

John Ellerman Foundation

Museums and Galleries Fund: October 2021 - 2022

Museums and galleries are a means by which people engage with arts and heritage. Many institutions outside London hold important collections which have the power to inspire creativity, motivate artistic expression and stimulate local regeneration. In recent years they have been affected by the impact of funding cuts and curatorial under-provision, reducing their scope to research and display collections and create new exhibitions. The current pandemic is adding further challenges while also presenting opportunities to engage in different ways with new and existing audiences.

Aim

The Fund aims to help strengthen museums and galleries in the UK, celebrating the unique assets that our regions possess and their benefit to us nationally. We want to help organisations enhance and sustain curatorial development to attract a broader and more diverse public.

We have again earmarked ca. 10 per cent of our overall grants budget to be awarded through the Fund, with final decisions to be made in May 2022. We expect to make no more than five or six grants for periods of two to three years. While the average grant size is circa £90k we will consider higher amounts for exceptional projects.

What we will fund

We are keen to fund work which has a legacy within and beyond the organisation. We prioritise applications that aspire to achieve outcomes for people working in curatorial roles, the collections they work with and the institutions in which they work. We are particularly interested in proposals which:

- enable new ways of working through innovation, new thinking and fresh approaches both for established curators or those just starting out
or
- ensure organisations are able to safeguard and advance curatorial skills and make the most of opportunities at a time of development or change.

Who can apply

The Fund is open to a wide variety of collection types. We have supported visual and decorative arts, archaeology, and social and natural history collections. Accreditation is not required, but applicants are expected to demonstrate:

- excellence in their field at a national level
- national significance, usually through a unique or high-quality collection
- commitment to collaborative approaches, either as the focus of the request, or at a minimum with a strong track record of partnership working.

In line with our general policy, we favour organisations with an income between £100,000 and £10m, but may fund a larger institution if it is uniquely placed to meet our aim and can demonstrate a funding need for the work applied for. Local authority, independent museums and contemporary galleries without permanent collections are also eligible. While our priority is small to medium-sized museums and galleries outside of London, national and/or London-based institutions may also apply if their project brings significant benefits in the regions. Universities are eligible to apply but due to their size and relative financial stability are less likely to be successful. We are particularly interested in receiving applications from those areas where we have made fewer grants, such as the East Midlands, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The organisation applying must be able to demonstrate the following:

- an emphasis on the value of curatorial skills
- a commitment to excellence and innovation
- strong leadership and commitment from senior management, board or governing body
- effective financial management
- the difference a grant would make, to the organisation, the general public or other audiences.

What we do not fund:

- individual conservation projects (but we may consider conservation work as part of a wider request)
- capital development
- education and outreach work.

Applying to the Fund

The online application portal for the Museums and Galleries Fund will be open from Monday 18 October 2021. As for all other applications, we have a two-stage process. First-stage applications must be received by **5pm on Friday 7 January 2022**. We expect to make decisions in spring 2022, so you should plan for the work funded by a grant to start from or after June 2022.

If you have any queries in the meantime about eligibility criteria or the application process, please contact the Grants Team via museums@ellerman.org.uk. A follow-up phone call with a member of the Grants Team can be arranged for more in-depth queries. If you have applied several times before to the Museums and Galleries Fund and have been unsuccessful, we would like to ask that you get in touch with a member of the team prior to applying.

Stage 1

Your first-stage application should include:

1. A description of what you are seeking funding for, on no more than two sides of A4. Please include:
 - a brief description of your organisation, relevant track record and implications of Covid-19 on your work
 - the nature of your collection, and why it has national significance
 - what you would like us to fund, including (where possible) a specific amount and number of years for which funding is sought

- how your proposal matches what we fund and are looking for (see above).

2. Financial information:

If you are a charity, a copy of your most recent annual accounts. If you are part of a larger organisation (such as a university or local authority) please provide an income and expenditure statement for the running costs of your department or unit.

If your accounts show a significant surplus or deficit, high or low reserves, please explain this briefly. If the year-end date of your accounts is more than 10 months old, please include your latest management accounts.

Stage 2

If we invite you to apply for the second stage, we will ask for a more detailed application, and arrange to meet you virtually or in person, circumstances allowing, to find out more about you and your work.