



## **A call for applications to take part in the Times Cheltenham Science Festival and the Times and the Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival**

### **1. Introduction**

To mark its tenth anniversary in 2015, the AHRC is looking to extend its partnership with Cheltenham Festivals by inviting applications from researchers to present their research at one of a series of four engaging public events at the Times Cheltenham Science Festival and the Times and The Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival in 2015. One event will run at the Science Festival, and three at the Literature Festival.

Cheltenham Festivals is the charitable organisation behind the town's internationally acclaimed [Jazz \(opens in a new window\)](#), [Science \(opens in a new window\)](#), [Music \(opens in a new window\)](#) and [Literature \(opens in a new window\)](#) Festivals. Through cutting edge and creative programming, Cheltenham's four festivals have provided a platform for debate and commentary from writers, performers, scientists, musicians and scholars across the world.

Up to twenty successful applicants will have a chance to develop their event ideas with experienced Cheltenham Festival producers and members of the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement team at a dedicated workshop. Of these, up to four will have the chance to hold their event at one of the Festivals.

A workshop held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015 will focus on the Science and Literature festivals. The selected researchers will benefit from a unique opportunity to work closely with the Cheltenham Festival producers to create interactive and engaging events, invite high profile speakers, where relevant, and ultimately share their research with a public audience.

We welcome applications from individual researchers or project teams with one lead applicant, working in all areas of the arts and humanities. The topics of the proposed events should fall within one of the disciplines within the AHRC's remit.

## **The Times Cheltenham Science Festival**

[The Science Festival \(opens in a new window\)](#) will be held from 2 June to 7 June 2015. The Science Festival is a celebration of science, engineering, technology and maths, promoting dialogue about the latest ideas and cutting edge research. It has become recognised as one of the most important platforms for science communication and engagement with the public, and includes a thriving schools programme and weekend activities for all the family. With hands-on interactive experiences and lively events, it showcases science from Britain and around the globe in a unique festival format.

Past AHRC events at the festival have focussed on what science and the arts and humanities can learn from each other. [Descriptions of these events can be found on the AHRC website \(opens in a new window\)](#). The remit of this year's science festival is very broad, and applications are invited on all relevant topics from researchers across the arts and humanities.

## **The Times and the Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival**

[The Literature Festival \(opens in a new window\)](#) will be held from 2 October to 11 October 2015. It is known for attracting the most intriguing, exciting and thought provoking writers and thinkers from across the arts and humanities spectrum – including literary giants, influential politicians, leading historians and many others. Its mission is to share with the widest possible audience the pleasures of reading, writing, exploring and debating. The Festival site incorporates book shops, cafes and interactive spaces alongside auditoriums, creating an atmosphere of open discussion and flow of ideas which engages and inspires our audiences.

[Past AHRC events at the Cheltenham Literature Festival can be found on the AHRC website \(opens in a new window\)](#). The remit of this year's literature festival is very broad, and applications are invited on all relevant topics from researchers across the arts and humanities. However, we will be looking for themes that could emerge to tie the events together; this is something that will be worked on with applicants chosen to attend the workshop.

## **Aims of the scheme**

The aim of the scheme is to provide a development opportunity for researchers to cultivate the skills to communicate their research findings to those outside the academic community. The scheme aims to find academics that can bring the best of the latest research to life to a broad audience in an interactive and engaging manner.

Applications should demonstrate an engaging and stimulating event idea but also demonstrate an ability to present in an accessible and refreshing manner, with awareness of a festival audience.

## **2. The workshop**

Up to twenty applicants will be chosen to attend the workshop for the festival (science or literature) to which they have applied. Please note that although applications from groups are welcomed, only one member of each group will be allowed to attend the workshop. The workshop will give them a chance to:

- Devise and take part in interactive and practice sessions to showcase their event ideas and demonstrate their ability to communicate with a Festival audience
- Gain the perspective of Cheltenham staff on how they develop event ideas and produce the International Festivals
- Develop their event ideas with the help of other delegates, public engagement experts and Cheltenham Festival producers.
- Develop an understanding of how to engage the media in their research and the event.

### **Final applicants**

Up to four successful applicants chosen from the workshops, three for the Literature Festival and one for the Science Festival, will be offered the opportunity to work with the Cheltenham Festivals. They will:

- Work with Cheltenham Festival Producers to develop their own event ideas for inclusion into the Festival Programme.
- Have the chance to speak at AHRC events to both senior academics and the public
- Have their research featured on the AHRC website
- Be offered further media support from the AHRC to promote their event and research
- Have their travel and subsistence reimbursed for attendance at the event in accordance with AHRC policy

## **3. Eligibility**

This scheme is open to researchers at any stage in their career. Additionally, to apply for the scheme you must:

1. Be eligible according to AHRC guidelines. Please see our [Research Funding Guide \(opens in a new window\)](#) for further information. PhD students are also eligible to apply.
2. Not be an employee of the Cheltenham Festivals or the AHRC
3. Be free to attend the workshop on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015

#### **4. How to apply**

Complete the [online application form \(opens in a new window\)](#), which will include the two questions set out below. Please note that sessions are usually one hour long. Applicants are advised to be realistic in terms of the resources required to run their proposed sessions.

##### *The Questions*

*The questions below are designed to give you a chance to show that you can communicate your research to a Festival audience. Look at the [Cheltenham Festivals website \(opens in a new window\)](#) for ideas of the kinds of events that are run.*

*A. Briefly describe your research and its broader relevance to a non-academic audience (250 words)*

*B. Focusing on one aspect of your research, describe how it could make an engaging and stimulating event for a non-academic audience. Explain how you would attract interest in your research area, the format this event, the speakers, and any interactive elements. (400 words)*

From these entries up to 20 people will be selected per festival by the judges to attend a NCCPE run workshops developing event ideas from academics.

The successful applicants for each festival will be chosen from a pitching process at the workshop.

**The deadline for applications is 23:59 on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015.** The workshop will be on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015. Please note that no one research area will get preferential treatment over another. All applications will be assessed on their own merits against the application criteria.

## **4. Further Information**

Judges for the application process will include:

- Jane Furze (Cheltenham Literature & Science Festival Director)
- Sophie Duncan (NCCPE)
- Philip Pothen (AHRC)
- Julia Jenkins (Development Director, Cheltenham Festivals)
- Barry Smith (Director, Institute of Philosophy (University of London) and AHRC Leadership Fellow for Science in Culture)
- Andrew Prescott (Professor of Digital Studies at the University of Glasgow and AHRC Leadership Fellow for Digital Transformations)

Judges may be subject to change.

## **5. Contacts**

If you have any queries please email [cheltenhamfestivals@ahrc.ac.uk](mailto:cheltenhamfestivals@ahrc.ac.uk) or call Russell Leake on 01793 41 6039