

The Whitworth Mission and Vision

The Whitworth was established in 1889 for 'the perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester'. This founding mission is still at the heart of what we do today, highlighting our commitment to the people of Manchester and beyond.

Our vision reflects our time and place in the world, and we actively seek and manifest connections between our collection of art, textiles and wallpaper and its role in society. We place art, creativity, artists, and the audiences at the centre of all our work, with a belief that our gallery and park offer a space for enjoyment, expression, research, discussion, and rest. As an integral part of the University of Manchester, we therefore play a key role in the delivery of its core goals of research and discovery, teaching and learning and social responsibility.

Our Aims

Provide access to art and creativity for all communities and be an advocate of social and ecological innovation for sustainable futures.

Provide expertise and space for experiential learning and interdisciplinary research.

Contribute to the development of a more resilient, socially responsible and caring society by inspiring and informing the audiences through exhibitions, public programmes, civic engagement, education, and the care and research of the collection.

Tell new and less-known stories from multiple global perspectives through art, making connections with Manchester's people and history, to imagine better ways of living together.

Contribute to the understanding of the world as the cumulative effect of transcultural intersections and connections distributed across time and space through art and creativity.

Our Approach

People: Care and respect of our staff and volunteers extend to everyone we work with and the audiences. We wish to offer an open, inspiring, and safe place for all, upholding values including freedom of ideas and expression, and ask everyone to be considerate and caring to each other.

Place: Our gallery and park are where art and creativity meet people. We provide a resource and platform for all its constituents, from our immediate neighbours to wider communities in the city and globally.

Programme: We are informed and enthused by our collection of art, textiles and wallpaper that holds an international significance, which we care for as custodians and share with the audiences in innovative and contemporary ways. We are also inspired and guided by art and creativity beyond our collection, which relate to all aspects of human experience affecting our shared planet. Our exhibitions and public programmes are shaped with and for our audiences with diverse interests, abilities, and lived experiences.