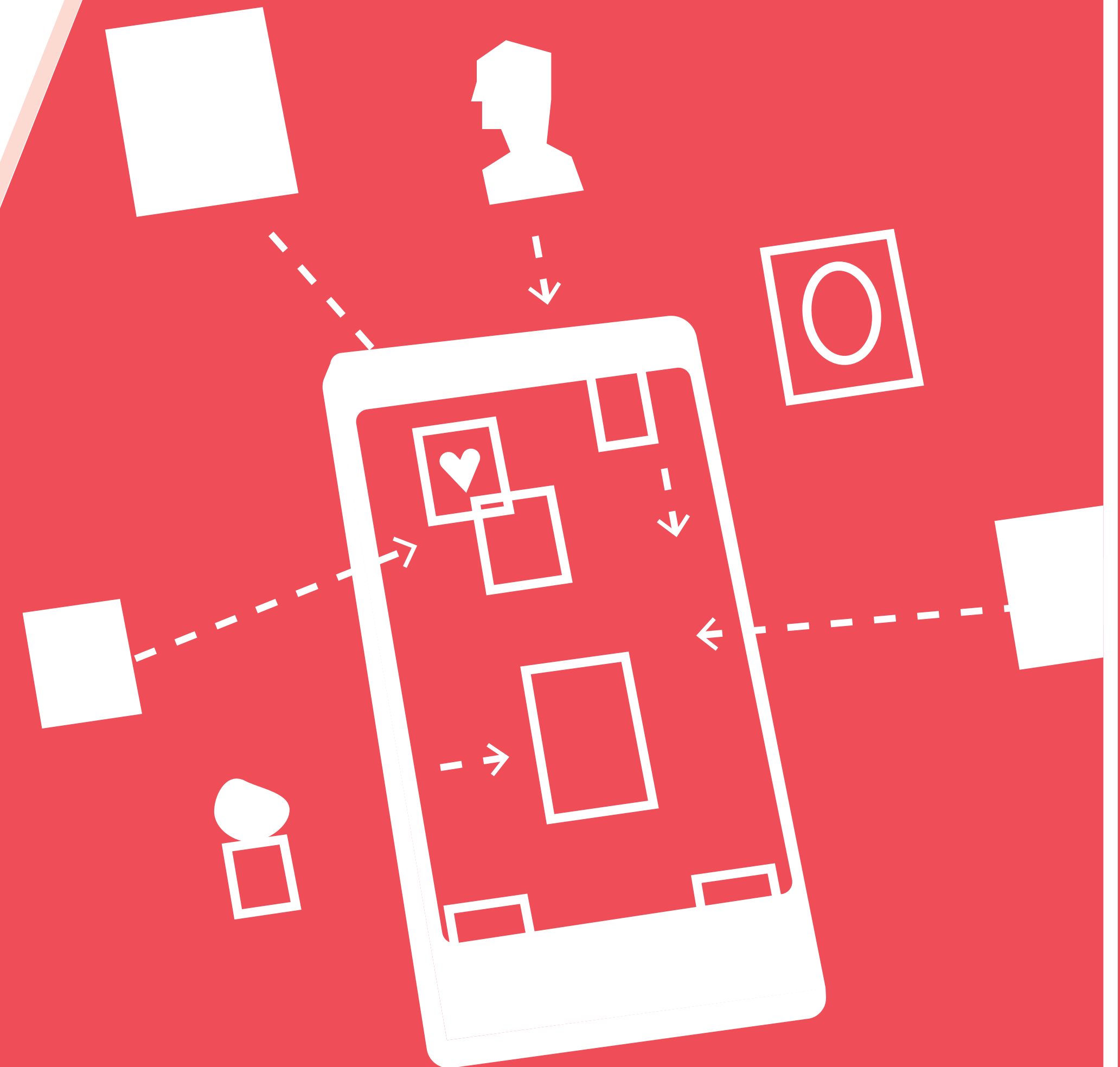


# Our innovation

- ▶ In June, we relaunched Tagger, our crowdsourcing initiative, and in the six months to December it had **11,825** users
- ▶ **10,600** artworks are now easier to search due to having been tagged
- ▶ Our micro-volunteers generated a total of **83,000** individual tags, of which **35,000** were verified
- ▶ Curations allows anyone to create and share their own online exhibition. By the end of 2022, **14,733** people had created **27,031** Curations

