



## V&A's Exhibition Road project secures 80% of funding target as new display opens to public

[www.vam.ac.uk/futureplan](http://www.vam.ac.uk/futureplan)

The V&A has secured more than 80% of the funds required for its Exhibition Road building project. The Museum's largest architectural intervention of the last 100 years, the scheme will create a magnificent new courtyard, entrance and purpose-built underground gallery for the V&A's internationally renowned exhibitions and is due to open to the public in 2017.

Close to £40 million of the £49.5 million required for the project has been raised thanks to The Monument Trust, The Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation, The Headley Trust, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Heritage Lottery Fund (who awarded the scheme a grant of £4,999,000 in Autumn 2013) and other generous donors including Peter Williams and Heather Acton and the Friends of the V&A.

The new 1,100m<sup>2</sup> exhibition gallery beneath the courtyard will be known as **The Sainsbury Gallery** in recognition of the joint gifts from The Monument Trust and The Headley Trust. The courtyard – a new 1,500m<sup>2</sup> public space to the West of the Museum site adjoining Exhibition Road – will be named **The Sackler Courtyard** in recognition of the generous grant awarded by The Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation.

Martin Roth, V&A Director, said:

*"We are delighted to be recognising the generosity and vital support of our funders with the naming of two future spaces today. This project is the biggest architectural intervention at the Museum in over 100 years; one which will transform the way the V&A presents major exhibitions and the experience of our increasing number of visitors.*

*It's incredibly exciting to see the work intensify on site, and the new spaces start to take shape. I hope that many people come and visit our new display so they too can see the scale, technicalities and ambition of this project first hand."*

The Exhibition Road scheme, designed by AL\_A, will transform previously inaccessible back-of-house space into an open courtyard for installations, events and a café, and will create a new relationship between the heart of the V&A and the rest of the reinvigorated cultural quarter around Exhibition Road. The new, uninterrupted major exhibition space will allow the Museum to

significantly enhance the way it designs and presents its world-class exhibition programme. The V&A is currently enjoying more visitors than ever before and the project is vital to sustain increasing audience numbers.

AL\_A won the international competition to design the project in March 2011 and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea awarded planning permission in July 2012. Enabling work to divert services within the site was completed in June 2013, the main construction work started in early 2014 and will be complete by the end of 2016. The new spaces and entrance will open to the public in 2017.

As the work on site continues, previously hidden facades of Aston Webb's original buildings, and the detailed 'sgraffito' decoration on the later Henry Cole building, have been revealed. From 2017, they will be publicly accessible for the first time in over 100 years. Entry to the new courtyard will be through the arches of the 19th century Aston Webb Screen. An integral part of the Museum's original building, the screen was carefully removed by specialist conservators and put into storage at the end of 2013. The majority of the masonry will be reinstated at the end of the project, with the arches opened up to allow direct access from Exhibition Road.

A display dedicated to the Exhibition Road building project – including models, design visualisations, sketches and mock ups – will open to the public at the Museum on Wednesday 26th November 2014. Charting the scheme from the early history of the 'boilerhouse yard' site through to the 2011 design competition and development of AL\_A's winning scheme, and the build itself, visitors will be able to see an animated fly-through of the new spaces, as well as a time-lapse film showing progress on the construction site. Drawings and 3D work by the Exhibition Road Resident Artist, Liam O'Connor, will also be on display. New material will be incorporated as the project progresses, and a range of special events, artist demonstrations and other activities will continue to explore different aspects of the build as it moves towards completion in 2017.

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#### Notes to Editors

- **The Monument Trust** and **The Headley Trust** are two of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts. They were established by the late Simon Sainsbury and Sir Timothy Sainsbury respectively.
- **The Garfield Weston Foundation** is a family-founded charitable grant-making foundation which supports a wide range of causes across the UK, donating over £54million in the most recent financial year. It was established in 1958 by Willard Garfield Weston and has donated

over £785m, becoming one of the largest and most respected charitable institutions in the UK. [www.garfieldweston.org](http://www.garfieldweston.org)

- **Heritage Lottery Fund.** Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) aims to make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities across the UK and help build a resilient heritage economy. HLF has supported 36,000 projects with £6bn across the UK. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)
- **AL\_A** is an international award-winning architecture and design practice with a passion for experimentation across sectors. Its intuitive and strategic approach has led to a diverse range of concepts for cultural, retail and commercial schemes around the world including Central Embassy luxury shopping mall and hotel in Bangkok, EDP cultural centre in Lisbon (to complete in 2015) and the highly anticipated expansion of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London (to complete in 2017). [www.ala.uk.com](http://www.ala.uk.com)
- **FuturePlan.** Over the last 13 years the V&A has completed more than 50 building projects and transformed around 40,000 square metres of the Museum. It has worked with some of the UK's most innovative architects, designers and engineers to create beautiful and contemporary new settings for the V&A's outstanding collections while renewing and restoring much of the building's original architecture and improving the visitors' experience. [www.vam.ac.uk/futureplan](http://www.vam.ac.uk/futureplan)
- **The Exhibition Road display** is free and will be open to the public in Room 20 from Thu 27 November 2014 – Sat 15 October 2016.