Arts and Humanities Impact Fund (AHIF)

Guide for Applicants 2018-2019

Due to a lack of AHRC funding for research impact, the Arts and Humanities Impact Fund (AHIF) aims to enhance the non-academic impact of the outputs of arts and humanities research at the University of Cambridge. Other research councils such as the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC) run Impact Acceleration Accounts (IAA)\(^1\) with regular internal funding calls at Cambridge. Please check if you are eligible to apply for these if your research falls within their funding remit. The AHIF covers all arts and humanities research that generally falls within the remit of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).\(^2\)

The aim of the Impact Fund is to support ‘on the ground’ impact/knowledge exchange activities, which enable researchers at all levels to engage with the public, private and third sectors and to establish a sustainable support structure within the University to promote wider and more effective engagement with external organisations that will enhance impact.

**The aim of the Impact Fund is to support:**

1. Activities to broaden the experience of engagement with business, NGOs and the public and third sectors. This can cover deepening and strengthening relationships with existing contacts as well as establishing new contacts.
2. Engagement with public, private and third sector organisations
3. Developing and promoting new engagement methods to help promote best practice across arts and humanities knowledge areas.
4. Short projects to define routes to impact, liaising with partners and finding the resources to enhance impact activities will be eligible. This would include, but is not limited to, holding a workshop to scope interest with a suite of external organisations that would ideally lead to a further impact project.
5. Innovative and unusual projects leading to impactful outputs and outcomes.

Awards will be made available to fund work which will significantly increase the probability of the ideas and findings generated by the research having an impact on the private, public and third sectors. Collaborative, innovative and co-funded projects are encouraged.

The awards are not for the continuation of research. Applications should therefore focus on the development of impact activities and outputs and not on research. Applications which read like research grant proposals re-drafted for AHIF purposes are less likely to be successful than projects which clearly comprise development of findings and ideas toward impact.

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\(^1\) For ESRC IAA funding at Cambridge see [http://www.research-strategy.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-funding/internal-funding-opportunities/institutional-sponsorship-grants/esrc-impact](http://www.research-strategy.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-funding/internal-funding-opportunities/institutional-sponsorship-grants/esrc-impact).


\(^2\) [http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/funding/research/subjectcoverage/](http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/funding/research/subjectcoverage/)
Eligibility

Applications are invited from researchers active in the arts and humanities who hold a current contract of employment as a senior independent researcher – at the point of application – with the University. Relevant non-school institutional staff (such as from Museums or Libraries) on academic-related contracts are eligible to apply. [Award holders will normally be at the level of University Lecturer or equivalent, or holding a senior Fellowship.] CTOs may apply with the endorsement of a hosting department, confirmed by a letter of support from the relevant Chair of Faculty/Department. Research staff (including research associates and JRFs) may not normally apply, except with the written support of their Faculty or Department, and if a senior independent researcher participates in the project as Principal Investigator and award holder.

Applications should only be made to either the AHIF or the ESRC IAA, not both.

Applicants should inform their Head of Faculty/Department and Research Grants Administrator of their intention to apply, at the earliest opportunity. All applications must be submitted with support from the Head of Department, through the mechanism provided in the digital application form. This process must be completed by the Head of Department/Faculty before the closing date of 5pm on Friday 16 November. Please note that impact activities should be completed in accordance with all relevant University Guidelines, Policies and Procedures, including, Financial Regulations, Research Integrity and Risk Assessment; heads of faculties/departments should be satisfied that these obligations have been met before approving applications.

Postgraduate students are not eligible to apply.

Application Process

Impact Fund

The grants will be awarded as a result of two or more rounds of competitive bids within the University in 2018/19. The closing date for the first round of applications is 5pm Friday 16 November. There are funds of up to £50,000 available for this call and we expect to fund between 5 and 8 projects. The typical level of award will therefore be in the region of £5,000 to £10,000. The award will cover 100% of directly incurred costs but will not cover indirect costs. It does not attract ICC.

Projects must be completed within 9 months of the award of the grant for that project. Bids for testing experimental or innovative approaches are welcome.

Flexi-Fund

There is also a flexible fund available to support short-term tactical opportunities which come up at short notice and require a rapid response. Awards will typically be less than £2,000. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

All applications must be submitted with support from the lead applicant’s Head of Department. We encourage cross departmental bids, but in such cases there must still be a designated lead applicant and an expression of support from each of the departments involved.
Advice on preparing applications, creating pathways to impact, identifying measures of success and evaluating impact is available from the Impact Facilitator, who can be contacted on AHImpact@admin.cam.ac.uk

All applications must be made using the digital AHIF Project Application Form: https://webservices.admin.cam.ac.uk/ncbk/gaif/index.cgi

Assessment criteria
Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Quality of the impact development plan: including clear objectives and milestones over the life of the project and criteria against which long-term success could be gauged.
- Identification where possible of the likely target audiences for the impact and their potential involvement in the activity to be supported.
- Evidence of how the project will be managed to ensure that it works toward impact.
- Added value: the application must describe how the AHIF grant will be expected to develop or enhance the prospect of impact and be additional to existing Research Council or other funding for impact activities.
- Co-funding of activities to be supported by the Impact Fund is encouraged, but not required. When activities are aimed at developing impacts targeted at specific organisations, then a clear statement of any commitment in kind or in terms of co-funding by those organisations should be provided.

Evaluation
The bids will be evaluated by a cross departmental Steering Group comprised of experienced arts and humanities researchers and cultural practitioners. Decisions on bids will be made by December 2018.

Progress and Final Reports
Progress updates from funded project holders will be required after 3 months, or half way through the project, whichever is sooner. Periodic reviews of the expenditures associated with projects are completed on a regular basis by the School team and all PIs are asked to ensure that invoices are submitted to the relevant financial teams on a timely basis. Any underspend or ineligible costs will be reclaimed by the School. Interim updates shall be brief (approximately 250-400 word) and will outline progress against the milestones proposed for the project and agreed by the members of the initial evaluation panel. A Final End of Award Report will be required at the end of the project and will be assessed by the Impact Fund Steering Group and the award-holder’s Head of Department.
Resources
Please contact the Impact Facilitator (AHImpact@admin.cam.ac.uk) if you would like feedback or support in creating your application.

The following resources might also be useful:

https://www.research-strategy.admin.cam.ac.uk/impact
http://www.english.cam.ac.uk/research/intranet/impact/
http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/evaluation-and-impact/what-is-impact/