

Public asked to vote for Pianodrome in National Lottery Award

An Edinburgh project which saves old pianos from landfill, turning them in to interactive sculptures, has been nominated for a 2023 National Lottery Award.

Pianodrome has been named one of 17 finalists from all over the UK competing for the title of National Lottery Project of the Year.

The project beat off competition from 3,780 organisations to be shortlisted for the public vote in the annual search for the nation's favourite National Lottery funded project.

The winner of the poll, which runs until 9 October will receive a £5,000 cash prize and a National Lottery Awards trophy.

Musicians and bandmates Tim Vincent-Smith, 44, and Matthew Wright, 39, were shocked to discover the number of acoustic pianos ending up in landfill after being thrown away by their owners due to broken pieces or general wear and tear and set up Pianodrome.

Determined to find a new purpose for old pianos, the duo began reusing them to create sculptures, furniture and Pianodromes – amphitheatres built entirely from upcycled pianos. They bought a shipping container on a brownfield site in Edinburgh and

started filling it with disused pianos.

Their innovative projects are now run by an impressive network of makers, artists, performers and volunteers who create unique sculptures and programme inspiring festivals, one-off events and educational experiences.

Pianodrome received a National Lottery grant of £35,000 through Creative Scotland last summer to host over 200 events in their 80-seater amphitheatre constructed entirely from up-cycled pianos, in the Old Royal High School on Calton Hill. The three-month 'Resonancy' began during the Hidden Door Festival and went on to host many performances and activities during the summer, in collaboration with local partners, community groups and hundreds of artists.

Pianodrome co-founder and Producer, Matthew Wright, said: "It was a wonderful surprise to receive this nomination for a National Lottery Award and it's a great opportunity for us to celebrate this huge combined effort.

"Creative communities can thrive if they have space, inspiration and collaboration. We turn unwanted pianos into interactive sculptures and performance spaces, creating places for people to play, to share ideas and to be together, and then we activate them by inviting people in.

"The National Lottery funding we received allowed us to open up an iconic building to the public which, like so many old pianos, has sat disused for decades. Over 10,000 people got involved. In collaboration with our amazing community partners we were able to make good on our slogan: 'No piano is waste, and no person is unmusical'. It would be really exciting for the Pianodrome to be named National Lottery Project of the Year."

Jonathan Tuchner, from The National Lottery, said: "We were delighted to have received so many nominations highlighting the excellent work of National Lottery funded organisations.

It's no secret that times are tough, so it's great to see so many people and projects dedicating time and energy into giving something back to their communities.

"It's thanks to National Lottery players, who raise more than £30 million each week for good causes, that the work of these amazing projects is made possible.

"Pianodrome are doing really imaginative work saving otherwise unloved pianos from landfill and they thoroughly deserve to be in the finals of the National Lottery Awards Project of the Year 2023. With your support, they could be a winner."

To vote for Pianodrome, go to lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/awards.

Or use the Twitter hashtag #NLAPianodrome. Voting runs until 12pm on 9 October.



The Hebrides Ensemble perform in the original 'Grand Pianodrome' in the Leith Theatre as part of the Pianodrome 'Resonancy' in November 2019. Photo credit_ Chris Scott