Recorded webinar and FAQs: Heritage Innovation Fund

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A recording of our applicant support webinar, and answers to questions raised by attendees during the webinar.

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View the webinar

We held an applicant support webinar for the Heritage Innovation Fund on Thursday 21 July 2022.

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Chapters

- **0:00** Welcome and webinar overview
- **0:34** Speaker introductions
- **2:17** Background and context to Heritage Innovation Fund
- **4:28** How is this funding different to our project funding?
- **5:55** What do we mean by 'workforce' (the theme for this pilot)?
- **8:05** Available support from us
- **10:05** What we hope grantees will bring
- **11:41** Support offered by the Young Foundation
- **14:18** Examples of innovation
- **18:17** Key features of innovation
- **19:07** Innovation themes identified by webinar attendees
- **21:23** What we are looking for from applications
- **23:40** The application journey
- **26:34** Key dates

The speakers are:

- Emma Birks, Senior Engagement Manager at the Heritage Fund
- Penny Yewers, Innovation Development Project Manager at the Heritage Fund

- Alex Roberts, Head of Innovation and New Business at the Heritage Fund
- Anna Dinnen, Senior Associate of the Young Foundation

FAQs arising from the webinar

Attendees at the webinar raised a series of questions, which we have answered below.

The answers to several questions raised can be found by reading the guidance. Please read the guidance and the help notes carefully before applying.

Eligibility

Question: Can volunteer organisations apply?

Answer: We include volunteers in our definition of workforce, so voluntary organisations are welcome to apply to this programme. However, you will need to have a constitution (a document explaining your aims and objectives). Think carefully about the workforce issue you are facing, whether you have capacity to engage with the wider programme support, and what costs you will incur.

Question: Are private owners eligible? Are there any requirements for being open/accessible to the public?

Answer: As this is funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, private owners of heritage must meet our mandatory outcome of engaging a wider range of people in heritage. We will take this wider public benefit into account when assessing applications from private owners of heritage. As per the guidance private owners must have a workforce or team, including freelancers and volunteers and are not eligible if applying under a commercial or for-profit arm

Question: Are partnerships/collaborations eligible?

Answer: Partnerships are eligible but there needs to be a lead applicant to which the grant funding will be paid and where the lead staff member is based. You should have a partnership agreement in place if funds are to be formally shared – see amended guidance for further details.

Question: Can organisations that have recently applied for/received National Lottery Heritage Fund grants or other grants apply? Can we apply if we have an ongoing project?

Answer: Yes, previous and ongoing applications under other National Lottery programmes do not affect your eligibility for the Heritage Innovation Fund. Think carefully about whether you have capacity alongside your ongoing projects and the value-add this work may bring. We will take delivery risk into account in our assessment.

Question: Can universities and higher education organisations apply?

Answer: Public sector organisations are eligible but we would expect applicants to have the ability to directly apply their learning within a heritage context.

Project Ideas

Question: Can you explain how we should evidence that we will meet the outcomes of this programme, when the work is at an early stage?

Answer: This fund is about supporting the longer-term conditions in which these outcomes can be achieved in future. We do not expect innovation fund grantees at this early stage, or within the 6-month timeframe of this grant programme, to evidence direct impact on the outcomes.

Achievement of these outcomes will therefore be more focused on you beginning to anticipate and prepare for the future impact of your work beyond the life of this grant.

Question: What kinds of activities do you envisage grantees performing in the Explore phase? For example, would you expect us to perform any testing?

Answer: The focus of the Explore phase is to scope and define the challenge area. In practice, this means activities may include things like getting structured, robust feedback from people directly affected by the challenge, and understanding how they are affected with more precision.

It may extend to working out where else the challenge exists and what the requirements are of a potential solution to your challenge and how others experience it. It may involve other forms of research and it may involve testing out hypotheses or early ideas. Subsequent phases will be more geared to testing and prototyping activities.

The structured support programme should help you more precisely identify and plan the activities you need to deliver. Participation in this programme will also involve listening to and learning from other heritage colleagues. It may be that the challenge you identified evolves or shifts as a consequence of your research and learning.

Question: How do you define a ‘workforce challenge’?

Answer: This programme aims to support you to first define the problem or challenge that you face. A ‘workforce challenge’ is any issue relating to the workforce (whether paid or voluntary) that impacts on having the skills and capabilities to meet future demands on and ambitions for preserving, restoring and celebrating the UK’s diverse heritage. It might also include the way work is organised and distributed. Please see help notes for further details.

Question: 'Innovation' looks different for different organisations – how will you ensure this is understood within your decision making process?

Answer: We are certainly conscious that innovation can look different in different places and that grantees may have different starting points. This is part of the reason we plan to incorporate an interview discussion in the process, so that we can better understand the context you are working in.

Question: Can projects start in April rather than February 2023?

