

Checklist of steps to take, if you are applying for a research grant through the Faculty of History

NOTIFY AND SEEK ADVICE FROM THE RESEARCH DIRECTOR ABOUT YOUR PROJECT PROPOSAL

If you are thinking of applying for a research grant, please consult with the Faculty's Research Director (Projects and Impact) on the scope of your proposal and potential sponsors.

INFORM THE FACULTY'S RESEARCH GRANTS ADMINISTRATOR WELL IN ADVANCE

Inform the Research Grants Administrator (RGA) at the Faculty that you plan to apply and ask for necessary assistance. The RGA can help you with both identifying funding schemes and checking eligibility.

READ THE SPONSOR'S GUIDELINES CAREFULLY

Before starting your application, please read the essential *Guidance for applicants*, which provides full details of the aims and eligibility criteria for the particular scheme that you've chosen.

CONSIDER THE ISSUES FOR THE FACULTY

Each application going through the Faculty will need an approval from the Chair of the Faculty. Please consider these Faculty related issues: Will you need an office space for research staff working on your grant, if awarded? Will the grant mean remittance of other Faculty duties such as teaching? Is your Subject Group aware of anticipated leave from teaching? Will you need a formal support statement from the HoD to attach to your application? Discuss all these questions with the RGA.

IS YOUR RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE?

Owing to the more complicated nature of collaborative research more time is needed for compiling costs of different partners involved, thus you should start working with the RGA as far in advance as feasible on financial aspects of the grant. Additional help is also available from School's Research Facilitators for those developing collaborative, complex or EU applications.

START COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION ONLINE

Before commencing your online application form refer to any application *Help notes* supplied by the sponsor which provide detailed requirements for different sections of the application. Allow the RGA access to the online form where permitted.

ASK RGA TO COST YOUR PROPOSAL

When planning for costs you should first check *eligible* and *ineligible* costs in the sponsor guidance. All applications are accompanied by a detailed costing in X5, the University's costing and pricing program. In order to generate an X5 costing for your application, the RGA will need to get the basic information about your project. For this please fill in the online form on the website of the Faculty of History (will be available soon). After receiving this form and discussing all cost details with you, the RGA will generate a costing in X5 and send the report to you for checking and confirmation. When the costing is ready you can complete the financial section in the application form.

PROVIDE YOUR APPLICATION FOR REVIEW BY RESEARCH DIRECTOR/ OR PEER-REVIEWERS

Peer-review increases your chance of getting the grant. Once you have a draft of the academic case of your project, please send it to the Research Director (Projects and Impact) for review. Depending on the scope of the project it may be peer-reviewed by colleagues in the Faculty. Please note that there is also a possibility to arrange an internal cross-School AHRC and ESRC peer review for your application.

CONSIDER IF YOUR PROJECT REQUIRES ETHICAL APPROVAL OR INVOLVES RISK FACTORS

If your research involves human participation or personal data, ethical approval should be obtained. If it appears to be low risk research, ethical review can be provided at the Faculty level. Cases that are particularly complex or sensitive should be referred to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. Please contact the Research Director (Projects and Impact) for advice. You should also consult with Research Director if you think your research activities might be related to threats to your health and security.

CONSIDER THE SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

You submit your project application online via the sponsor's application portal. When you press 'Submit' your application is automatically forwarded to the ROO for the final approval and submission on behalf of the University. The ROO will receive both your application and the X5 costing submitted in parallel by the RGA. They will perform the checks and either approve it or send it back to you, should any changes be needed. After the approval the ROO submits your application to the sponsor. In order that your application reaches the sponsor by the deadline, please follow the University's deadlines: **2 working days** for the Faculty to submit and approve the costing in X5; **7 working days** for the ROO to check and submit your application to sponsor.

