

The Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation

Access Programme, 2022-2025



Lipspeaker Tour, February 2025

Having reached the final of our three years of support from The Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation, we are able to reflect upon what has been an incredibly positive and productive period for our free and inclusive access programme. Following the departure of the Collection's former Community Learning Producer in December 2023, Emily Watkins was appointed to the role in April 2024. Thanks to the generosity of the Foundation, Emily has been able to build upon our thriving programme and has established an imaginative offer for adults with additional needs, including blind and partially sighted and D/deaf audiences. Through the skill of our expert guides and facilitators, and the support of charitable partners such as Blind Aid and Deaf Women Ealing, participants have been able to meaningfully engage with the Collection and some of its most remarkable artworks through creative workshops and tours.

Across our major exhibitions - including *Inspiring Walt Disney: The Animation of French Decorative Arts* (6 April 2022-16 October 2022), *Portraits of Dogs: From Gainsborough to Hockney* (29 March-15 October 2023) and *Ranjit Singh: Sikh, Warrior, King* (10 April-20 October 2024) - and focused displays, accessibility has remained a priority. To ensure that these special exhibitions are open to all, we have delivered a series of dedicated events designed to enable participants to explore them in safe and welcoming settings.

In total, 51 live sessions have been delivered over the past three years, engaging more than 500 participants.

Year	Activity	Sessions Delivered	Participants	Year Total
2022-2023	BSL Workshops	2	30	135
	D/deaf tours	6	39	
	Audio-described workshops	4	28	
	Audio-described tours	4	38	
2023-2024	BSL workshops	2	27	172
	D/deaf tours	5	46	
	Audio-described workshops	3	47	
	Audio-described tours	3	34	
	Neurodiverse family mornings	1	18	
2024-2025	BSL workshops	3	40	240
	D/deaf tours	7	76	
	Audio-described workshops	3	33	
	Audio-described tours	7	62	
	Neurodiverse family mornings	1	29	

Access in 2024-25

Over the past financial year, we have delivered 21 accessible events which have engaged over 200 people (for a full list of events, please see page 5). This year concluded with a lively audio-described printmaking session for blind and partially-sighted people inspired by *The Listening Housewife* (“The Eavesdropper”) by Nicolas Maes during which participants were invited to respond to the painting and create their own art.

Highlights of the programme included our successful workshops tying in with our exhibition *Ranjit Singh* which attracted attendees who had never participated before. Feedback continues to be incredibly positive, with many participants highlighting the feeling of community and the quality of the delivery. For the final year of the funding, we also decided to implement a pilot of evening access tours, one of the most recurrent suggestions from users, which has met with great success.



Audio-described relaxed opening: *Ranjit Singh: Sikh, Warrior, King*, September 2024

Tours

For *Ranjit Singh*, we delivered four relaxed openings as well as a neurodiverse family morning. In response to feedback, September’s BSL and audio-described tours took place in the evening so that those with commitments during the day could also enjoy the display. The events proved popular

and attracted a diverse audience who appreciated the opportunity to explore the galleries and learn more about the histories of the objects on display whilst the museum was closed to the public.

'It was brilliant. I love the way everyone was so helpful. Julie was very good. Patient staff answered people's questions. Nice to have the stools.'

- Participant, Audio-described relaxed opening: *Ranjit Singh: Sikh, Warrior, King*, September 2024

In February 2025, a BSL tour of our temporary display *Keeping Time: Clocks by Boulle* enabled D/deaf visitors to learn more about the extraordinary timepieces featured in the show and the many craftspeople involved in their creation. Tours of the wider collection have also proved popular, with a particular highlight being our *Sensing the Landscape* audio-described tour in October. Through vivid descriptions of light, colour and mood, participants were able to immerse themselves in the unique atmospheres of works by Rubens, Watteau and Canaletto.

