UK's publicly owned sculpture collection to be catalogued



Kanagawa, by William Pye, 2000, in Selsey, West Sussex. Anthony McIntosh

Art UK has been awarded National Lottery funding of £2.8million. This will enable it to embark on an ambitious project to digitally catalogue 170,000 sculptures - a global first.

All sculptures will be freely accessible to browse on the Art UK website. Users will be able to curate their own collection for reference or sharing and contribute knowledge about objects through the Art Detective function. Downloadable resources will allow people to undertake their own activities at home.

World first

Once completed, the UK will be the first country in the world to have a free-to-access online photographic showcase of its publicly-owned sculpture.

Stuart Hobley, Head of HLF London, said: “Thanks to National Lottery players we’re able to help Art UK raise awareness of our sculpture heritage by creating a new interactive website with exciting activity to get people involved, inspired and exploring this fascinating collection."

Global reach

The UK's wonderful sculpture collection is drawn from all over the world, with a significant proportion not on display. All objects – irrespective of condition or perceived quality – will be recorded, and most will be photographed.

[quote-Cornelia Parker, Sculptor]"I can't wait to use the resource."[/quote]

Cornelia Parker, Sculptor, said: "Such wonderful news that Art UK has successfully raised the funds to put online the nation's sculpture collection. Can't wait to use the resource."

Learning and engagement

There will also be a new programme to engage the public, with contemporary sculptors and curators taking works into shopping centres and public libraries. Young people will create films about sculptures and there will be specially designed events and activities for blind and partially-sighted people. 2,000 volunteers will be trained to help deliver the project, learning skills including photography and digitisation.

Strong track record

This is Art UK's second major digitisation programme, and follows another world-first – its internationally-acclaimed oil painting project which has made over 200,000 publicly-owned oil paintings from over 3,000 UK collections freely available online.



A Greyhound, Joseph Gott, 1827. Temple Newsam, Leeds

Your Sculpture project wins Heritage Lottery Fund support