



**University of Cambridge**

**Cambridge Humanities Research Grants Scheme  
2024-25 scheme notes**

**1. About the CHRG**

- 1.1 The objective of the funding is to enable researchers in the arts, humanities and social sciences to
- conduct small-scale research or collaboration activities, of the highest quality, that enable them to bid successfully for larger-scale funding, and/or
  - to generate publications, and/or
  - to contribute materially in other ways towards the research objectives of their home institution.
- 1.2 Applications will be assessed above all for research quality.
- 1.3 The CHRG operates through four Tiers, each tailored towards particular objectives, as detailed overleaf; Tier 4 has been introduced from 2024-25, specifically aimed at early career researchers.
- 1.4 CHRG awards are held only in Cambridge Departments, with the consent of the Head of Department, or in certain non-School institutions (please contact the Scheme Administrator).
- 1.5 Award holders have full responsibility for managing their award in line with the project proposal and subject to the University's Financial Regulations.
- 1.6 Any queries relating to the scheme or the application process should be referred to the scheme administrator via [GrantsAHSS@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:GrantsAHSS@admin.cam.ac.uk)

|                   | <b>Tier 1) Newton Trust Small Grants</b>  | <b>Tier 2) Standard Grants</b>  | <b>Tier 3) International Exchange/Collaboration Grants</b>   | <b>Tier 4) <span style="color: red;">New</span> Isaac Newton Trust Research Pathway grants</b>  |
|-------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Objective         | Short-term support for initial/experimental research, or to expedite a research output.                                       | General research grants, to be assessed primarily on academic quality.  | <p>Joint research activities between Cambridge researchers and researchers based outside the UK whose institutions will match the Cambridge contributions.</p> <p>Exchange and collaboration between Cambridge researchers and eligible colleagues, including work with the University's library and museum collections.</p> | Promote early career research opportunities, in line with AHSS strategic priorities and research themes.  |
| Funding available | Up to £1.5K   | £1.5 -20K   | £1-10K subject to match funding from the collaborative partner. (Awards will support the direct non-pay costs of organising conferences or seminars).  | Up to £10K  |
| Eligibility       | Any researcher active in the arts, humanities and social sciences, subject to the requirements detailed in section 3.1 below. | Applicants will normally be at or above the level of University Assistant Professor or equivalent or holding a senior Fellowship (see section 3.2 below). | Any researcher active in the arts, humanities and social sciences, subject to the requirements detailed in section 3.1 below.  | <p>This tier specifically seeks to support newly independent researchers, in particular to mitigate the effects of contract precarity.</p> <p>Applicants will normally be expected to have gained their PhD or equivalent no more than 8 years prior to application, subject to the requirements detailed in section 3.3 below.</p> <p>Applicants will be encouraged to bring forward applications addressing one or more of the thematic areas specified in 3.3 below.</p> |

|            | <b>Tier 1) Newton Trust Small Grants</b>  | <b>Tier 2) Standard Grants</b>   | <b>Tier 3) International Exchange/Collaboration Grants</b>   | <b>Tier 4) NEW Isaac Newton Trust Research Pathway grants</b>   |
|------------|---|--|--|---|
| Exclusions | Applicants may not apply for their own salary costs or other direct personal support. | Applicants may not apply for their own salary costs or other direct personal support.<br><br>While conference support is not excluded in this tier, it must demonstrably support the priorities identified in 2.3 below. | Costs for staff time, research assistance or publication costs will not normally be considered.<br><br>Applicants may not apply for their own salary costs or other direct personal support.   | Applicants may not apply for their own salary costs or other direct personal support, but may include the costs of research assistance. |
| Reporting  | Not required.   | Required.  | Required.  | Required.   |
| Notes      | Can support short-term research assistance from PhD students or research assistants.  | N/A  | The standard expected match-contribution is 50%, which can be in-kind. Applications will need to clearly describe the matched funding arrangements. The partner institution will usually be required to transfer the funds to Cambridge within 30 days of the award announcement.<br><br>Applications with a collaborator from an institution with which the University does not already have a formal agreement must include a letter, signed by the collaborator's Head of Department and the appropriate institutional authority, affirming the collaborator's eligibility to receive funds from their institution, and stipulating that, should the application be successful, the collaborator's institution will make a significant contribution to the total award. | N/A   |

---

<sup>1</sup> Currently Cambridge has a formal matched funding agreement with Paris Sciences et Lettres (PSL), but Tier 3 is not limited to PSL collaborations and welcomes partnerships with any non-UK institution.

