

# Building a network for queer heritage

## Programme:

Professional network grants

## Case study:

Queer Heritage and  
Collections Network

Founding member and lead  
applicant: National Trust

## Challenge

There is already excellent work being done by groups such as Queer British Art to champion LGBTQ+ narratives in the heritage sector; however, there has not previously been a formal membership network to provide peer support for people in the UK working with LGBTQ+ collections and histories. The National Trust led on an application to Art Fund to develop such a network, supported by founding members English Heritage; Historic England; Historic Royal Palaces; and the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries at the University of Leicester.

## Working with Art Fund

The grant awarded to the Queer Heritage and Collections Network will support a freelance project manager to oversee the development of the network and cover the practical costs of a launch event and training workshop, including speaker fees and toolkits. The grant will also fund research to map current practice, knowledge and resources, helping the network plan future activities and making sure they remain responsive to the needs of the heritage sector and their audiences.



Exile at Kingston Lacy. © National Trust images/  
Steven Haywood.



Dan Vo

*"We must ensure that there are more diverse voices at the table, and that representation and inclusion are embedded at the core of all our activities. With the support of Art Fund, we will be able to delve further into collections to uncover, amplify and celebrate LGBTQ+ stories and narratives."*

Dan Vo, Project Manager

# £14,964

offered in funding through our  
network grants

# 5

founding members  
representing hundreds of  
museums and heritage sites  
across the UK

# 40

heritage professionals will  
benefit from training on  
developing LGBTQ+ tours

“Although the last five years have seen a huge increase in LGBTQ+ activity across the cultural sector, this heightened interest has posed a set of increasingly pressing questions around how to take this work forward in ethical and impactful ways. This support from Art Fund is enabling the network to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding in ways that we hope will foster confidence and experimentation in moving the field forward.”

Richard Sandell, Director, RCMG, University of Leicester

## Outcomes

- Launch of UK-wide network, providing training, networking and peer support to people working with LGBTQ+ collections and histories.
- Mapping existing sector practice to plan future activity based on identified sector and audience needs.
- Training workshop on ‘Developing LGBTQ+ tours’, which will help embed public programming that brings LGBTQ+ histories and themes to the fore.

## Looking ahead

This is just the beginning of the network. They plan to consult with the sector to identify what support it can offer and develop a programme of activities in response, with an emphasis on regional needs. As the network evolves and begins offering increased support for the sector, they could apply for further support from Art Fund’s professional network grants, as networks can apply for funding more than once.

Art Fund is keen, not only to provide financial support for professional networks, but to help promote their activities to ensure training and resources are available to the broadest possible professional audiences. We are working to provide a more helpful digital self-service user experience for supported networks and partners to share their online exhibitions and events through our website to maximise our marketing support and engage our members and wider culture seeker community.



Long Live Queen James 3 © Historic Royal Palaces



Girl Boy Child – a research led collaboration between David McAlmont and the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries - was commissioned by the National Trust as part of its national public programme, Prejudice and Pride.



Visitors admiring Henry VIII by Kev Clarke at Sutton House Queered launch event, February 2017. Photograph by Eli Beristain, courtesy of Sutton House.

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