

New Scottish galleries to open in September

The new areas at The National Galleries of Scotland (NGS) have been under construction since 2018 in a £38.62 million building project, but now the wait is over and the new galleries will open on 30 September.

The extension into former office space and excavations to open new areas beneath the galleries will use the available space more effectively to exhibit the art collections. These ten new galleries will be filled with light, doubling the display space and “transforming the visitor experience”.

The first phase of creating a new entrance way into Princes Street Gardens – when trees were felled and ramps added to the gardens – was completed in 2019. This also introduced a café area and shop on the garden level.

There are large windows created overlooking the gardens outside the galleries which remain free for everyone to access.

Works by Scottish Colourists will be prominent in the new areas, and early photographs of Edinburgh will be shown in the same space as the great Highland landscapes.

The galleries will use new ways of displaying works of artists such as William McTaggart, Anne Redpath, Phoebe Anna Traquair,

Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Glasgow Boys, and there will be more than 130 new works on show.

NGS say this has been a complex engineering project as it lies above railway tunnels and is part of an A listed building within a World Heritage site.

Many issues were encountered including undocumented asbestos, damp and water damage all adding to the length of time the project took as well as the complexity of the work. There were layers of concrete buried at a deep level all of which had to be extracted.

The project has been funded by major contributions from the Scottish Government (£15.25m) and The National Lottery Heritage Fund (£6.89 million). An extremely successful fundraising campaign raised over £16m thanks to an extraordinarily generous response in donations from trusts, foundations, Patrons, the National Galleries of Scotland's Friends organisation, American Patrons and a wide range of private individuals.



Sir John Leighton PHOTO Bryan Robertson
Director-General of the National Galleries of Scotland, Sir John Leighton, said: "This project has been driven by an

ambition to transform the experience of visiting the National and to show the extraordinary collections of Scottish art with pride in beautiful, new, light-filled spaces. We believe that we have created a National Gallery that is more open, engaging and inviting than ever before. Whether immersing themselves in the highly Romantic paintings of the Scottish Highlands, taking part in a family day or just enjoying the views, all are welcome to come and discover. We are incredibly grateful to all our funders including the Scottish Government, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, key trusts and foundations, our Patrons, American Patrons and Friends as well as the many private individuals and donors who have been so generous in supporting this project.”

Culture Minister Christina McKelvie said: “The National Galleries of Scotland has the world’s finest collection of Scottish Art and I’m delighted that the new galleries will now have space to show this off to a wide national and international public. We have supported this redevelopment project from the start with a significant contribution of £15.25 million and it’s wonderful to see this will open soon so the public can enjoy these new galleries.”

View a [fly-through animation of the new](#) Scottish galleries at the National and [visit our website hub](#) to discover more stories about the project, [Celebrating Scotland’s Art: The new Scottish galleries at the National](#)









Phoebe Anna Traquair The Progress of a Soul The Stress.
National Galleries of Scotland