## 2. Criteria for award

2.1 The primary criterion for awards will be research quality.

Applications to all tiers should demonstrate an explicit link to the arts, humanities and social sciences.

In addition, successful awards will be likely to meet one or more of the following priorities:

- a) Direct support of pilot or experimental research intended to lead to larger-scale activity suitable for external funding;
- b) Direct support for activity towards a publication output.
- c) Support for fieldwork, archival access etc. allied to existing or emerging research priorities in Departments;
- d) Support for early-stage network or concept-development activities, including collaborative work with CRASSH;
- e) Match-funding to support externally-funded research where sponsors are unable to meet the full costs, e.g. website assistance for dissemination, support for charity research;
- f) Support for research activities for which externally-funded grants are not normally available;
- g) Support for activities to enhance impact or outreach, related to eligible underpinning research.

2.2 In keeping with the University's commitment to reduce indirect carbon emissions (including supply chain and business travel), the CHRG Panel expect the design of projects to take into account the environmental impact of the research.

2.3 The University has approved [guidelines on sustainable business travel](#). The purpose of the guidelines is to support a reduction in non-essential business travel (particularly air travel) and its associated carbon impacts. They are not intended to limit essential travel.

In summary, the guidelines recommend that:

- Staff and students attend meetings and conferences virtually;
- Staff and students consider whether their travel is essential (guidance on defining this is provided);
- Staff and students prioritise modes of travel that have the lowest carbon impact, and provide a hierarchy of preferred travel modes;
- Flights to UK destinations and to European destinations that can be reached by train within six hours from London terminals are discouraged;
- Where it is necessary to travel by plane, staff and students are strongly encouraged to offset the carbon emissions in accordance with the University's offsetting policy.

More detail about the guidelines is available [on the University's sustainability webpages](#). Please contact [sustainability@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:sustainability@admin.cam.ac.uk) if you have further questions.

### 3. Eligibility

**Please note: in all cases, applicants must seek approval from their proposed host faculty or department before making an application.**

#### 3.1 Tiers 1 and 3: Newton Trust Small Grants, and International Exchange/Collaboration Grants

Applications are invited from **any** researcher active in the arts, humanities and social sciences holding a current contract of employment as an independent researcher – at the point of application - with either the University or the Colleges.

For the avoidance of doubt, this includes:

- externally-funded Research Fellows and those working in museums, research centres or other relevant non-School institutions;
- Cambridge-based emeritus staff (with the written support of their host faculty or department);
- Senior Research Associates or Research Associates, provided that their current contract will outlast the proposed activity;
- College Teaching Officers and Junior Research Fellows;
- Visiting or affiliated researchers (with the written support of their host faculty or department).

#### 3.2 Tier 2 : Standard Grants

Applications to this Tier are invited from researchers at, or above, the level of University Assistant Professor or equivalent, or holding a senior Fellowship.

- Senior Research Associates or Research Associates may apply, provided that:
  - their current contract will outlast the proposed activity; and
  - they have the written support of the host faculty or department, and
  - they have sponsorship of a tenured academic in their Department;
- Visiting or affiliated researchers may apply with written support from their host faculty or department;
- Cambridge-based Emeritus staff may apply with the written support of their host faculty or department.

#### 3.3 Tier 4: Isaac Newton Trust Research Pathway grants

This tier specifically seeks to support newly independent researchers, in particular to mitigate the effects of contract precarity.

Applicants will normally be expected to have gained their PhD or equivalent no more than 8 years prior to application, and must either:

- hold a current fixed term research contract, with duration outlasting proposed project; or
- be within 5 years of appointment as Assistant Professor/Associate Professor and not yet passed probation.

Individuals may be able to make a case for exemption from these requirements, if there are compelling life circumstances that demonstrate the individual's situation is compatible with that of a newly independent researcher. Examples could include time away from research due to parental leave, caring responsibilities or conflict.

Applicants may not apply for their own salary costs or other direct personal support, but may include the costs of research assistance.