Answer: No. The programme has been designed to support a cohort that will start and finish at the same time to allow for participation in the learning and support programme.

This does not mean you cannot be exploring your challenge area before and after this in your own time – but the dedicated time and space the funding provides is required to be from February 2023.

Question: Can we use this grant to help develop ways of working to fit with a subsequent or ongoing Heritage Fund proposal/project?

Answer: Yes, however we would encourage you to speak to your local Investment Manager to discuss ideas. You should explore whether the work you would do with the Heritage Innovation Fund is likely to align with any subsequent funding you might seek through our open programmes.

Staffing

Question: How does The National Lottery Heritage Fund define heritage workforce?

Answer: We don't define heritage, and all types of heritage areas are eligible for this programme. Workforce can include paid staff, contractors/freelancers, placements/paid trainees and volunteers. The programme is focused on ensuring the future workforce, in its broadest sense, has the skills and capacity needed to meet future ambitions for, and demands on, the UK's heritage.

Question: Can the grant be used to commission elements of activity if you don't have capacity, and/or can the lead person be a consultant or contractor?

Answer: The aim of the funding is to support the costs of your organisation doing this early stage exploratory work. The funds can be used to cover staff time as well as the associated costs of doing the work. This may include commissioning some elements, however it's essential to have a consistent staff member leading the work throughout and participating in the support programme.

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for freelancers/contractors to the lead the project, for example organisations and private owners which only use freelancers/contractors. However, we will want to hear how the long term benefits of participation in the programme will develop for the organisation, rather than the supplier.

Please see application help notes, guidance and Receiving a Grant guidance for further details.

Question: How does The National Lottery Heritage Fund define diversity?

Answer: When we talk about diversity and inclusion, we mean equal and fair access for everyone, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, faith, class or income. See our inclusion guidance for more info.

Eligible costs

Question: How should we calculate the non-cash contribution of a senior manager?

Answer: A simple calculation of the number of hours they will provide multiplied by their hourly rate is enough. We are interested in how they will engage with the programme rather than the financial value, so please make sure this is clear in your application/supporting documents.

Question: Can this funding be used as match-funding for other grants? Can it be used as match-funding for National Lottery Heritage Fund grants?

Answer: The funding could not be used as match-funding for National Lottery Heritage Fund grants but it could be used as match-funding for other grants. However, we will be funding the initiative in its own right and you will need to sign up to dedicated grant terms reflecting this.

Question: Can we use match funding along with the Heritage Innovation Fund as part of the Explore process?

Answer: You are welcome to contribute to this process through cash or in-kind contributions, and you can include this in your application form if you can commit to it at this stage. However there are no minimum cash match-funding requirements for the Heritage Innovation Fund.

Additional support

Question: If we are unsuccessful, is there an opportunity to gain anything else from the programme?

Answer: We intend to model a 'learning in the open' approach, meaning we will share our insights from the pilot, and we are looking to enable grantees to do the same. We will also use the learning from this pilot to inform future funding offers to the sector to ensure as wide a benefit as possible. We are not providing any formal programme for unsuccessful applicants.

Question: What should we do if we can't get onto the workshops/if there are not enough spaces?

Answer: Please sign up for the waitlist. We will look at feedback from the first workshop and respond with additional resources as required. You can also contact your local area/country Engagement team for additional support while developing your application.

Question: Is attending a workshop required for an application to go forward?

Answer: No, attendance at a workshop is not mandatory. They are an additional support for those who would like to workshop their ideas with others.

Scheme overview

Question: Is there likely to be a repeat of the Stage 1?

Answer: This is a pilot programme, so we will review the demand and learning coming from the first phase to inform our future plans. At the moment, there is no repeat of Stage 1 scheduled.

Question: How big will grants be for Stage 2 and 3?

Answer: We cannot yet confirm the full budget for the later stage funding. This is still subject to our annual business planning process which will be informed by the learning arising from this first stage pilot. In principle we expect to make fewer grants but of a larger amount at the stages 2 and 3.

In designing the initiative, we worked to an indicative budget of £5million. We expect to spend c. £800,000 on these first stage grants. The remaining funds will go towards the next stage of the programme in 2022-2023 and the grants that organisations may apply for after the successful completion of the 'Explore' programme.

Question: How many projects are you hoping to fund at each of the three stages?

Answer: We have a budget of c. £800,000 for the Explore grants and expect to make 30-35 grants. As per the above response on budget for next stage funding, this will be finalised in response to the learning coming out of this first stage.

Question: How was the timetable for this programme decided on? Our capacity over the summer is limited and the application window is too short.

Answer: We have tried to keep the application process as light touch as is possible for public funds, and ensured the deadline runs to the end of September to accommodate different UK summer holiday periods.

The timeline ensures that awards can be made and the cohort can commence this financial year.