

# OPENCULTURE

**UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF COLLECTIONS  
COLLECTIONS TRUST FORWARD PLAN 2011-14**

# Contents

<b>2</b>	<b>Foreword</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>About the Collections Trust</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Our mission</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Working in Partnership</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Programmes</b>
	OpenCulture
	Collections Link
	Excellence in Collections
	Culture Grid
	International
<b>7</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Business Strategy</b>

# Foreword

The UK's museums, galleries, archives and libraries are filled with potential. They create moments of discovery and inspiration, help businesses innovate and creators create. They empower people to imagine a better world and then go out and build it.

For more than 30 years, the Collections Trust has been helping cultural organisations worldwide unlock the potential in their collections.

This new Forward Plan 2011-14 picks up the story from *Making the Connection* (our successful plan from 2008-11). It marks the coming of age of the Collections Trust as a dynamic force in the new Creative & Cultural landscape.

*OpenCulture* is both the vision and the guiding principle which drives our work as the international leader in Collections Management. We hope that this plan will inspire you to work with us to unlock the potential in your collections.

**Margaret Greeves, Chair, Collections Trust**

# About the Collections Trust

The Collections Trust is an independent UK-based charity with an international profile.

Our standards, publications and services are used by thousands of creative and cultural organisations in almost every country worldwide to:

- Unlock the potential in their collections
- Improve their practice
- Interpret their Collections from new perspectives
- Engage with new audiences
- Develop new relationships
- Exploit new technologies
- Reduce their costs

Our products and services help Cultural and Creative organisations achieve best practice, save money and maximise impact for audiences.

Our networks help professionals connect, collaborate and share knowledge and expertise.

Our solutions and know-how help bring collections out of the storeroom and to millions of consumers via the web, mobile and applications.

Our knowledge and insight helps Governments and policymakers define future-facing strategies for Culture and the Arts.

Meet us at **[www.collectionstrust.org.uk](http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk)**

# Our mission

The Collections Trust helps museums, galleries, libraries and archives unlock the potential in their collections.

We do this for the collections community by:

- Providing know-how
- Developing and promoting excellence
- Challenging existing practices
- Pioneering new ideas
- Bringing experts together

# Working in Partnership

The Collections Trust works in partnership to help unlock the potential of collections, people and networks worldwide. Our partnerships include:

## **Individual Practitioners**

Our work is supported by a network of thousands of current practitioners who contribute their time, knowledge and expertise to shape our products, services and standards.

## **Government Departments & Agencies**

We work with Government departments and sponsored bodies in the UK and throughout Europe to support policy development and provide expert advice on collections practice.

## **Sector Agencies & Organisations**

We work with UK and international organisations including Museums Galleries Scotland, CyMAL, Museums Association, Association of Independent Museums and National Museum Directors Conference to coordinate support to and advocacy for the sector.

## **Networks & Professional Groups**

We work with networks including subject specialist networks and the SHARE network to develop and promote best practice and collaboration.

## **Commercial Partnerships**

We maintain the Collections Trust Affiliates programme, the SPECTRUM Partners Scheme and Collections Trust Partners Scheme with more than 50 commercial partners to ensure that their products and services represent good value and reflect best practice.

## **Learning Providers**

We work in partnership with Higher Education institutions to ensure that curricula, teaching and learning resources reflect current practice and to improve the employability of their students.

## **Content Partnerships**

We work in partnership with creative and cultural institutions to open up their digital content through the Culture Grid and Europeana.

## **European Consortia & Networks**

The Collections Trust represents the UK community within the European Commission's Member States Expert Group and also as part of the governance of Europeana, the one-stop portal to European cultural content. We coordinate or participate in programme networks with thousands of European cultural institutions.

# Programmes

## OpenCulture

OpenCulture is the Collections Trust's 'heartbeat'. It brings together all of our work, networks and new ideas into an annual programme of events, publications and activities which both drive our work and help us sustain our business.

Our aim is to work with Creative & Cultural organisations to unlock the potential of their collections and OpenCulture is the way we do it.

Each year for the next **3 years**, we will:

- Deliver a UK & international OpenCulture conference
- Publish new books in the *Practical Guides* series
- Maintain and expand the Collections Trust and SPECTRUM Partners Schemes
- Expand the Collections Link Advertisers programme
- Expand and improve our commercial retail activity
- Build our profile and audience internationally
- Proactively communicate our work through the press & direct marketing
- Publish new thinking and leading opinion on the OpenCulture blog
- Proactively seek out and exploit new opportunities for collaborative income generation

OpenCulture captures the excitement, vision and commitment we bring to our work, and which we share with the UK and international professional community. It drives us and inspires us.

## **Collections Link**

Collections Link helps cultural and creative professionals unlock the potential of their collections by enabling them to:

- Build networks of expertise
- Share their professional knowledge
- Access more than 2000 expert publications across 25 disciplines
- Find training, mentoring and support
- Source suppliers and service providers

Collections Link makes the sector stronger, and enables professionals to deliver better, more sustainable services for the visiting public. It contributes to OpenCulture by providing a key channel to support the profession in opening up their collections.

