Foundational Collaborative Projects Call Guide
Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World

Deadline for submission of proposals: 15th October 2019, 4pm

Applicants must follow the guidelines and the application process as detailed below.

Introduction

The Foundational Collaborative Projects Call for *Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World* is the first funding stage of a programme that will address the lack of coordination between different online collections and catalogues as a major barrier to public access and research. *Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World* will forge new and deeper partnerships between Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), amplifying their combined research power. Using the catalytic potential of new technology, the programme will dissolve barriers between different collections, opening them up to new cross-disciplinary and cross-collection lines of research, and at the same time radically diversifying their visitor base. In so doing it will begin to realize the full, combined potential of the collections not only for research but for the heritage economy and the wider social good, and take the first important steps towards creating a unified virtual 'national collection'.

Context

The UK's world-renowned museums, archives, galleries and heritage organisations are a major asset for the UK, playing a central role in the country's multi-billion heritage economy, and contributing significantly to our global influence and reputation. About half of all visitors to the UK cite culture as their reason for visiting, with AHRC IROs accounting for eight of the UK's ten most popular attractions. The AHRC IROs are not only unrivalled windows on research, but outstanding centres of research in their own right, and their holdings provide the basis for some of the most innovative inter-disciplinary research within and beyond the arts and humanities.

Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World will take the first steps towards creating a unified virtual 'national collection'. This will allow researchers to formulate radically different research questions and to exploit the potential of research assets in innovative ways. Combining the research power of IROs and universities, the programme seizes the opportunity presented by new digital technology and datasets, generating cutting edge research that will allow new stories to be told, making new connections between disparate areas of the past, or between the past and the present.

Aims of the programme

The aim of the programme is to begin to dissolve barriers between different collections, opening them up to new cross-disciplinary and cross-collection lines of research, and to extend researcher and public access beyond the physical boundaries of their location, thus directly addressing the issues related to accessibility beyond current metropolitan centres. The programme is very broad as it will extend across the UK including all the devolved nations, and will potentially have a global reach in terms of setting a standard for other countries building their own collections (with the long-term potential for inter-connection between the national collections).

This programme will have a transformative impact on:
- Digital search and cataloguing tools, technologies and methodologies, and associated issues.
- Research capability, by enabling search across collections to address cross-cutting research questions which will allow UK to maintain UK leadership in cross-disciplinary research.
- The heritage sector as a whole, in terms of enhancing access for researchers, and for facilitating wider and better-informed public engagement.

There will be two rounds of funding calls – the Foundational Collaborative Projects and the Discovery Research projects.

Foundational Collaborative Projects Call Overview

The Foundational Collaborative Projects will provide evidence and policy recommendations to inform the future development of the 'national collection'. Independent Research Organisations are invited to produce, collaboratively via IROC (the standing committee of IRO research directors), a shortlist of up to 12 candidate Foundational Collaborative Projects from which up to 8 will be selected within the allocated funding envelope, via a Panel assessment process. Selection will be on the basis of quality, subject to the condition that the set of funded projects as a whole provides coverage of a good range of foundational questions relevant to the formation of a virtual 'national collection'.

Aims of the Call
The call aims to lay the foundations for a virtual national collection through collaborative projects that identify and address the current or future challenges facing the formation of such a collection.

Eligibility
UKRI IROs and HEIs are invited to produce Foundational Collaborative Project proposals, collaboratively via IROC.

Each project must be a collaboration at least **one IRO** and **one HEI**. It will be up to the collaborating institutions to decide the roles of Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator, and so on. Each partnership may include more than one IRO and/or HEI and may also include relevant non-IRO organisations.

Principal Investigators (PI):
- To be eligible, the Principal Investigator must be actively engaged in research, have a track record of research activity relevant to the project, and be of postdoctoral standing, i.e. either have a doctorate or be able to demonstrate in the application that they have equivalent research experience and/or training.
- The Principal Investigator must have a level of skills, knowledge and experience appropriate to the nature of the proposed project, including intellectual leadership of the project (or aspects of the project).
- Principal Investigators must adhere to contractual requirements of AHRC Principal Investigators; please consult Section 3 of the AHRC Research Funding Guide for further information.