Please remember that this means **you should submit your application online 7 working days ahead of the sponsor's deadline.**

APPLYING FOR A RESEARCH GRANT THROUGH THE FACULTY OF HISTORY

This document provides a general outline of the funding application process through the Faculty of History. All applications are different with regard to size, scope and duration, and thus the time needed to prepare a quality application will vary. Some applications are straightforward and simple, while others are complex, collaborative and require much more time and effort to elaborate, to process and submit.

It's important to plan ahead. Grant applications will need checks on financial, contractual, risk and ethical issues, as well as their intellectual content. In most cases these are swift and uncomplicated and are not a burden on the applicant, but we cannot know before we get to discuss the project with you. So make sure you plan ahead for the Faculty's deadlines for checking, approving and processing of your application.

For simple, internal applications, i.e. not requiring more complex costing and approval from the University's Research Operations Office (ROO) we need to see them at least 5 working days before the deadline, while for standard grant applications to external sponsors we require at least 14 working days. However most applications will also require some peer review by which we aim to increase the chances of success. This has to be complete before any deadlines for final processing.

The most reliable policy is simply to let us know as early as possible of your intentions to apply for a grant, so we can arrange processes, give support and fix deadlines with the least fuss.

CHECKLIST OF STEPS TO TAKE

While the list of issues may seem long, many are easily resolved, and the Faculty and University have staff on hand to help you with them. This list aims to make that process as smooth as possible and ensure that everything is completed in a timely fashion.

1. NOTIFY AND SEEK ADVICE FROM THE RESEARCH DIRECTOR ABOUT YOUR PROJECT PROPOSAL

If you are thinking of applying for a research grant, please consult with the Faculty's Research Director (Projects and Impact) on the scope of your proposal and potential sponsors. If it is a complex, large-scale or EU application, please inform the Research Director or the Faculty's Research Grants Administrator (RGA) at the very least 2 months in advance.

2. INFORM WELL IN ADVANCE THE FACULTY'S RESEARCH GRANTS ADMINISTRATOR

Inform the RGA at the Faculty that you plan to apply and ask for necessary assistance. The RGA can help you with both identifying funding schemes and checking eligibility. If you are responding to a call with definite deadline, please consider if there will be enough time for an application to be processed and submitted. Please note that if the sponsor is new to the University, the ROO will need to verify their credentials which will take more time.

3. READ THE SPONSOR'S GUIDELINES CAREFULLY

Before starting your application, please read the essential *guidance for applicants*, which provides full details of the aims and eligibility criteria for the particular scheme that you've chosen. Pay special attention to sponsor definition of the Principal Investigator's (PI) eligibility.

4. CONSIDER THE ISSUES FOR THE FACULTY

Each application going through the Faculty will need an approval from the Head of Department (HoD), i.e. Chair of the Faculty. For some applications it is enough to e-mail the Chair and inform about your plans to apply, however many applications require a formal support statement from the HoD, which is usually drafted by the Research Director (Projects and Impact). Thus it is important to provide a draft of your research proposal to the Research Director well in advance of the deadline. With regard to other Faculty-related issues, please consider:

- Will you need an office space for research staff working on your grant, if awarded? Please contact Assistant Registry and inform them about your potential needs for office space.
- Will the grant mean remittance of other Faculty duties such as teaching which will require approval in advance?
- Is your Subject Group aware of anticipated leave from teaching?

5. IS YOUR RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE?

Collaboration may be between University departments or with other institutions. In the latter case, collaboration agreements must be signed by all institutional parties (this is co-ordinated by the ROO). Owing to the more complicated nature of these grants more time is needed for compiling costs of different partners involved, thus you should start working with the RGA as far in advance as feasible on financial aspects of the grant.

If your project is collaborative and complex or you are seeking EU funding, additional help is also available from the School Research Facilitators.

6. START COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION ONLINE

Applications are usually made electronically and online application portals vary between sponsors. Before commencing your application form refer to any application *help notes* supplied by the sponsor which provide detailed requirements for different sections of the application. Allow the RGA access to the online form where permitted.

