Arts & Humanities Research Council

Science in Culture Exploratory Awards call

Closing date for proposals: 4pm, Tuesday 22 November 2011

Introduction

Science in Culture is one of four themes currently being developed by the AHRC. As part of this development process, the AHRC wishes to commission a number of small awards. Proposals are sought for exploratory awards that aim to hold a workshop or series of workshops or similar events, or to carry out a scoping study or a research review. Proposals may address any aspect of the theme as outlined below.

It is hoped the activities funded through this call will:

- help to build research capacity in areas relevant to the theme;
- support the development of collaborative partnerships;
- stimulate debate and provide some early outputs for the theme;
- inform future discussions about its shape, focus and priorities; and
- be of value to researchers undertaking research under the theme in the future.

Applications are invited from researchers from any discipline or subject area across the arts and humanities. Cross-disciplinary proposals and collaboration with scientists and other relevant collaborators is strongly encouraged, where appropriate. We anticipate funding a number of awards from different disciplinary or conceptual perspectives or addressing different dimensions of the Science in Culture theme. We will expect successful applicants to collaborate to ensure that the foci of their studies complement each other, to reduce unnecessary duplication and share expertise across disciplines.

This call is aimed at supporting research development activities at an earlier stage of development than is usually the case under other AHRC schemes such as the Research Networking scheme. Proposals may allow for more room for research agendas to evolve and develop as the work progresses and the outcomes may be more uncertain at the outset than is normally the case. We are not looking for fully formed research projects, but for innovative and creative proposals that seek to address new areas within the Science in Culture theme. The fit and potential contribution to the Science in Culture theme will be an important assessment criterion.

Funding of up to **£30,000** is available on a full economic costs basis with the AHRC meeting 80% of the FEC. Awards should last for a maximum of **6 months** and will be expected to start in **February 2012** and be completed (and a final report submitted) by the end of September 2012.

We expect to invite the successful applicants to attend a workshop in 2012 along with award holders funded under the current highlight notice in our Networking and Fellowships schemes and relevant projects funded under our standard responsive mode schemes that address issues pertinent to Science in Culture. The aim of this workshop will be to identify any themes, gaps and new opportunities that would benefit from further investigation and possible funding calls for longer and larger collaborative grants. Receipt of an award under the Exploratory Awards call would not guarantee success in any future calls, however, we would expect you to participate in the workshop to discuss the future shape of the theme.

The Science in Culture Theme

The 'Science in Culture' theme aims to develop the reciprocal relationship between the sciences on the one hand, and arts and humanities on the other. The sciences and the arts and humanities often seek to answer very different kinds of questions about human nature, the nature of the world we inhabit, and the relationship between the two. Sometimes, however, the questions we seek to answer do not neatly fall within the remit of one or the other.

Arts and humanities research goes beyond investigating the cultural contexts for science to inform and contribute to its advancement. Situated in a radically different research paradigm, the arts and humanities bring knowledge not available to science, offering exciting possibilities for new scientific discoveries and critical confluences of ideas and practices. It can promote a broader understanding of societal views about science, the role of scientific advances in our cultural life and how this shapes our broader world views. Arts and humanities research in the 21st century will inform science as much as it charts its cultural impacts. It will provoke new scientific enquiry as much as account for the historical, cultural, legal and ethical contexts for the future development of many areas of science. It can help to anticipate and inform future public and policy debates and controversies. There is growing recognition of the interconnections and complementarity between the sciences and the arts and humanities, the potential for creativity and innovation that these connections can generate and the limits of using scientific approaches in isolation to tackle societal challenges.

The public understanding of, and engagement with, science – in the sense of our ability to integrate the findings of the sciences within our overall worldview – is one in which the arts and humanities play an essential role. Arts and humanities research can help us answer questions such as:

- What are the nature, value and limits of scientific research?
- What roles do imagination, argumentation, creativity, discovery and curiosity play in scientific enquiry?
- How might we engage with the sciences as systems of knowledge from the perspective of their cultural context, development and impact?
- How might such engagement enhance public understanding and educational approaches, and inform policy debate about science?

