

CREATIVE CAREERS

Getting started in museums and galleries

www.npg.org.uk/creativecareers

**National Portrait Gallery
Exhibitions Department
Document developed by London**

Putting an exhibition together

Date preceding
opening or
approx. date

Exhibition

- Choice of subject/artist considered by Exhibitions Committee Meeting 3-5 years (submitted by staff and external sources)
- Choice of curator either on the NPG staff or an outside expert confirmed. 3-5 years
- Exhibition dates confirmed 3-5 years
- Curator develops concept – themes, ideas, general narrative – and key list of loans 3-5 years
- Full list of works for inclusion agreed. Space study and general discussion about general nature of the display. 2-4 years
- Outline budget developed by Exhibitions 3-5 years
- Preparation of letters of request, checking addresses etc and follow up correspondence, send out loan forms, update database 2- 4 years
- Title of exhibition discussed and agreed 1 year

Transport and Arrival

- Discussion with Exhibitions about nature of transport, design of packing cases, timetable of arrivals 8-9 months
- Agree valuations with lenders 8-9 months
- Exhibitions send letters to transport firms with instructions 6-7 months
- Correspondence with lenders about dates and confirmation of indemnity coverage 3-4 months
- Proof of indemnity sent to lenders 2-3 months
- Arrangements for couriers made, hotels booked. 2-3 months
- Arrival dates fixed and discussions with Art Handling take place 2-3 months
- Unloading lorries, unpacking cases on arrival under courier's supervision when necessary 1 month
- Recording packing on condition report and photography 1 month
- Placing work in safe store and recording location 1 month
- Conservators check of condition and preparation of 2-3 weeks

- condition report
- Contact with lender if any conservation is needed 2-3 weeks
- Conservation work, framing etc if necessary 2 weeks

Preparation of Gallery

- Overall layout decided at fairly early stage in discussion between Curator, Exhibitions and Design 1 year – 6 months
- Designer commissioned if necessary 18 months-1 year
- 3d model created – screen/wall arrangement devised, wall colours chosen, plinths and cases etc designed, any technology requirements discussed, accessibility issues considered 8-12 months
- Contractors contacted and tended process undertaken 4-6 months
- Construction work commissioned and programmed, work done under supervision of Exhibitions and Design 1-2 months
- Further needs for display, notices, labels etc decided and ordered. 2-3 months

Installation

- Discussions with Health & Safety officer, Facilities Management, Conservation, Art Handling about complicated installation requirements, barriers and security 3-6 months
- Risk assessments compiled (if necessary) 8-12 months
- Works of art brought into gallery by Art Handling and set out accordingly to an initial layout plan. 1-2 weeks
- Final layout decided by Curator/Exhibitions/Design, 1-2 weeks
- Instruction for actual spacing heights etc.
- Exhibition installed 1 week
- Switching on and off/emergency procedures written (if necessary) 1 week/day of opening
- Exhibition handed over to Visitor Services Team Day before opening

Lighting and other technical work

- Electricians given a screen layout plan in advance with general instructions about matters of lights needed 2-3 months
- Set up lights in all galleries 1 week
- Lighting checked and any alterations requested by Exhibitions/Design 1 week

Catalogue

- Discussion with the curator and NPG Publishing about the catalogue, number of reproductions (colour/black and white) length of articles, nature of entries etc 2-3 years
- Order photographs, clear copyright and assemble other material for catalogue. Further discussion about actual format 18 months – 2 years
- Check page proofs 6 months

Marketing

- Marketing team discuss publicity/promotion for campaign – focussed on target audiences, marketing platforms and formats, budget considerations

- Consider images for private view/press view/poster/leaflet
6 months – 1 year

Interpretation Plan

- Discuss interpretation options with Curator/Exhibitions – detail of target audience, exhibition themes developed, interpretation ideas developed
18 months – 1 year

Learning Programme

- Research and planning of programme of related events for audiences
Programme of activity plans developed including detail of activity, target audience and budget
6 months-1 year

Press and Publicity

- Discuss publicity and provide press office with photographs 6 months – 1 year
- Press released drafted and agreed 6-8 months
- Press release sent to publications with 3 month lead in time eg Magazines and monthly publications
- Press release sent to daily newspapers and websites

Opening

- Private View (with possible dinner)
- Press View
- Open to Public