7. ASK RGA TO COST YOUR PROPOSAL

All applications are accompanied by a detailed costing. This is done in X5, the University's costing and pricing program. When planning for costs, you should consider the following questions (please first check *eligible* and *ineligible* costs in the sponsor guidance):

- Will you need research assistance?
- What level of research assistance will you need: a postdoctoral assistant or less qualified assistance? The status of the post has an effect on the level of salary that may be offered by the University. Contact your RGA for advice regarding researcher starting salaries.
- Will you require a project administrator (usually for large or EU funded grants)?
- Have you considered whether your plans for personnel recruitment are legal and/or within the recruitment rules laid down by the University's Human Resources (HR) Division? Details of personnel to be included on applications must be sent to the RGA and to the Faculty's HR clerk as early in the process as possible.
- Do you plan research expenses (travel and subsistence, conference fees, costs for organising workshops, website design and maintenance, etc.)?
- How many hours per week are you planning to spend on this grant as the PI? Consider your other commitments (including teaching). Will your tenure outlast the duration of the grant? Might you be due to retire during the lifetime of the grant?
- Will you need to be replaced in your teaching duties? **NB:** teaching replacement is NOT offered by all sponsors (e.g. the AHRC and ESRC). In these instances, any teaching replacement must be negotiated with the HoD.
- What is the duration, start date and title of your project?

For generating a costing for your project the RGA needs to receive information from you on all those questions above. It's always a good idea to provide any details you can on your application to the RGA via e-mail or through arranging a meeting. After receiving this information and discussing all cost details with you, the RGA will generate a costing in X5 and send the report to you for checking and confirmation. When the costing is ready you can complete the financial section in the application form.

8. PROVIDE YOUR APPLICATION FOR REVIEW BY RESEARCH DIRECTOR/ OR PEER-REVIEWERS

The Faculty fosters a culture in which all applications, regardless of size and sponsor, are peer-reviewed. Once you have a draft of the academic case of your project, please send it to the Research Director (Projects and Impact) for review. Depending on the scope of the project it may be peer-reviewed by colleagues in the Faculty. This step is important because the University monitors the success rate of applications and it is important to demonstrate that all steps are taken to ensure the highest quality.

More importantly, it increases your chance of getting the grant! Please note that there is also a possibility to arrange an internal cross-School AHRC and ESRC peer review for your application. Experienced AHRC and ESRC peer-reviewers and award holders will give applicants realistic advice that can pre-empt possible points that arise in the formal AHRC or ESRC peer review.

9. CONSIDER IF YOUR PROJECT REQUIRES ETHICAL APPROVAL OR INVOLVES RISK FACTORS

If your research involves human participation or personal data from current or recent times, ethical approval should be obtained. In such cases please contact the Research Director (Projects and Impact) for advice. If it appears to be low risk research, ethical review can be provided at the Faculty level. Cases that are particularly complex or sensitive, or those presenting a potential conflict of interest, should be referred to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. The Committee aims to deliver a decision in approximately three weeks after you complete the Committee's application form and provide details of your research proposal and participant information.

You should also consider if your project activities might involve potential risk factors, associated with field research in countries, such as those affected by conflicts and violence, threats of natural disasters, health risks etc. Please consult with the Research Director (Projects and Impact) if you think your research activities might be related to threats to your health and security and that special measures should be taken to mitigate these risks.

10. CONSIDER THE SUBMISSION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

The process of submitting your application is twofold:

- You submit your project application online via the sponsor's application portal. The submitted application is usually forwarded to the ROO for final submission by that office on behalf of the University. **NB:** submission processes may differ between sponsors and even between different schemes offered by the same sponsor. Your RGA can advise. Please also send the .pdf copy of submitted application to the RGA.
- The RGA in parallel submits a costing of your application in X5. The Chair of the Faculty approves it in the X5 system. The costing is then received by the ROO in X5.

The ROO will receive both your application and the X5 costing, perform the checks and either approve it or send it back to you and the Faculty, should any changes be needed. After the approval the ROO submits your application to the sponsor. Only then is the application submitted. **NB:** ROO will not routinely provide full checks to applications budgeted at less than £250,000 fEC, therefore the RGA and applicant must ensure there are no errors.