In **2011**, we will:

- Enhance and extend the functionality of Collections Link
- Proactively promote the service to the Collections Management community
- Support key initiatives including the launch of the Museum Accreditation Scheme

In **2012**, we will:

- Deliver Collections Link as a social/professional networking application
- Achieve sustainable income from CT Advertising (see 'OpenCulture')
- Establish the Collections Link online shop as a retail destination for the profession

In **2013**, we will:

- Launch collectionslink.tv as a new dimension in professional development
- Cover all development & support costs from generated income

## Excellence in Collections

UK cultural institutions are renowned worldwide for the richness of their collections and the professionalism of their Collections Management.

*Excellence in Collections* is a 3-year programme to build on this international reputation by defining and promoting excellence for museums, archives and libraries in delivering Collections-based services to their audiences (online and off).

Our aim is to deliver next-generation standards and guidance which enable cultural organisations to deliver against a triple bottom-line of economic, environmental and social impact and sustainability for their collections.

In **2011**, we will:

- Launch an *Excellence in Collections Framework*
- Support the rollout of the *Museum Accreditation Scheme*
- Promote BSI PAS 197 and BSI PAS 198 as tools for strategic Collections Management
- Publish and promote guidance on *Sustainable Digital Content*
- Develop and promote the *Assessing Significance* and *Revisiting Collections* models

In **2012**, we will:

- Provide additional support to cultural institutions in engaging with *Excellence in Collections*
- Develop an *Excellence in Collections* curriculum to be delivered in partnership with the HE/FE sector
- Proactively promote *Excellence in Collections* as a vital component of funding sustainable collections-based services.

In **2013**, we will:

- Develop an evidence framework to demonstrate the impact of *Excellence in Collections* for cultural organisations and their audiences.

## Culture Grid

The Culture Grid unlocks the potential of digital collections for an audience of millions through search engines, widgets, applications and 3<sup>rd</sup> party partnerships.

The aims of the Culture Grid are to:

- Aggregate digital collections from UK museums, archives and libraries
- Open up our rich digital collections through mainstream media channels
- Encourage people to discover, create and share new ideas
- Celebrate UK culture online by opening up access to collections
- Deliver new revenue streams for cultural organisations
- Support the development of innovative technical applications & business models

By opening up these digital collections, we aim to enrich peoples' lives, to foster a culture of digital creativity and to help create a new role for cultural organisations in a digital Economy. The Culture Grid supports OpenCulture by helping rewrite the rules of engagement with Collections.

In **2011**, we will:

- Incorporate new collections from a wide range of arts & museum organisations
- Establish content partnerships including the BBC, PCF & Technology Strategy Board
- Deliver a *Find a Library* application to promote engagement with library collections
- Continue to deliver the UK contribution to the *Europeana* service

In **2012**, we will:

- Incorporate new Collections from a wide range of arts & museum organisations
- Supply digital content to Creative Industry partners including gaming, CGI, 3D printing and advertising
- Develop commercial revenue models based on image licensing & preservation
- Showcase Culture Grid content as part of the Cultural Olympiad/ Olympics 2012

In **2013**, we will:

- Secure sustainable, long-term investment in the Culture Grid
- Develop the Culture Grid as the primary channel for delivering cultural content to mainstream audiences in partnership with media

## International

The Collections Trust is committed to working internationally to help unlock the potential of the Cultural and Creative Industries and their collections. Our International Strategy is to:

- Export UK Collections Management know-how worldwide
- Import knowledge and expertise from overseas
- Seek out and exploit opportunities for international partnership

The Collections Trust aims to become the national contact for the UK's participation in international projects and programmes across the European community relating to physical and digital collections and collections-based services. A key element of our business strategy is to secure long-term revenue income through delivering funded programmes outside the UK.

Each year for the next **3 years**, we will:

- Represent the UK cultural community within EC Digital programmes
- Raise awareness of forthcoming funding programmes & opportunities
- Establish an internal team to coordinate project bids and programmes on a commercial basis
- Coordinate the ENUMERATE Consortium
- Participate in the Linked Heritage project
- Lead or participate in consortia to bid against FP7 funding calls
- Proactively seek out and exploit new collaborative projects to promote engagement with collections

Our International work supports OpenCulture by ensuring that the UK community benefits from knowledge and innovation from the global community.

# Outcomes

At the end of each year, we will review our performance and assess how far we have come in achieving our objectives. The outcomes we aim to achieve in our work include:

- More use of collections, by more people, in more interesting ways
- More use of digital collections, by more people, in more interesting ways
- A professional community that values our services, and makes use of them
- An ongoing commitment to best practice in Collections Management
- Satisfied customers, who buy from us consistently
- Partners who value their partnership with us
- Client organisations who feel we deliver high-quality, good value work
- National and international recognition for excellence
- Happy, motivated staff who feel valued and engaged

# Business Strategy

The Collections Trust is a charitable company, which means that we operate commercial trading activity to support and extend our charitable purpose.

Our industry-leading products and services are acknowledged for their quality, authority and relevance and are priced competitively to ensure that they are accessible to the widest possible spectrum of practitioners, students and policymakers.

Our commercial activities include:

- Commercial partnership schemes
- Advertising/promotion
- IP Licensing
- Events, conferences and seminars
- Publishing and retail
- Commissioned projects/support services
- Commercial digital services
- Sponsorship

Between 2011 and 2014, we will proactively seek out and exploit opportunities to build profile in new international markets.

The Collections Trust is grateful to have received grant-aid support from national agencies. Our aim in the next 3 years is to reduce the proportion of our budgets that are derived from grant-in-aid to 30% or less.