There is significant potential for collaborative research pathways between the sciences and the arts and humanities. For example, a sophisticated understanding of cultural values, rights, religions and systems of belief is essential for addressing the complex legal, ethical and regulatory policy issues raised by some emerging areas of science and technology. And there is significant potential for research on the representation of scientific ideas and progress (for example in language, literature, visual media and the performing arts) and on the role of narrative, imagery, artefacts and cultural institutions (including museums and galleries) to inform ways of enhancing public engagement with science and technology. Beyond this, the arts and humanities can generate new knowledges about human life and interaction which may inform and directly contribute to scientific discovery and advancement. The Science in Culture theme aims to encourage mutual exchanges between the sciences and the arts and humanities that offer scope for developing new meta-methodologies, research frameworks and styles of thinking across the disciplines.

Theme Development

Our central focus is on innovative and cutting-edge inter-relationships between the sciences and the arts and humanities. Innovative research might include:

- the application of arts and humanities in advancing scientific discovery;
- what science and humanities have learnt, and might learn, from each other;
- the development of new epistemologies for collaborative enquiry between the sciences, arts and humanities;
- the comparative roles of experts and expertise in the sciences, arts and humanities;
- the making of authority, integrity and trust in scientific and interpretivist research;
- rights, openness and ownership in collaborative research across the sciences, arts and humanities;
- the relationships between scientific, religious and other world views.

Another major area for potential research is how developments in science are influencing, and are being influenced by, cultural change. For example, how are advances in genetics, neuroscience and artificial intelligence affecting, and being affected by, our conceptions of what it is to be human? How have arts and humanities perspectives on, and representations of, science, through for example science fiction, film, exhibitions, media coverage, histories of science and technology, and legal, theological and philosophical debates, led to further scientific developments, shaped public views or helped to inform, educate and engage society on key issues or debates? How have the natural sciences affected our perceptions of nature and the 'natural world', and influenced our beliefs about human relationships, roles and responsibilities with respect to the environment? Conversely, how has culture shaped the mission and development of science? There are many senses and versions of culture, and through the Science in Culture theme, we can explore and help to understand notions of culture.

By building on existing strengths in areas such as the history and philosophy of science, innovative collaborations between scientists and artists and emerging cross-disciplinary fields such as medical or health humanities, we will be able to open up new and exciting opportunities for collaboration and learning between the arts and humanities and the sciences. In addition to working across the Research Councils and with the TSB, academies, learned societies, other funders, science educators, museums, regulators and policy-makers, there will be collaborative opportunities with research-led businesses and high technology companies. There are opportunities for research under this theme to contribute to inter-disciplinary collaboration across all of the RCUK's research challenges, including 'Lifelong Health and Well-being' and 'Living with Environmental Change', as well as in 'breakthrough' research areas.

Nature of Proposed Activities
We are open to proposals which involve a wide range or combination of activities which would contribute to the aims of the call. Further details of two broad types of potential activity are provided below.

Exploratory Workshops, Networking and Collaborative Activities
Activities under this heading should support forums for the discussion and exchange of ideas on a specified thematic area, issue or problem relating to Science in Culture and/or for exploring the potential to develop new boundary crossing collaborations. The intention is to facilitate interactions between researchers and other stakeholders as appropriate through, for example, a one-off workshop or series of workshops, seminars, on-line fora or debates, networking activities or other similar activities.

The aim of these activities should be to stimulate new debate across boundaries, for example, disciplinary, conceptual, theoretical, methodological, institutional and/or international. Proposals should explore new areas, be collaborative across the arts and humanities, and where appropriate involve the sciences, be multi-institutional and can include creative or innovative approaches or entrepreneurship. Proposals must justify the approach taken and clearly explain the novelty or added value for bringing the participants together.

Details should be given of the proposed participants, their areas of expertise and the suggested focus of the discussion.

Research Reviews, Scoping Studies and Capacity Building Activities
Activities under this heading could include desk-based reviews of research and research-related literature. These reviews would be expected to draw on relevant literature across a number of disciplines. Reviews are expected to synthesise research from a range of fields on their selected topic, highlighting common themes and areas of both emerging consensus and disagreement within the research literature. Reviewers will also be expected to identify emerging areas of research innovation and also potential lacunae in research and to outline their own views on recommendations on potential future opportunities, directions and priorities for research in the field.

The work could be undertaken by a single individual, an individual with research assistance, or by a team of reviewers, provided that the roles of team members, including overall editorial responsibility, are clearly specified.

It will be up to the applicants to propose the precise focus of their review. In undertaking reviews applicants are expected to move beyond the literature in any one single domain or discipline.

Reviews with a strong historical perspective, those involving an international dimension, looking at research or experience in other countries, or looking at experiences in different cultural contexts will be welcomed.