Co-Investigators (Co-Is)
- Each project may include Co-Investigators.
- There is no maximum number of Co-Investigators that can be included.
- The role of the Co-I or Co-Is in the project should be explained within the proposal
- The same eligibility criteria apply to Co-Investigators as to Principal Investigators

Research Assistants (RAs)
- Research Assistants may be included within the project
- Research Assistants must be of postdoctoral standing. This means that they should either have a doctorate or be able to demonstrate in the application that they have equivalent research experience and/or training
- The responsibilities of the RA post requested on the project should be commensurate with the level of experience and skills of the proposed RA (whether named or unnamed)

Project Partners
- Applications may include Project Partners where they are making a significant and specific contribution (either in cash or in kind) to the project, for example, expertise, staff time, use of facilities etc.
- Named Project Partners may include UK or overseas organisations but UK Research Organisations are not eligible (HEIS and UKRI IROs).
- Project partner contributions are treated as additional to the FEC of the proposal, therefore they will not need to be costed under the usual cost headings.
- University museums and galleries may participate as Project Partners provided that they are working with a Research Organisation other than or in addition to the RO with which they are formally linked; please consult Section 2 of the AHRC Research Funding Guide for further information.

Guidance on Costs and Project Timescales
- All proposals should be costed on the basis of the full economic costs (FEC) of the research, and 80% of these costs can be claimed, i.e., if the application is successful, AHRC will contribute 80% of these costs.
- The maximum total payable by AHRC (the 'funding envelope') is £1.6m for all the Foundational Collaborative Projects taken together.
- The indicative funding limit for each project is £200,000, where £200,000 represents 80% of the project's FEC. Applicants may submit proposals for less than the indicative limit where this is appropriate to the research proposed. Where appropriate, applicants may also make the case for exceeding the indicative limit, by demonstrating clearly the rationale and additionality to the overall aims of the call. However, the assessment panel reserves the right to scale down such proposals to the level of £200,000 80 % FEC (or to scale them up where they are less than the indicative limit). In any case all funded projects will be expected to fit within the total budget of £1.6m for this call.
- Projects may be up to 24 months in duration
- Projects should begin in December 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter (confirmation of funding permitting).

Full guidance on how to cost your proposal can be found in the AHRC Research Funding Guide, Section 3.

N.B. Any payments consequent upon the result of the application and review process are conditional upon HMT approval of spending on this programme, which at time of writing has not been yet received. Applicants will be notified about the HMT approval as soon as it has been received.

Assessment Process and Criteria
It is expected that up to eight foundational projects will be selected by a one-stage expert panel review process. The panel will be chaired by the Programme Director (or Interim Director) of *Towards a National Collection*, and will comprise members of the Programme Steering Committee, the AHRC's Peer Review College and others who have the necessary knowledge and expertise. The panel will be responsible for assessing the applications, agreeing a final score and producing a ranked list.

The panel will be provided with assessment guidance. The guidance will include some standard AHRC Peer Review guidance which will ask them to consider, for example:
- the quality and importance of the proposal project
- the people/organisations involved in the project
- Management of the project
- Value for money
- Outputs, dissemination and impact

In addition to the standard peer review guidance, the panel will consider how projects address the needs of the *Towards a National Collection* programme, i.e. succeed in identifying and addressing the current or future challenges facing the formation of such a collection. Questions to be addressed may include the following, though projects may address other questions as long as the case for their relevance to the formation of a virtual 'national collection' is successfully made:

- How are current online resources being used? Are they being used effectively to support research, and to support wider public access? What are the current implications of this use for the access and use of physical collections?
- How do we support a more diverse public to engage with a joined up virtual collection? How do engage across different social groups e.g. age, gender, generation, ethnicity, locality, socio-economic background?
- What is the extent and nature of the digitization of collections and assets around the UK, both among and beyond the IROs?
- How can IROs and other collections/asset holders make their data linked and interoperable? How do they get their individual collections/assets to connect up? Would a standardised approach to cataloguing for digital use be appropriate?

- How can IROs and other collections/asset holders get into a position to share data sets when many collections have only paper-based information, or have poor (or no) catalogues/data?
- What is the most appropriate system or systems for the citation of different kinds of digital asset?
- How can we represent and reference location, in time and landscape? For example, how do we integrate historic object collections (in their broadest sense) with the historic environment?
- How can digital access increase the efficiency of planning systems in the context of the historic environment?
- What are the infrastructure requirements for the analysis of heritage collections and for greater communication between different data sets?
- What is the role of digital preservation and different types of data sustainability?

