Towards a National Collection

- Use the catalytic potential of new technology
- Begin to dissolve barriers between different collections
- Open up collections to new cross-disciplinary and cross collections lines of research
- Diversify both their visitor base and the ways the public can access them
- Forge new and deeper partnerships between Independent Research Organisations and Higher Education Institutions
Funding

• £18.9m Strategic Priorities Funding over five years (February 2020 – January 2025)

• Delivered through UK Research and Innovation/Arts and Humanities Research Council

• Structured around two phases of grant funding - £1.6m for eight Foundation Projects and £15m for up to five Discovery Projects

• Led and coordinated by a programme directorate based at Historic Environment Scotland in Edinburgh
Foundation Projects

- Eight projects of 18-24 months, each c£200K
- All projects led by an Independent Research Organisation (IRO) in partnership with a Higher Education Institution (HEI), with further IRO and other partners
- All employing a digital humanities post-doctoral researcher
- Projects are reviewing current position, testing methodologies through case studies, presenting recommendations for future practice
Foundation Projects

**The National Gallery: Practical applications of IIIF**

Aims to understand current use of the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) and explore what new tools and/or services are needed. Co-Investigators: University of Edinburgh, British Library, National Portrait Gallery

**The National Archives: Deep Discoveries**

Aims to design a prototype app enabling cross-collection image linking by harnessing the ability of computer vision and deep learning methods to identify and recognise specific patterns without the need for preliminary integrated descriptive metadata. Co-Investigators: University of Surrey, V&A, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
Foundation Projects

**British Library: Locating a national collection**
Aims to help cultural heritage organisations to use geospatial data to connect diverse collections and engage research and public audiences in new ways. Co-Investigators: University of Exeter, National Trust, Historic Royal Palaces

**British Library: Persistent Identifiers**
Aims to develop a framework and recommendations on the approach to Persistent Identifiers for local, regional and national institutions across the UK heritage sector. Co-Investigators: University of Glasgow, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, The National Gallery

**Science Museum Group: Heritage Connector**
Aims to create a "Heritage Connection Engine" that will analyse catalogues, published material and knowledge graphs, and build links at massive scale. Co-Investigator: University of London
Foundation Projects

**Tate: Provisional Semantics**
Aims to develop ethical, equitable and transparent readings to support a more diverse public to engage with the digitised national collection. Co-Investigator: University of the Arts London, Imperial War Museum, National Trust

**The National Archives: Engaging Crowds**

**V&A: Born Digital**
Aims to ensure born-digital culture remains an integral and research-led part of the national collections of cultural heritage. Co-Investigators: Birkbeck College, British Film Institute
Objectives

• Carry out world-class interdisciplinary research in key thematic areas
• Grow and diversify audiences by introducing the public to new ways of engaging with the collections
• Devise technological and organizational solutions to the barriers between online collections and catalogues
• Deliver benefit not only to the IROs, but also to collections of other organisations of varied scale and geographic location
• Create a sound evidence base for the future development of a virtual ‘national collection’
• Produce evidence-based policy recommendations
Delivering impact

Discovery Projects should deliver impact in all three of the following areas:

• **Dissolving barriers between collections** – addressing technological, organisational and other issues that stand in the way of an integrated virtual ‘national collection’

• **Research capability** – enhancing researchers’ ability to address research questions which draw on a heterogeneous range of sources

• **Public engagement** – enhancing and innovating in access for all stakeholders in the form of major research-driven public-facing outputs
Eligibility

• All proposals must have a core collaboration between one or more HEI and one or more IRO

• The Principal Investigator can be from either an HEI or an IRO

• Staff based in university museums, galleries, libraries and archives are eligible to be Principal Investigators or Co-Investigators

• Any single IRO or HEI can lead a maximum of three outline proposals

• All proposals are strongly encouraged to include collection organisations and stakeholders beyond the Independent Research Organisations
Partnerships

• The term ‘national collection’ represents the breadth and range of culture and heritage collections across the UK

• Private sector and international partnerships are welcome

• Project Partners make a specific contribution either in cash or in kind; a minor element of costs can be included

• Collaborating Organisations can have a more significant element of their costs funded by the grant

• IROs and university museums, galleries, libraries and archives can be Project Partners, but cannot be Collaborating Organisations

• Project Partners and Collaborating Organisations can be based in the UK or overseas
Application Process

• Two-stage application process: outline and full

• Applications must be submitted through the Je-S system

• Outline proposals require a Case for Support, summary CVs and project partner letters of support

• Outline proposals should focus on articulating a compelling, coherent and deliverable vision

• It is not expected that some components, such as costs and partnerships, will be finalised at outline stage
Application Process

- Outline proposals will go through a panel process
- Shortlisted proposals will be invited to a workshop that will provide guidance and advice before full proposals are prepared
- Applicants must submit an outline proposal, be shortlisted, and attend the workshop in order to submit a full stage proposal
- Full applications require Case for Support, summary CVs and publication lists, project partner letters of support, justification of resources, timetable and data management plan
- Full proposals will go through a full peer-review, Principal Investigator-response and panel process
Timetable

• Call specification launched: 28 April 2020
• Deadline for outline proposals: 17 November 2020
• Workshop for shortlisted outline applicants: 17 February 2021
• Deadline for full applications: 29 April 2021
• Successful projects notified: late September 2021
• Discovery Projects must start by: 1 December 2021
• Discovery Projects must end by: 30 November 2024
COVID-19 Response

Urgency Call

• Towards a National Collection Urgency Call launched 6 May 2020
• Focus on researching how collections are shared and consumed during lockdown, and lessons from that for the future
• No deadlines, short application form, rapid assessment

#CollectionsUnited

• #CollectionsUnited social media campaign launched 12 May 2020
• Join in by posting images from more than one collection, telling the story of what connects them
• Use the hashtag #CollectionsUnited
Consultation with the Programme Director on proposal ideas is encouraged

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Share your ideas and seek partners:

https://jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?AO=NATIONALCOLLECTION