Applicants will be encouraged to bring forward applications addressing one or more of the following thematic areas:

| SAH (see <a href="#">details</a> )   | SHSS (see <a href="#">details</a> )  |
|--|--|
| School themes:   | School themes  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Global Humanities</li></ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Area studies, global inequality and economic development</li></ul>         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cambridge Collections</li></ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understanding social, culture and economic transformation</li></ul>        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Humanizing Our Digital Futures</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conflict, conservation, environmental policy and climate justice</li></ul> |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Technology, knowledge and human development</li></ul>                      |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legacies of the past/historical transitions</li></ul>                      |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Healthy lives</li></ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public Policy</li></ul>  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consortium of the Global South</li></ul>                                   |

- 3.4 Funding for Tier 1 and 4 of this Scheme is provided by the **Isaac Newton Trust**. Unsuccessful applicants to this Scheme may not apply to the Isaac Newton Trust's main research grant programme for the same project.
- 3.5 Researchers are normally expected to apply in only one tier in any given round.
- 3.6 Preference will normally be given to first-time applicants, subject to the Scheme criteria.
- 3.7 Postgraduate students are **not** eligible to apply to any of the tiers.

#### 4. Funding

- 4.1 The CHRG supports direct costs of travel, consumables and other non-pay costs.
- 4.2 Applicants may not apply for their own salary costs or other direct personal support; costs of research assistance may be included in Tiers 1-2 and 4 only, and should be presented using standard University rates, including the necessary allowance for on-costs. Payment for research assistance managed via expenses will be disallowed.
- 4.3 The Scheme is exempt from indirect costs and does not operate via fEC. An X5 costing is not required, but may be useful in preparing applications.

#### 5. Application Process

- 5.1 Before submitting an application, please ensure that your proposed host department is aware of your application – there may be internal review procedures to follow within the department prior to submission, and the department may be able to offer assistance in preparing costings.
- 5.2 A series of gathered fields will operate across the academic year; applications may be made at any time for the next available gathered field, with outcomes known approximately six weeks later.
- 5.3 Applications must be made using the [online form](#).
- 5.4 Applications submitted after a gathered field has closed will be held over to the next available field.

Applicants are required to submit the following documents:

##### **ALL Tiers:**

- a. A project proposal (using the template provided); and
- b. An itemised costing (using the template provided); and
- c. A confirmation of support letter from the head of the faculty or department where the project will be hosted (using the template provided)

##### **Tier 2 and Tier 4**

All documents above (a-c) plus:

- A letter from an external referee (I.e. external to the collegiate University of Cambridge).

##### **Tier 3 only**

All documents above (a-c) plus:

- A letter of support from your exchange collaborator; and
- A letter of support from your exchange collaborator's faculty or department confirming they support the exchange; and (if applicable)
- A letter, signed by the collaborator's Head of Department and the appropriate institutional authority, affirming the collaborator's eligibility to receive funds from their institution, and stipulating that, should the application be successful, the collaborator's Institution will make a significant contribution to the total award (*Only for applications with a collaborator from an institution with which the University does not already have a formal agreement*).



5.5 A panel of four reviewers will assess applications against the stated CHRG criteria, with final awards confirmed by the Heads of the School of Arts & Humanities and the School of the Humanities & Social Sciences.

## 6. Award process

6.1 Awards will be transferred to the relevant host Faculty or Department, with all expenditure undertaken through standard financial procedures.

6.2 Award holders must not make direct payments for services under any circumstances.

6.3 Costs should be charged to Source of Funds ANBJ.

6.4 Awards must normally be completed within twelve months unless otherwise specified or agreed.

## 7. Changes to awards

7.1 CHRG award are strictly cash-limited and no follow-on funding is available.

7.2 No-cost extensions are normally granted only on the basis of unavoidable delay such as a change in personnel or other circumstances outside the control of the researcher and are subject to the PI contract end date, if on a fixed-term contract.

7.3 Repurposing of funds may be possible depending on the circumstances, and must be approved in advance by submitting a change request.

7.4 Changes to awards must be requested online via the [change request form](#).

## 8. Completing and reporting

8.1 Expenditure must be completed within one month of the project end date. Any unspent funds will be journalled back to the Scheme annually.

8.2 Any overspend will be the responsibility of the faculty or department concerned.

8.3 As a condition of the award, each awardee in Tier 2, 3 and 4 will be asked to provide a brief report (using the template provided) on the outcomes of the project and the extent to which the specific aims/outputs have been achieved, along with a statement of expenditure. No narrative PI reports will be required for Tier 1 grants.

8.4 Reports are due within thirty days of the project end-date and must be [submitted online](#).

**Failure to submit a report may result in the funds being recalled.**

---

Please visit <https://www.ahssresearch.group.cam.ac.uk/res-fund-opps/CHRG> for further information, and to access the online forms and template documents.

The CHRG administration may be contacted via [GrantsAHSS@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:GrantsAHSS@admin.cam.ac.uk)