

AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Awards in the Science Museums and Archives Consortium (SMAC) Guidance Document

A consortium made up of the Science Museum Group (SMG) Museums, BT Archives, the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers and the Royal Society has been awarded 18 AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral studentships over three years, which are allocated by a consortium-appointed panel. We are now welcoming applications for six studentships to be taken up in the second year, autumn 2017.

We encourage HEI-based academics or consortium staff interested in supervising a Collaborative Doctorate to contact the relevant organisation below:

- Science Museum Group: research@sciencemuseum.ac.uk.
- BT Archives: david.a.hay@bt.com
- RGS-IBG: c.souch@rgs.org
- Royal Society: keith.moore@royalsociety.org

All projects are required to involve a collaboration between a university-based researcher and a member of one of our museums' or archives' professional staff.

The deadline for complete proposals is **November 25th 2016**; these should be made to research@sciencemuseum.ac.uk using the proposal form at the end of the online version of this document.

The Science Museums and Archives Consortium brings together some of the UK's most significant object, library and archive collections in the history of science, geography, technology, engineering, transport, medicine, mathematics and media. Our collaborative doctoral partnership funds doctorates that use these collections to develop new insights into the history represented by these collections and their effective use in public engagement.

We will look particularly favourably on applications that demonstrate relevance to more than one of the museums or archives in the consortium. To guide applications we have set out the following themes that respect the research priorities of the partner organisations.

SMAC Themes 2015-16

A. Exhibiting, interpreting and collecting science, technology, engineering and medicine

1. Representing and collecting 20th/21st century science and technology
2. Performance, immersive environments and audience including community engagement
 1. The history of collecting and exhibiting material culture (including public history, STS and museum studies approaches)
 2. Collecting, representing and preserving software and data.
 3. Museums and place: objects, collections and displays in historical and contemporary place-making

B. Using collections and archives to understand the material culture of science, technology, engineering and medicine

1. The development of high speed communications, including rail from Rocket to HS2
2. Too big for a museum? Infrastructure Technologies.
 - i. The history of the principal networks and structures that support society: roads, bridges, tunnels, railways, water supply, gas and electrical grids, communications networks, water supply and sewers.
 - ii. History of human infrastructures and management structures in railways.
3. Sites of scientific research and their material culture: the country house, the laboratory, the asylum, the field, including industry and psychiatric research and care centres

C. International perspectives on science, technology, engineering and medicine

1. New ways to represent Empire
2. International networks of scientific and medical knowledge, including congresses, conferences and personal networks.
3. Perspectives on material cultures of non-western science and medicine
4. Scientific, technological and engineering developments in India, Russia, Brazil, China

D. Science and technology as practice

1. Observation and experiment 17th century -present day.
2. Representing scientific lives in prose and/or displays
3. Women in science, technology, engineering and medical workplaces.
4. Scientific instrument trade
5. Experimental and industrial chemistry in the 19th and 20th centuries
6. History of Medicine
 - i. Changing understandings of the body and their impact on diagnosis and care
 - ii. Manifestations of changing patient-practitioner power relations in material medical culture

Approaches to Research

SMG Research Strategy and Programme

Each of the SMG museums has a distinctive research focus deriving from its collections – material, visual, library and archive – and subject concerns, as well as its planned events programme, forward plan for displays, and its collecting activity. Those priorities can be briefly summarised:

- **The Science Museum's** historical collections range across the physical sciences, all forms of engineering, technology, and medicine. Its masterplan proposes, amongst others, major new permanent galleries on the history of medicine, and on the scientific instrument trade in early-modern London. Our cultural programme plans potentially include exhibitions on solar science, the search for immortality and sound.
- **The National Railway Museum** explores the origins of the railways and the science and technology behind their development; the impact of railways on people's lives, and how railways shaped our world and culture. The museum's masterplan envisions a significant transformation of the York site, with exhibitions and public programmes which will draw on these themes and on related research. The redevelopment will include exhibitions on popular culture and literature, architecture, contemporary railways and railways of the future.
- **The National Media Museum** explores the science and culture of image and sound technologies and their impact on all our lives. It cares for large and significant collections of cinematography, television and photography (including the Kodak Museum Collection and the Daily Herald Archive), all of which are among the foremost of their kind in the world. In addition to a lively programme of events, exhibitions and festivals, it has an ambitious programme of gallery developments in the pipeline that will showcase the museum's collections and tell the interconnected histories of media in new and innovative ways.
- **The Museum of Science & Industry, Manchester** hold rich collections of the history of science, technology and engineering in Manchester and the North West. Its story centres on how ideas can change the world from the industrial revolution to today and beyond. Upcoming master plan gallery Cottonopolis looks to strengthen MSI's story of Manchester as the city where science met industry. The Museum is also currently in the early stages of developing an exhibition about music and how it unites individuals and creates communities through its effects on our bodies and minds.

