



**NATIONAL MUSEUMS NI**

Guide to borrowing from

National Museums NI

2024

## **Contents**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Who do we lend to**
- 3. Preliminary enquiries**
- 4. Formal requests to borrow**
- 5. How much notice does National Museums NI need**
- 6. How decisions are made**
- 7. If a loan is refused**
- 8. Terms and conditions**
- 9. Preparation for loan**
- 10. Reproduction**
- 11. Costs**
- 12. Insurance and indemnity**
- 13. Long-term loans**
- 14. Travelling exhibitions**
- 15. Acknowledgement**
- 16. Contact**

## **1. Introduction**

National Museums NI actively encourages loans from its collections to promote access to and disseminate information about its collections and to connect with the widest possible audience.

National Museums NI views loans as a collaborative partnership that enables us to maximise access to its collections.

National Museums NI lends locally, nationally and internationally to borrowers that can meet its loan conditions.

National Museums NI's policy on lending can be found in Lending and Borrowing Policy 2021<sup>1</sup>.

National Museums NI must balance the work involved in loans with its own programme of activities and each loan will be considered on a case by case basis and with the appropriate assessment of risk.

This guide is intended to help make a successful application to borrow from National Museums NI collections and to make the process as easy as possible.

Loans are managed by the National Museums NI Registrar. ([loans@nmni.com](mailto:loans@nmni.com)).

## **2. Who do we lend to**

National Museums NI considers loan requests from any museum, gallery, library, archive, public organisation, charitable organisation or public venue for public display and/or research purposes providing the loan conditions can be met.

Loans to commercial organisations are considered only if objects are made accessible to the public and/or the loan is for research purposes, providing the loan conditions can be met.

Loans to private individuals are considered only for research purposes providing the loan conditions can be met.

Loans to specialist interest groups will be considered on an individual basis with consideration given to the benefit any partnership may bring to collections access and care.

## **3. Preliminary enquiries**

Prior to the formal written request it may be useful to contact National Museums NI to discuss the loan. Please contact the Registrar who will direct the query to the correct person within National Museums NI. General collections information may also be found at <https://nmni.com/Home/Online->

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<sup>1</sup><http://nmni.com/getattachment/Home/About-Us/Corporate-Documents/Cat/NMNI-Lending-And-Borrowing-Policy.pdf.aspx> (tbc)

[Collections](#) and for the oil paintings, sculpture and Harland and Wolff photographic collections at <http://artuk.org>.

#### 4. Formal requests to borrow

A formal written request should be sent to

Kathryn Thomson  
Chief Executive  
National Museums NI  
Cultra  
Holywood  
County Down  
Northern Ireland  
BT18 0EU

Information should include:-

- List of objects to be borrowed with accession numbers where possible
- Title and dates of exhibition (if applicable)
- Proposed duration of the loan (negotiable)
- Address of borrower and/or venue and contact details
- A clear rationale for the inclusion of the object requested for the exhibition/display/research project
- Details of any publication to be produced to accompany the exhibition/display/research project
- Exhibition organiser's address and contact details if different from borrower/venue details
- Details of tour and all proposed venues (if applicable)
- Details of any reciprocal or partnership proposals.

#### 5. How much notice does National Museums NI need

The timeframe required to plan and prepare for all loan requests is calculated from the start date for the loan (when it leaves National Museums NI). The required time frames from the initial request to the start of the loan is as follows:

- **Local (NI) loans** – should be submitted a minimum of **nine months** prior to the requested start date of the loan.
- **National (UK) loans** – should be submitted a minimum of **one year** prior to the requested start date of the loan.
- **Republic of Ireland loans** – should be submitted a minimum of **one year** prior to the requested start date of the loan.
- **International loans** – should be submitted a minimum of **one year** prior to the requested start date of the loan.

National Museums NI will consider any requests falling outside the notice period on a case by case basis with consideration given to available resources and ability to complete loan processes before requested start date.

## **6. How decisions are made**

When a formal request is received by the Chief Executive it will be forwarded to the Registrar and appropriate department for consideration. The loan will be acknowledged by the Registrar and further information may be requested.