Applicants are encouraged to submit projects which create new online tools, or prototypes of online tools, in response to the above questions (where appropriate).

It is expected that the set of funded projects as a whole will provide coverage of a good range of foundational questions relevant to the formation of a virtual 'national collection'. However, all applications are expected to reflect on the following:
- Ethical issues associated with the creation of a 'national collection'
- How the project will lay the foundations for a 'national collection
- How the project will benefit the GLAM sector as a whole, and other stakeholders beyond
- How the project relates to similar efforts, if any, under way internationally and how the project might position the UK as an international leader in understanding the requirements of a virtual 'national collection'.

Please note that any software developed through this programme must be made openly available for non-commercial use under an Open-Source Software licence. This includes software, algorithms, middleware and any additional code needed to enable connectivity, discovery, access and interaction of users with digital collections, and the proprietary or non-proprietary systems on which they are hosted. In accordance with best practice guidance from the Software Sustainability Institute, development versions of the software source code should be made available through a recognised and appropriate open version-control platform, with sufficient documentation for implementation and reuse as originally intended.

Application Process and Format
Applications, in the form of a **Case for Support and additional attachments** (see below), must be submitted via the Je-S system.

The following are a list of attachments that are permitted for this Call. Information about these attachments are provided below but more information can be found in Section 4 of the AHRC Research Funding Guide.

Attachment	Requirement and page limits (sides of A4)	Page Limit
Case for Support	Compulsory. Refer to Annex A for headings required for the Case for Support	6 sides of A4
Summary CVs	Compulsory for the PI, Co-Is and any named researchers.	2 sides of A4 for each person
Publication Lists	Compulsory for the PI, Co-Is and any named researchers.	1 side of A4
Justification of Resources	Compulsory	2 sides of A4
Pathways to Impact	Compulsory	2 sides of A4

Timetable	Compulsory	1 side of A4
Visual evidence	Optional	1 side of A4
Project Partner Letters of Support	Compulsory	1 side of A4

The attachments should be in Arial font (use of Arial Narrow is not permitted) no smaller than size 11 and must use normal margin sizes of 2cm.

Call timetable

Activity	Date
Application forms available on Je-s	July 2019
Deadline for submissions	16.00 hours; 15th October 2019
Assessment process	October/November 2019
Funding decisions to be issued	November 2019
Start date of awards	December 2019

Contacts
Enquiries regarding this call should be directed to:

Lucie Connors – Lucie.Connors@ahrc.ukri.org / 01793 416085
Or
Karen Buchanan – Karen.Buchanan@ahrc.ukri.org / 01793 416032

Annex A – Attachment Guidance

Case for Support guidance
Your proposal form must be accompanied by a **Case for Support** attachment. It is extremely important that this includes the information described below and that you format the document as requested.
Your Case for Support should be in Arial font no smaller than size 11

There is a limit of 6 sides of A4 for the Case for Support, and you should aim to make it as concise, specific and clear as possible. It is important to note that this limit includes all footnotes, endnotes and references. You are advised to focus your proposal and to provide sufficient evidence to enable Reviewers, Director and Steering Group to reach a considered judgment as to the potential quality of your proposal, its significance, its feasibility and value for money.

You should describe your proposed project using the headings below:

Contribution to *Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World*:
You should ensure that it is clear to the reader how the proposed Foundational Collaborative Project contributes to *Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World* and its aims. For example, how will your project proposal address the current/future challenges facing the creation of a national collection? How will it demonstrate how digital access will increase and diversify visitor numbers to heritage sites? How will it review use of current online resources? How will it establish common principles for cataloguing for digital use and identify the best approaches to joining up digital data sets? How will it identify lasting solutions to questions of IP and digital collections which meet the needs of policy, government and educational access?

Project topics and questions:
You should give a brief, clear description of the topic/areas, questions, challenges, issues or problems that will be addressed through the project. Clearly outline what the project will explore during the course of the grant.