In order that your application reaches the sponsor by the sponsor deadline, it is crucial that you build into your planning the following University deadlines:

- 2 working days for the Faculty to submit and approve the costing application in X5;
- 7 working days for the ROO to check and submit your application to the sponsor.

Please remember that this means **you must submit your application online 7 working days ahead of the sponsor's deadline!** The less time available for Faculty & ROO checks, the greater the risk of errors in submitted applications. **NB:** the British Academy & the Leverhulme Trust have adopted stricter policies regarding errors in applications. Previously, applications may have been returned to applicants for errors to be corrected. Effective from 2016, applications containing errors will now be **immediately rejected** regardless of academic quality.

SPECIFIC ISSUES THAT REQUIRE ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION

If you are employed by a college: since College employees are not University employees special attention must be given to issues related to costing a college employee's work on a grant in the role of PI and the contractual arrangements with the College for release of the PI and managing the flows of costs between University and College.

If you are a retired academic: if you are already retired and thinking of acting as PI (or Co-I) on a grant you should apply for a Voluntary Research Agreement (VRA). Such an agreement provides a route for a retired academic to act as a PI (or Co-I) on a grant (it is for a fixed term, it is unpaid and it is not a contract of employment). Please note that the ROO is not authorised to submit an application for a grant or start processing a contract without first receiving a copy of the authorisation for the VRA from the University's HR department. All aspects of the VRA are handled and managed by HR, however you should first inform HoD and the Faculty's Assistant Registry will support you in the application process.

If your budget is over £1M FEC: the *£1 Million + Checklist* should be completed and submitted for approval by the Head of the School. The checklist should be completed by the PI and the RGA, authorised by the Chair of the Faculty and submitted to the School at least six weeks prior to any deadline that the application is subject to. **NB:** The ROO will not approve and submit the application without this step having been completed.

Letters of support from Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor: where sponsors request a support letter signed by the Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research to be submitted with the application for funding a requests for such a support letter must be submitted to the Research Strategy Office 20 working days ahead of the sponsor's deadline.

POINTS OF CONTACT AT THE FACULTY OF HISTORY:

Any grants related queries may be sent to: researchgrants@hist.cam.ac.uk
Research Grants Administrator (RGA) Dr Allison Ksiazkiewicz: aak39@cam.ac.uk
Research Director (Projects and Impact) Professor Gareth Austin: gma31@cam.ac.uk
Research Director (Individual Research) Professor Annabel Brett: asb21@cam.ac.uk
Chair of the Faculty Professor Alex Walsham: histchm@hermes.cam.ac.uk
HR clerk Jo Pearson: jen26@cam.ac.uk
Assistant Registry Dr Liz Haresnape: eh273@cam.ac.uk

SCHOOL RESEARCH FACILITATORS FOR ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES:

Research Facilitator (UK funding) Dr Anna Cieslik: Anna.Cieslik@admin.cam.ac.uk

INFORMATION RESOURCES AT FACULTY AND SCHOOL LEVEL

Information on research funding opportunities and internal procedures at the Faculty: [Faculty of History website](#)

Essential information about research funding, timetables, research support and research opportunities across the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University: [Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research website](#).

LINKS TO INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY RESEARCH POLICIES & OTHER PERTINENT POLICIES

Determination of a starting salary: advice from the [Human Resources Division](#)

PIs working beyond retirement age: procedure for obtaining a [Voluntary Research Agreement](#)

Considering complex or high-risk ethics issues: procedure for obtaining approval from the [School of Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee](#)

Ethics in research: advice from the [Research Operations Office](#)

College employees as PIs on grants: advice from the [Research Operations Office](#)

Introduction to [research contracts](#) (ROO)

Link to the SHSS [£1M+ form](#)

Advice on obtaining [letters of support](#) from the Vice Chancellor or Pro-Vice Chancellor (ROO)