

Awards and winners

In 1973 National Heritage introduced the first annual awards for museums and galleries based in the UK. The top prize of £2000 and the trophy, *Moon Head*, by Henry Moore was awarded to a museum that the judges considered, within the limits of its budget, to have shown most enterprise in making general improvements both within the museum and in amenities for visitors. Sir Hugh Casson, President of the Royal Academy, was chairman of the judges for many years. The scheme ran for nearly three decades, and was succeeded in 2003 by the Gulbenkian Museum Prize, now sponsored by the Art Fund, and is the largest arts award in the UK. The Museum of the Year Award undoubtedly helped stimulate the dramatic improvements that took place in museum and gallery presentation in the last quarter of the 20th century. It also inspired the launching of many new museums and galleries; in 2017 English Heritage calculated that heritage tourism generated £16.4 billion in spending by domestic and international visitors.

National Heritage Museum of the Year (1973-2000)

1973

Abbott Hall Museum of Lakeland Life and Industry, Kendal

1974

The National Motor Museum, Beaulieu

1975

The Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton

1976

The Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

1977

The Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Telford

1978

Erdig Hall, Wrexham and The Museum of London

1979

Guernsey Museum & Art Gallery

1980

Natural History Museum, London

1981

The Hunday Farm Museum, Stocksfield

1982

The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

1983

The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum

1984

Quarry Bank Mill, Styal

1985

The Burrell Collection, Glasgow

1986

Beamish, The North of England Open Air Museum

1987

Manchester Museum

1988

National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, Bradford - now the National Science and Media Museum

1989

National Portrait Gallery at Bodelwyddan Castle

1990

Imperial War Museum, London and Museum of Science & Industry, Manchester

1991

The National Railway Museum, York

1992

Manx National Museum

1993

Jersey Museum and Art Gallery, Jersey Maritime Museum

1994

The Tower Museum, Derry

1995

Ryedale Folk Museum, Hutton le Hole

1996

Buckinghamshire County Museum, Aylesbury and National Trust exhibition at Uppark, Near Petersfield

1997

Waddesdon Manor, Aylesbury

1998

House of Manannan: Manx National Heritage, and Jersey Maritime Museum

1999

The River & Rowing Museum, Henley-on-Thames

2000

The British Museum, London



Photos: Top to bottom: National Motor Museum, Beaulieu; Beamish - The Living Museum of the North, County Durham; Great Laxey Wheel, Manx Heritage Museum; The River and Rowing Museum, Henley-on-Thames.

Gulbenkian Prize (2003-2007)

2003

National Centre for Citizenship, Galleries of Justice, Nottingham

2004

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh

2005

Big Pit National Coal Museum, Blaenavon, Torfaen

2006

SS Great Britain, Bristol

2007

Pallant House Gallery, Chichester

Art Fund Prize (2008-2012)

2008

The Lightbox, Woking

2009

Wedgwood Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

2010

Ulster Museum, Belfast

2011

A History of the World in 100 Objects, British Museum, London

2012

Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter



Above: Wedgwood Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

Art Fund Museum of the Year (2013-2018)

2013

William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, London

2014

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield

2015

Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester

2016

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

2017

The Hepworth Wakefield

2018

Tate, St Ives, Cornwall



Photos: Top to bottom: Daffodil printed cotton designed by John Henry Dearle (1860 - 1932) c.1891, William Morris & Co; The Hepworth Wakefield.