To enable National Museums NI to assess the loan we require:-

- Venue facilities report
- Venue security report
- Details of proposed display/exhibition/research

National Museums NI will:-

- Notify the potential borrower if the object requested is required for National Museums NI displays, research or has already been committed for loan
- Assess the legal and ethical implications of the loan
- Assess physical suitability of object for loan and travel
- Assess the suitability of the venue, including potential borrower's ability to meet professional standards
- Assess the relevance and importance of object to the exhibition theme and content
- Assess the potential of knowledge enhancement
- Assess level of public access
- Assess the benefits of partnership activity
- Check resources are available to facilitate the loan

National Museums NI will work with the borrower to ensure any issues with requests are discussed and resolved to the satisfaction of both National Museums NI and the borrower.

## **7. If a loan is refused**

Reasons National Museums NI may not lend include but are not limited to:-

- The requested object is required for National Museums NI displays, research or has already been committed for loan
- Legal or ethical issues prevent the loan
- The object is physically unsuitable for loan or travel
- The venue is unsuitable or cannot provide suitable environmental and professional standards
- The level of public access is inadequate
- The resources are unavailable to facilitate the loan

In cases where National Museums NI decides not to lend an object, consideration will be given to:-

- Substitution of an alternative object
- Allowing a reproduction to be produced and/or purchased
- Use of alternative media

## **8. Terms and conditions**

Borrowers will be required to sign a Loan Agreement stating the terms and conditions prior to the release of the loan.

All terms and conditions of the loan must be agreed with National Museums NI. They include but are not limited to:-

- Duration of loan
- Display requirements
- Reproduction
- Insurance/Indemnity
- Transport
- Security

Loan Agreement terms and conditions will be provided on request.

Borrowers are requested to fully read and consider the Loan Agreement and any queries should be discussed with the Registrar.

## **9. Preparation for loan**

National Museums NI will provide to the borrower:-

- Condition reports
- Assessment of preparation including costs if applicable
- Requirements for packing and transport
- Requirements for display
- Loan Agreement stating terms and conditions of loan

## **10. Reproduction**

Photography of loaned objects for reproduction must only be undertaken by National Museums NI staff. Please contact the Picture Library Executive ([picture.library@nmni.com](mailto:picture.library@nmni.com)) to:-

- Obtain images
- Get permission to reproduce
- Query copyright
- Agree acknowledgements.

## **11. Costs**

National Museums NI will recoup costs incurred as detailed in the Loans Charging Schedule. (Appendix 1)

All costs will be notified to the borrower as early as possible in the loans process.

## **12. Insurance and indemnity**

National Museums NI will give due consideration to the Government Indemnity Scheme Guidelines for national and non-national institutions<sup>2</sup>

All risks, 'nail to nail' insurance or indemnity, at valuations determined by National Museums NI, may be required. The insurance or indemnity policy terms must be approved by National Museums NI and provisions of cover must be to an agreed standard. Proof of required insurance or indemnity must be received by National Museums NI before a loan is released.

## **13. Licencing and Customs Clearances**

Import/Export licencing and customs clearances may be required for any loan outside Northern Ireland. Discussions should begin at an early stage in the loans process to enable all licences and declarations to be in place when transporting loans.

## **14. Long-term loans**

Long-term loan requests will be considered, in particular where they facilitate public access and promote partnership activity. Arrangements for long-term loans will generally be the same as for short-term loans. Long-term loans will be reviewed on a regular basis, normally annually.

## **15. Travelling exhibitions**

National Museums NI produces travelling exhibitions, both collections and non-collections based. Exhibitions consisting of non-collection material are available to a wider range of venues.

Information on available exhibitions may be obtained from the National Museums NI Interpretation Manager. ([exhibitions@nmni.com](mailto:exhibitions@nmni.com)).

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<sup>2</sup> Government Indemnity Scheme, Guidelines for national institutions, Arts Council England, January 2016  
Government Indemnity Scheme, Guidelines for non-national institutions, Arts Council England, January 2016

## **16. Acknowledgement**

Acknowledgement must be made of National Museums NI in any exhibition captions, publicity (including graphics and social media) and publications unless otherwise agreed. The form of acknowledgement should be approved in advance by National Museums NI.

The borrower should inform National Museums NI of any events or publicity associated with the loan.

## **17. Contact**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the loans process please contact:-

Registrar,  
National Museums Northern Ireland,  
Cultra,  
Holywood,  
County Down,  
Northern Ireland,  
BT18 0EU.  
([loans@nmni.com](mailto:loans@nmni.com)).



# Guide to Borrowing from National Museums NI

## Flowchart