Further details of our collections can be found at:

<http://collectionsonline.nmsi.ac.uk/>

<http://www.mosi.org.uk/collections/explore-the-collections/collections-online.aspx>

<http://www.nrm.org.uk/ResearchAndArchive/archiveandlibrarycollections.aspx>

<http://www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk/collection>

<http://www.scienceandsociety.co.uk>

BT Archives

BT Archives collections and particularly BT's research archives are recognised by UNESCO and Arts Council England as an important part of the UK's cultural and scientific heritage. They tell the story of the role of BT, its predecessors and the UK in the development of telecommunications since the birth of the technology, and its impact on society. www.bt.com/archives

The Royal Society

The Royal Society's collections of archives, manuscripts, portraits, artwork, books and museum objects are vital to understanding the development of natural philosophy and science from the seventeenth century to the twenty-first century. The Society wishes to open up collections to scholars and to the public and is particularly interested in research projects that aid in this: both by the better recording and digitising of its holdings; and by using these materials to study how aspects of science and its practice have shaped the modern world, especially in international activities and co-operations between scientists:

<https://royalsociety.org/collections/>

The Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers

The RGS-IBG collections exceed two million items, which include archival and historical printed material and artefacts, together with a rich visual archive, including photographs, maps, prints, films and drawings connected with the history of geographical science and discovery. The Society is committed to opening up these materials to new interpretations and audiences, and has a particular interest in research projects that focus on under-researched parts of the collections (maps, photographs, atlases etc).

For further information about AHRC CDAs in general, see the AHRC website: [AHRC CDAs](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there limits to the topic? We expect applications to demonstrate how they fit in with at least one of the strategic priorities outlined above. If in doubt, contact one of our institutional contacts (above). The subject matter also has to fit the remit of the AHRC. In practice the latter covers most of our research interests except some areas such as science-only conservation topics; and economic history, some aspects of policy and social research, which are supported by ESRC. The topic has to be suitable for a PhD; that is it has to be concerned with answering specific research questions, and is not suitable for undertaking blocks of routine work.

Can the proposal be for a particular student? Yes. It is possible to name a particular student who will receive the studentship if the application is successful. Indeed, they are encouraged to have a hand in the writing. However, as there would be considerable competition if the studentship were openly advertised, the proposal will need to show why a named person is a strong candidate, including that they are able to carry out PhD level research. Otherwise, studentships are openly advertised.

Who can be the university Partner? The university partner for a CDA can be anywhere in the UK. There is a balance to be struck: the proposed university supervisor and their department need to provide the right expertise and support for the topic, but it has to be realistic that a student will also be able to spend a significant time (which usually falls in their second year) researching at a SMAC site.

What are the benefits of a collaborative doctorate? Doctoral projects with this museum and archive consortium offer: the opportunity to work with and on some of the world's most fascinating and under-researched collections of objects and archive material; they provide scope to work alongside curators and other museum and archive professionals, providing insights into museum work for those who may be considering a career in the sector; and they provide some scope for contributing to the public programmes of the organisations involved. All these are in addition to the normal benefits of a doctorate: of conducting a guided, self-directed, major piece of academic research that can shape your subsequent career, whether it is in a university, museum, archive, or elsewhere.

How the Scheme Will Work for Year One (to start October 2016)

You will need to develop your proposal in conjunction with a member of SMAC staff. The proposal form is at the end of the online version of this document.

The six studentships will be allocated across the four SMG museums / BT Archives/ RGS-IBG/ Royal Society. It will be the SMAC panel's responsibility to decide which proposals and university partners are selected. This will be undertaken by a small panel representing both external and internal experts and stakeholders following a set of selection criteria (as below). The AHRC will be notified of our decisions and, the project **will be advertised immediately with the partner university**. The administration of the studentship will be carried out by the university.

