

The Wedgwood Collection – one of the most important industrial archives in the world – has been saved well ahead of the 30 November target, thanks to the generosity of over 7,000 individuals, Lottery players, several businesses and a number of grant-making foundations.

When the appeal was launched in September, the campaign got off to a great start with £13million already secured, thanks to a pledge in principle of over £10.8m from HLF, £1m from the Art Fund and a small number of private trusts and foundations. Within two weeks a further £700,000 had been raised, contributed by the public. A few days later, the campaign reached £1m from the public and £1m from major donors and grant-making foundations, propelling the total to £2m. The appeal then surged towards its final target thanks to donations from two regional sources, Bet365 Foundation and Staffordshire County Council.

Josiah Wedgwood was a true pioneer, transforming British pottery from a minor craft to a major industry through a combination of scientific experimentation, development of new ceramic materials and techniques, excellence in design and a genius for marketing and business. The incredible collection contains over 80,000 works of art, ceramics, manuscripts and letters, pattern books and photographs covering the 250-year history of Wedgwood. It is a unique archive of British politics, society, science and art. Developments in taste and fashion can be traced over three centuries.

[quote=Carole Souter, Chief Executive of the HLF]"It is, quite simply, one of the most extraordinary and rare collections of its type in the UK."[/quote]

Among the most valuable items in the collection are the family portraits painted by Stubbs, Josiah's friend and protégé. Josiah I and his wife, Sarah, were also painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, founding president of the Royal Academy. This archive represents priceless evidence of one company's contribution and response to a world of fast-paced commercial innovation, scientific discovery, intellectual enlightenment, turbulent social history and global politics.

Once all the monies have been agreed in November, the plan is for the Art Fund to gift the Collection to the V&A and for it to remain at the Wedgwood Museum near Stoke. It will lie at the heart of a major new visitor experience at the museum, as part of the redevelopment of the factory site set to open in spring next year.



Appeal launched to save Wedgwood Collection – £2.74m needed by November