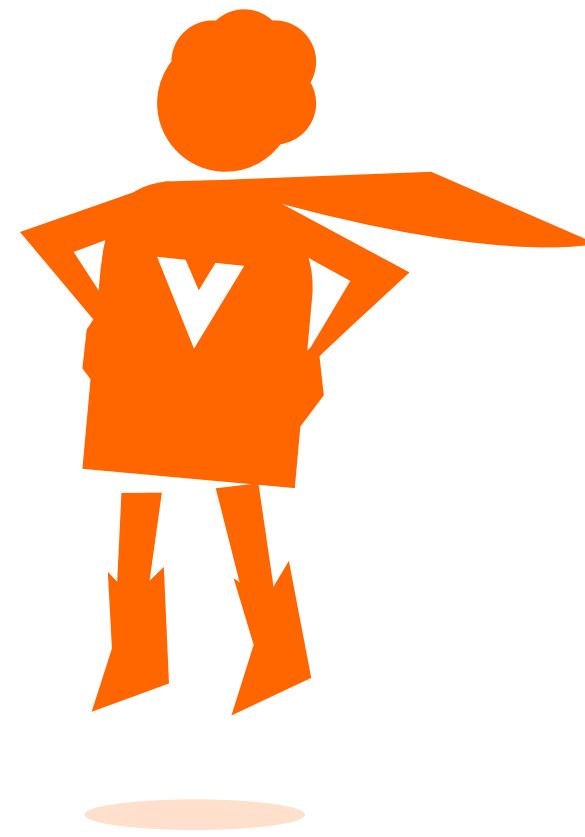
**'Art UK's innovative combination of digitised collections (including many artworks not usually on view to the public) and crowdsourcing transforms art history and history itself. If only the USA had such a thing'**

*Stephen Bury, Andrew W. Mellon Chief Librarian, Frick Art Reference Library New York*



# Our organisation

- ▶ Art UK has **27** full time equivalent staff spread across England and Scotland, with micro offices in Stoke-on-Trent and Glasgow
- ▶ We have **150** wonderful public art digitisation volunteers
- ▶ A massive **550** volunteers contributed to the public sculpture programme which took place from 2017 to 2022



# Delivering value

Total costs **£1.57m**

- ▶ Percentage spent on offices and utilities **0.3%**
- ▶ Percentage spent on raising funds **7%**
- ▶ Cost per participating collection **£462**

*Costs are for calendar year 2022*



# Trustees

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**Chair: Kathleen Soriano** Curator, arts and culture consultant, broadcaster

**Vice Chair: George Entwistle** Former Director-General of the BBC

**Noura Al-Maashouq** Co-Chair, UNICEF Next Generation London

**Hasan Bakhshi** Centre Director, Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, NESTA

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

**Ian Cuerden** Head of Admissions, Catering and Retail Sales at Historic Royal Palaces

**Errol Francis** Artistic director and CEO of Culture&

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

**Clare Lilley** Director, Yorkshire Sculpture Park

**Bob Lisney OBE** Former local government major project director

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

**Kim Streets** Chief Executive, Museums Sheffield

**Andria Zafirakou MBE** Art and Textiles teacher, Alperton Community School



RIGHT

*The National Windrush Monument, 2022, bronze by Basil Watson (b.1958) © the artist. Photo credit: Colleen Rowe Harvey/Art UK*

# Donors

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Our work in 2022 has been made possible thanks to the support of our donors. The following donors supported Art UK with a gift over £1,000:

Ampersand Foundation

Anson Family Charitable Trust

Mr Campbell Armour

Arts Council England

Arts Council Northern Ireland

Mrs Victoria Barnsley

Ms Rana Begum

Bloomberg Philanthropies

Mr Peter Bretherton

Mr Julian Cazalet

The John S Cohen Foundation

Creative Scotland

The Deborah Loeb Brice Donor Advised Fund

Jonathan and George De Pass

Simon C Dickinson Ltd

Mr Andrew Ellis

Foyle Foundation

Freelands Foundation

Mr Gavin Gemmell

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Mr Charles Gregson

Mr & Mrs Guerrini-Maraldi

Hauser & Wirth

Henry Moore Foundation

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Mr David Howden

Howden Group

Mr Chris Jones

Ms Fenella Knox

Ms Lesley Knox

Mr Mark Lewisohn

Miss Jean Matterson

Mr James McNaulty

Mr Edward Nicholson

The Oakmoor Trust

Mr James Peach

The Rushworth Foundation

Scottish Government

Simon Gillespie Studio

Stevenson Family's Charitable Trust

Tavolozza Foundation

Treebeard Trust

We are also grateful to the 1,450 other donors who supported Art UK during 2022.



RIGHT

Pupils from Hillcrest Primary, Bristol, with a bronze sculpture by Peter Thursby loaned from the Royal West of England Academy, June 2019.

Photo credit: Alice Hendy/Art UK/Royal West of England Academy

**‘No other country has online access to such an extensive database of its paintings as is provided by Art UK. That makes it unique in an international context’**  
*Gabriele Finaldi, Director of the National Gallery*

**Can you help us inspire creativity and learning?**

If you would like to discuss supporting the vital work of Art UK, please contact our Director, Andrew Ellis  
[andrew.ellis@artuk.org](mailto:andrew.ellis@artuk.org)



RIGHT  
Photographing *The Fury of Athamus*, 1790–1794, marble on wood by John Flaxman (1755–1826), at Ickworth. Photo credit: Julia Abel Smith/Art UK