Context:
You should describe the context for the project, including appropriate references where necessary, including the SPF bid *Towards a National Collection.* Why is it important that these questions or issues are explored? What is the background of the project? What other research is being, or has been, conducted in this area? How will the project benefit from cross-disciplinary working? You should explain the novelty, timeliness and significance of your project to the broader sector and how it will inform the future development of the infrastructure of the 'national collection'.

Project Design and Methodologies:
You should describe the overall project design and/or approaches the team will be using to investigate the questions, including aims and objectives that have been set. Why is the chosen approach appropriate for addressing the questions set for the project? How does the project design draw on and benefit from a range of disciplinary insights from both within and beyond the arts and humanities? Will the research produce new ideas, innovate or advance methods and techniques? Information on the technical aspects of the project (if any) should be explained here.

Project Management:
You should explain the work programme and management of the project. What will be the roles and contributions of all the team members (including the PI, any Co-Investigator(s), project partners and other collaborating partners, research assistants and students)? What is the timetable for the project? Does it include appropriate milestones and is it realistic? When will the outputs of the project be completed? How will you ensure that they meet the needs of your audience? What measures will be put in place to ensure effective integration and exchange between different elements of the project, across disciplinary and institutional boundaries and to include different project collaborators and partners? If the project is using new or existing networks to complement the expertise of the team members, include it here. Can the costs be justified? How will you ensure good value for money? You may cross refer to the separate timetable attachment in this section.

Dissemination and Outputs:
Please provide examples of the kinds of outputs which you propose to produce during the project and their proposed focus. For example, the projects will be expected, as part of their outputs, to prepare reports representing the current state of the art in their covered areas with clear evidence-based policy recommendations on next steps. Please explain further how the project will benefit all its intended stakeholders How do you propose to maximise the value of the proposed outputs and how their use could be scaled up for the benefit of a wider sector? You should cross refer here to the separate attachment, 'Pathways to Impact'.

<u>Summary CVs</u>
A summary curriculum vitae should be attached for the Principal Investigator, and any Co-Investigator(s) or named postdoctoral researcher(s). These should be no more than two sides of A4 paper each and in a font no smaller than size 11 (Ariel font). CVs should include basic information about education, employment history and academic responsibilities.

<u>Publications Lists</u>
A publication/research output list should be attached for the Principal Investigator and any Co-Investigators or named postdoctoral researchers. These should be no more than one side of A4 paper each and in a font no smaller than size 11 (Ariel font). Brief articles, conference papers, etc. need not be included. You should asterisk those of particular relevance to your current research proposal.

<u>Justification for Resources</u>
This statement should be used to justify the resources required to undertake the project. This should be no more than two sides of A4 paper and in a font no smaller than size 11. Applicants should:

- Explain why the indicated resources are needed, taking account of the nature and complexity of the project. Note that it is not sufficient merely to list what is required. Have regard for the breakdown of resources into the summary fund headings Directly Incurred, Directly Allocated and (where applicable) Exceptions.

- In some cases, such as Investigator time, use of internal facilities and shared staff costs (likely to be Directly Allocated costs), the basis of the costing need not be justified, but the need for the resources does need justification.

- If you are charging costs for a partnering organisation to the grant, the costs must be fully justified.

- Try to be explicit about the need for the level of Investigator time sought, bearing in mind the complexity of the project, the need to manage the project and supervise staff, and any wider considerations such as collaboration, research communication or facilities usage.

- Estates and indirect costs do not need to be justified.

Costs headings overview -

Directly Incurred
These are costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project, are charged as the cash value actually spent and are supported by an audit record. They include:

- ***Staff***
  Payroll costs requested for staff, full or part-time, who will work on the project and whose time can be supported by a full audit trail during the life of the project.
- ***Travel and Subsistence***
  Funds for travel and subsistence for use by staff who work on the project where these are required by the nature of the work.
- ***Equipment****
  Individual items of equipment that cost more than £10,000 (including VAT) are categorised by the Research Council as 'Capital Expenditure' and fall under the "Equipment" fund heading. (Previously, this threshold was items over £3,000).
  *Please note that the AHRC cannot support the funding of individual items of equipment costing more than £10,000 as the AHRC does not have a budget to fund Capital Expenditure' and if your project requires the use of equipment of this value then this will need to be provided from other sources.
  Note: individual items of equipment costing less than £10,000 (including VAT) are permissible to be included in the FEC of the proposal and should be included in the 'Directly Incurred – Other' fund heading.
- ***Other costs***
  Costs of other items dedicated to the project, including consumables, books, survey fees, purchase/hire of vehicles, publication costs or recruitment and advertising costs for staff directly employed on the project. Items of equipment costing less than £10,000 should also be included under this heading.