The Criteria we will use to assess CDA proposals

Proposals will be assessed on the *academic strength* of the proposal and *how well it supports SMAC interests and priorities*. Secondary considerations will include the university partner, the proposed student (if there is one) and how this fits with the SMAC proposer's workload and other commitments.

The Academic Strength of the proposal

Is there a PhD in this topic? Will the research lead to an original and substantial contribution to the knowledge of the subject matter? Are there clear and answerable research questions? How practical will it be for the student to complete the research and answer the questions in the 3-4 years and with the resources SMAC and the partner university have available? Is there scope for the student to develop their own emphasis with the overall proposal? What will be the benefits to the student of doing a doctorate through CDA rather than in a university department alone?

Support for SMAC aims and priorities

How does this CDA support SMAC research interests and priorities - and its current programme? Is this CDA part of an existing or planned Museum research project, an exhibition or new gallery project? If so, how will it support or extend that project? Does it illuminate significant underresearched aspects of the collections? Does it have the potential to stretch how the Museums think about their work? The proposal will clearly indicate which of the SMAC Themes (above) the proposal supports.

Cross-institutional work

We are keen to support doctorates that address our research topics across different institutions within the consortium. We will look particularly favourably on proposals that suggest research questions applicable to more than one SMAC site.

Please erase all red guidance text and advice (above) before submission

<u>COLLABORATIVE DOCTORAL PARTNERSHIP (CDP) PROPOSAL FORM 2015</u>	
1) Title of the proposal:	
Abstract: <i>(Maximum 100 words)</i>	
2) Lead cultural heritage organisation:	<i>(name specific consortium partner(s) as appropriate)</i>
Cultural heritage organisation supervisors:	<u>Lead SMAC supervisor</u>
	<u>Second SMAC supervisor</u>
3) Higher Education Institution (HEI) supervisors: <i>Please include contact email address</i>	<u>Lead HEI supervisor</u>
	<u>Second HEI supervisor</u>
4) Number of CDP studentships applied for:	
5) Any other partner organisations:	
6) Is the proposal for a named student? Name?	
Has a summary CV for the student been attached to this application? <input type="checkbox"/>	
Reason for selecting student <i>Most CDAs are openly advertised and the best qualified candidate appointed, but it is possible to propose a potential student.</i> <i>If this is for a proposed named student, please state</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Who they are</i> <i>2. Why they are being proposed, as opposed to this being an openly advertised studentship? Please outline any relevant experience and other information such as if the proposed student has played an active role in creating this proposal.</i> <i>The panel and the AHRC will need assurance that the proposed student has the ability to research and write a PhD.</i>	

<p>7) Case for support for the project (<i>this is the most important section</i>)</p> <p><i>The summary must cover the following points to enable it to be assessed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What research questions guide the application? (What is project about? Why is the project important and original?)</i> ○ <i>What is the context?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What collections or museum / archive concerns will be involved?</i> ○ <i>What does the existing literature say, and where does it fall short?</i> ○ <i>Approach / Method? (outline of research likely to be undertaken - the data to be collected and studied, the type of approach or analysis to be used etc)</i> <p>Maximum: 4pp at 11pt</p>
<p>8) How will the studentship contribute towards the priorities and objectives of SMAC?</p> <p><i>Please state which theme the proposal addresses</i></p>
<p>If connected to future museum / Archive display or activity please attach e-mail from Head of Exhibitions (or similar) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>9) In the new round the AHRC has made available an additional 6 months funding called the 'Student Development Fund'. Please give an indication of how this fund could be used in the course of the project? <i>While we understand that this will in practice be developed with the student, we want supervisors to begin thinking about the best use of this additional funding, particularly in supporting partnership work.</i></p>
<p>10) Please provide details of any additional financial (or other) support required to undertake the research, and source:</p>
<p><u>11) SMAC lead supervisor</u></p> <p>Please provide a brief outline CV/research profile with details of previous supervisory experience and relevant publications or other outputs:</p>
<p><u>12) HEI lead supervisor</u></p> <p>Please provide a brief outline CV/research profile with details of previous supervisory experience and relevant publications or other outputs:</p>
<p><u>12) HEI department</u></p> <p>Please provide a statement of the department's suitability, including the support it will provide to the successful CDP student, its experience of engaging with cultural heritage organisations, and its research profile:</p>