Applicants should explain how their review would either address a gap in existing literature or add a significant new dimension to any previous similar reviews.

Other activities under this heading could include scoping or pilot studies to test the feasibility or added value of new lines of enquiry or potential for new collaborative working and/or capacity building activities, for example activities involving early career researchers or trialling new collaborative methods, approaches or tools.

How to apply
This call document should be read in conjunction with the AHRC Research Funding Guide. which gives details about applying for AHRC funding, including eligibility requirements, information about costings and completing the proposal form.

Detailed guidance on completing the Case for Support and other attachments is provided in Annex A.

You should submit your proposal using the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/). To prepare a proposal form in Je-S, log-in to your account and choose **New Document**, then select **AHRC** as the Council, **Standard Proposal** as the Document Type, **Development Grants** as the Scheme, **Science in Culture Exploratory Awards 22 November 2011** as the Call/Type/Mode and then 'Create Document'. Je-S will then create a proposal form, displaying the relevant section headings. Using the 'Help' link at the top of each section will provide guidance relevant to that section of the form. **Please take care when choosing the Call/Type/Mode as other similar options will be presented in the drop-down list.**

Please note that the proposal form for this scheme will be available in Je-S from **18 October 2011**.

Details of which Research Organisations have registered to use Je-S are available from http://www.so.stfc.ac.uk/jes/jes1/RODetails(Web).pdf.

Note that clicking 'submit document' on your proposal form in Je-S initially submits the proposal to your host organisation's administration, not to AHRC. Please remember to allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the Call closing date.'

All proposals must be completed and submitted by the host organisation by the deadline of **4pm on Tuesday 22 November 2011**.

Please note that in order for the AHRC to coordinate any other work surrounding the activities, **all awards must have a start date between 1 February and 1 March 2012 inclusive**. **Start Confirmations must be submitted via Je-S within 7 days of the start date (rather than the usual 42 days)**.

Funded applicants will be expected to produce a summary report outlining the outcomes of their activities upon completion of the award (and by 30 September 2012 at the latest).

Award holders' HEIs will also need to complete a Financial Expenditure Statement at the end of the award in order for the AHRC to reconcile the project costs. Further information will be provided by the AHRC towards the end of the award period.

Assessment process and criteria
Proposals will be subject to light touch peer review by a small assessment panel involving members of the Science in Culture Advisory Group and of the AHRC's Peer Review College.

The following will be taken into account when assessing proposals:

- the extent to which the proposal meets the specific aims of the call
- the extent to which the proposal fits the **Science in Culture** theme

- the quality of the research process outlined, including: research agenda, participants, sustainability and appropriateness of methods
- the significance and importance of the thematic area to be explored
- the extent to which the proposed activities will build on and add value to existing research
- the extent to which the proposed activities will generate genuine and productive interaction across boundaries (e.g. disciplinary, conceptual, theoretical, methodological and/or international), including the potential for them to lead to advances in knowledge and understanding in the fields concerned and/or new high quality cross-disciplinary research projects
- the extent to which the potential outcomes justify the costs
- whether the Principal Investigator (and any Co-Investigators) demonstrate the requisite skills and experience to manage the proposed activities, and whether there is a sufficiently broad range of expertise and experience amongst the other named participants
- the extent to which there are effective plans for management of the activities and the monitoring of progress, including whether a realistic timetable and reasonable costs are presented which will achieve the aims and objectives of the proposal
- whether the proposal demonstrates an appropriate strategy for the dissemination and exploitation of any outcomes, including the extent to which plans are in place to extend collaboration once the award has ended
- the extent to which what is proposed will have an impact beyond the lifetime of the award

Award announcements
Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their proposal by mid January 2012.

Reporting and Dissemination
As a minimum requirement, award holders will be expected to set up a webpage for their project within its first month providing a summary of planned activities and reports of any events, presentations, papers or other materials emerging from activities. Proposals involving more interactive uses of digital technologies will be welcomed

Award holders will be expected to produce a summary final report at the end of the award outlining their findings, lessons learnt and future plans. These reports should be published on the webpage (with public access maintained for at least 18 months after the end of the project) and will be used by the Science in Culture Advisory Group to help further develop the theme.

Whilst it is recognised that the exploratory nature of these awards may make outputs more difficult to specify at the outset, broader dissemination of outcomes through both traditional academic routes, digital media or broader public engagement activites is strongly encouraged.