Directly Allocated
These are the costs of resources used by a project that are shared by other activities. They are charged to projects on the basis of estimates rather than actual costs and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis. They include:

- ***Investigators***
  Proposals will need to show the costs of the Principal Investigator and any Co-Investigators if their time charged to the project is based on estimates rather than actual costs.
- ***Estates***
  These costs may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities, and any clerical staff and equipment maintenance or operational costs not already included under other cost headings.
- ***Other Directly Allocated***
  These costs may include, for example, the costs of other research staff, technical, administrative and other support staff, or access to institutional research facilities such as equipment and IT systems.

Indirect Costs
These include non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated costs. They include the costs of the Research Organisation's administration, such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services.

Exceptions
These are Directly Incurred costs that Research Councils will fund in full (i.e. at 100%), subject to actual expenditure incurred, or items that are outside fEC. This heading is only currently applicable

to the cost of Project Students (Research Grants).

Indexation
All costings should be at current prices, inclusive of VAT and other taxes where applicable, with no allowance for inflation. Any allowance for inflation that has been included in the full economic costing of the proposal by the Research Organisation must be excluded. The AHRC will include an allowance for inflation if a grant is awarded.

Knowledge Exchange & Dissemination Activities
Costs may only be claimed for communication, dissemination and exploitation activities undertaken during the period of the project.

Project Partners
The organisation(s) with whom you are collaborating should be included in the proposal as Project Partners **only** if they are providing cash and/or in-kind contributions. Project Partners are expected to provide a specific contribution (cash or in kind) to the project. If a collaborating organisation's involvement is being fully charged to the project you should not include this within the project partner section; their role on the project should be clearly defined and justified within the application. It is recognised that some organisations may be both making a contribution to a project and included within the project partners section and also undertaking other work which is being charged to the project and justified elsewhere in the proposal.

Applicants should bear in mind that working collaboratively requires time and effort, and should ensure therefore that discussions with potential Project Partners over the requirements and feasibility of the collaboration take place well in advance of submitting a proposal.

Resources to be provided by Project Partners, whether cash or in-kind contributions, should be clearly identified in the proposal.

Please note that Project Partners can be based in the UK or abroad. A letter of support is required from each Project Partner. This letter is intended to outline both the level of commitment of the proposed partner, the value and benefit of the work to the Project Partner, the nature of the contribution and the added value to the project of their involvement.

Pathways to Impact
The Pathways to Impact attachment (of up to 2 sides of A4) asks you to expand on the Impact Summary by answering the question *what* will be done to ensure that potential beneficiaries have the opportunity to engage with the project?

The Pathways to Impact attachment is your opportunity to describe in more detail how the potential impacts of the project will be realised in particular how the proposed project provides evidence and policy recommendations to inform the future development of the infrastructure of the 'national collection'.

When completing the attachment, you should consider (and address if appropriate) methods for communications and engagement, collaboration and exploitation. You should also detail who will be undertaking any impact activities and include any resource implications in the financial summary and in the separate Justification of Resources attachment.

Further information regarding Social and Economic Impact can be found in the AHRC's Funding Guide.

Visual Evidence
Proposals may include up to two sides of A4 of non-textual visual evidence (may include captions), in support of the proposal to illustrate the proposed aims and objectives and / or methods. It is not permitted to include this material to supplement or replace a curriculum vitae or publications list or to illustrate previous work in any way.

Timetable
A gantt chart plotting the key milestones for the duration of the project. The page limit for this is two sides of A4.

Letters of Support
A Letter of Support is required from each Project Partner, outlining the level of commitment of the

proposed partner, the value and benefit of the work to the Project Partner, the nature of the contribution and the added value to the project of the involvement. The letter should be dated and signed by a senior member of the organisation, with the authority to make this commitment. If the collaborating organisation is not providing an in-kind contribution then they should not be classed as a Project Partner (see sections above on Project Partners).

Information on uploading Letters of Support is available within the relevant section of the JeS Helptext.