'Really detailed description, enjoyed thinking about sounds and atmosphere. Gave a sense of you being there [...] thank you for the i-pads it really helps to look at the image closer.'

- Participant, audio-described tour: *Sensing the Landscape*, October 2024

Creative Workshops



BSL life drawing, November 2024

Hands-on creative workshops have also remained in high demand, with participants particularly valuing the chance to work with a professional artist and model during the life drawing sessions. The BSL life drawing session in November, a unique offering in London, was fully booked, with many participants eager to take part again. Attendees appreciated the opportunity to communicate in BSL, both with one another and with the tutors, and to participate in a fully accessible drawing class.

'Got my art mojo back, maybe make it a whole day of art, so nice to see a variety of people in the class'

'All the deaf people coming together, and accessible with BSL, it was wonderful.'

- Participants, BSL life drawing, November 2024

We have also continued to offer drawing classes for blind and partially sighted visitors. With a variety of art materials available, and detailed verbal descriptions provided by our facilitators, participants were able to produce their own creative responses to the Collection. In December, participants braved Storm Darragh to take part in a session delivered by museum educator and mindfulness teacher Karly Allen. Feedback from participants was very positive, with one describing the workshop as one of the best life drawing classes they had ever attended and commenting on the helpfulness of the audio descriptions of the artwork and the model.

'It was absolutely brilliant [...] I wouldn't have seen the significance of the artwork without the talk. The way Karly audio described the model was very helpful to me.'

'That was the best life drawing session [...] I couldn't have managed without the description of the model as I can't see very well.'

- Participants, audio-described life drawing, December 2024



Audio-described life drawing, August 2024

Thank You

The Wallace Collection remains incredibly grateful to The Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation for its support of our access programme over the years. The museum's access offer is one of the few in London to provide such a rich and free programme of events and the only one to include life drawing sessions. It is thanks to the Foundation's generosity that we are able to create and deliver a programme of free, creative, high-quality events designed to ensure that everybody can experience and enjoy our unique Collection.

Event Name	Start Date	Event Subtype	Total Attendees
Audio-described relaxed opening: <i>Ranjit Singh: Sikh, Warrior, King</i>	07/05/2024 10:30	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	5
D/deaf creative workshop	22/06/2024 10:30	BSL Event	9
Audio-described tour	12/07/2024 17:30	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	12
BSL relaxed opening: <i>Ranjit Singh: Sikh, Warrior, King</i>	23/07/2024 10:30	BSL Event	7
Audio-described life drawing	24/08/2024 10:30	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	12
Neurodiverse relaxed family morning: <i>Ranjit Singh, Sikh, Warrior, King</i>	07/09/2024 9:00	Neurodiverse Family Event	29
BSL relaxed evening opening: <i>Ranjit Singh, Sikh, Warrior, King</i>	16/09/2024 17:30	BSL Event	14
Audio-described relaxed evening opening: <i>Ranjit Singh: Sikh, Warrior, King</i>	27/09/2024 17:30	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	8
Audio-described tour	10/10/2024 14:00	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	8
Audio-described tour	07/11/2024 14:00	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	10
D/Deaf life drawing	30/11/2024 10:30	BSL Event	16
BSL tour	04/12/2024 14:00	BSL Event	9
Audio-described life drawing	07/12/2024 10:30	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	3
Audio-described tour	16/01/2025 14:00	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	11
BSL tour	31/01/2025 14:00	BSL Event	16
BSL tour: <i>Keeping Time: Clocks by Boulle</i>	27/02/2025 14:00	BSL Event	5
Lipspeaking tour of the Great Gallery	28/02/2025 14:00	Lipspeaking Event	10
Audio-described tour	08/03/2025 10:30	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	8
BSL tour	14/03/2025 14:00	BSL Event	15
D/deaf creative workshop	22/03/2025 10:30	BSL Event	15
Audio-described creative session	29/03/2025 10:30	Event for Blind/Partially-Sighted People	18