Contacts
Enquiries regarding the type of activities that can be supported through this call should be directed to either:

Katherine Warren, Strategy and Development Manager (History and Thought)
k.warren@ahrc.ac.uk or 01793 416053

or
Ian Broadbridge, Portfolio Manager (History and Thought)
i.broadbridge@ahrc.ac.uk or 01793 416054

The AHRC works with the RCUK Shared Services Centre (SSC) to deliver all of our funding activities.
Enquiries about Je-S registration or completing the proposal form should be directed to grants@ssc.rcuk.ac.uk or 01793 444 164

Annex A

Guidance for completing attachments

All the following documents should be completed in a font no smaller than size 11. Please also note the permitted document lengths.

Case for Support

The Case for Support should be no more than **4 sides of A4** outlining the rationale for the proposed activity, how it will add value to current activities, a description of the proposed activities to be undertaken, and an outline of the expected outputs and dissemination plans as appropriate. Please ensure you use a font no smaller than size 11.

You should structure your Case for Support using the following headings:

Fit to theme
You should ensure that it is clear to the reader how the proposed activities fit with the **Science in Culture** theme and how you envisage your project contributing to the theme.

Rationale and context
You should describe clearly the rationale, approach and context of the activities. Why are the proposed activities necessary to address this theme at this time? How will the proposed work build on, and add value to, the existing research base? How will it identify emerging areas of research innovation or potential gaps in current research? Why are you the right person / people to conduct this work? What is the research context in which the activities will operate and how will it advance knowledge and understanding in the fields concerned?

Aims and objectives
You should describe the aims and objectives of the activities. What specific targets or outcomes will you have achieved by the end of the project?

Timetable of activities
You should give a clear timetable of activities, including key milestones.

Management and Co-ordination
How will the activities be managed, coordinated and delivered? If the application includes additional assistance or administrative support, please outline the activities and responsibilities for each post.

Outcomes and dissemination
Please provide examples of any outputs you propose to produce during the award and their proposed focus. To which audiences will the activities and their outcomes be of interest? How will any outputs be discussed with, and/or communicated and disseminated to, those audiences?

Justification of Resources

All costs associated with the project must be justified in the Justification of Resources. Applicants should:

- Explain why the indicated resources are needed, taking into account the nature and complexity of the activities proposed. Note that it is not sufficient merely to list what is required
- Refer to the breakdown of resources in the summary fund headings Directly Incurred and Directly Allocated
- Estates costs, Indirect costs, Fellowship salary costs, and some other Directly Allocated costs such as general technical services do not need to be justified

The Justification of resources should not exceed two sides of A4.

Curriculum Vitae

Summary curriculum vitae should be attached as separate documents for each Principal Investigator, any Co- Investigators or named postdoctoral researchers. These should be no more than two sides of A4 paper and in an Arial font no smaller than size 11. CVs should include basic information about education, employment history, and academic responsibilities.

Publications Lists

Summary lists of publications/research outputs should be attached as separate documents for each Principal Investigator, any Co- Investigators or named postdoctoral researchers. These should cover major publications/outputs in the last five years and should be no more than one side of A4 paper and in a Arial font no smaller than size 11.

Brief articles, conference papers, etc. need not be included. You should asterisk those of particular relevance to your current research proposal.

Letters of Support

If any Project Partners have been included in the proposal, a Letter of Support is required from each 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.

Visual evidence

Applications may include no more than two sides of A4 non-textual, visual evidence in support of the proposal, to illustrate the proposed aims and objectives and/or research methods. It is not permitted to include this material to supplement or replace your CV or publications list or to illustrate previous work in any way nor should it be used to circumvent the word limit for the Case for Support.

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 research?

The Pathways to Impact attachment is your opportunity to describe in more detail how the potential impacts of the research beyond academia, as outlined in the Impact Summary, will be realised. Taking into account what is reasonable and appropriate given the nature of the research you propose to conduct, you are asked to describe how the proposed research will be managed to engage any users and beneficiaries that have been identified, or to identify potential users and beneficiaries as the research progresses, and to increase

the likelihood of achieving impacts. In presenting your plans, you should tailor and target your impact activities to ensure that they are relevant to the specific user and beneficiary groups likely to be interested in your research and appropriate for supporting the potential research impacts outlined. Innovative and creative approaches are strongly encouraged.

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 on completing this section can be found in the AHRC Research Funding Guide.