International Placement Scheme Reopened 2018

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Introduction

The International Placement Scheme (IPS) is an annual programme providing Research Fellowships to AHRC funded doctoral students, early career researchers and doctoral-level research assistants.

The purpose of the Call (described as an 'IPS Fellowship') is to provide Early Career Researchers (ECRs), doctoral level research assistants and AHRC funded doctoral students with dedicated access to the internationally renowned collections/programmes/expertise held at the IPS institutions. The IPS scheme has been reopened and applicants are invited to submit applications to the following world-leading, international institutions:

- National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU), Japan[1]
- Shanghai Theatre Academy (STA), Shanghai, China
- Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., USA

The AHRC offers differing numbers of placements at each institution (please see the guidance on costs section VI for the proposed numbers). Placements will be for 3-6 months; the total awarded consists of an £870 stipend for travel and visa costs and a living stipend of £1200 for each month of the fellowship. Please see the AHRC website for case studies and further information from previous IPS Fellows.

Applications should be made through Je-S; please see Section VII below for further information. The deadline for applications is **16:00 (GMT) on Wednesday 28th February 2018.**

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[1] NIHU is comprised of six institutes, the names of which are listed in section X 'Contacts' at the bottom of this document. The above link acts as a landing page to the guidebook informing about the individual institutes, whilst the contact details at the bottom of the document provide links direct to the individual institutes.

Context

The IPS scheme represents a unique opportunity for young researchers to benefit from the AHRC's and IPS Hosts' strong commitment to enhance our fellows experience and skills, enrich individual projects and develop and strengthen international relationships.

Co-operating with our hosts to fund these placements is a rewarding and valuable process which is directly responsible for positively impacting on our fellow's research. The scheme excels at providing opportunities to network and forge important contacts. Providing these early opportunities and connections has been crucial to the development and improvement of career progression and personal goals. To date we have funded 484 awards.

Aims of the Call

The Call aims to:
- provide ECRs, doctoral level research assistants and AHRC funded doctoral students, with dedicated access to the internationally renowned collections/programmes/expertise held at these three IPS institutions;
- enhance the depth, range and quality of research activities conducted by scholars;
- create opportunities for networking with other international scholars at those institutions.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be either PhD students or doctoral level research assistants or ECR's.
- The Call is open to AHRC candidates only from the above groups. AHRC candidates are eligible to apply to all hosts.
- For the AHRC definition of 'Early Career' please see the [Research Funding Guide](#) section 3.8. ECRs must have a contract with a UK Research Organisation (RO) at the time of application to IPS that extends beyond the proposed end date of the IPS Fellowship. In addition to the AHRC's general ECR eligibility criteria ECRs must have previously held AHRC funding (including PhD funding) or have had a role on an AHRC funded project (with the exception of STA and NIHU; please see 'Host-specific eligibility' below for further information). AHRC funded ECRs must include their previous grant reference in the application form.
- Research assistants must be of doctoral standing i.e. have a PhD or equivalent research experience. Please see section 3.7 of our [Research Funding Guide](#) for further information on Research Assistants.
- PhD Students must be AHRC-funded students. **PhD students are only eligible to apply in the funded period of their award (not their writing-up year).** No additional time will be added to the doctoral award end date to compensate for time spent on the IPS award. PhD students must enter the grant reference of their current grant in the 'Grant Reference' section of the application form.
- AHRC applicants must be applying to undertake primary research in an AHRC subject area for all hosts.
- The project will be assessed on how well it demonstrates relevance to your PhD, therefore the proposed research activities and outputs for the project should complement or feed into your PhD directly.
- Applications are welcomed from full or part time candidates, during the IPS placement fellows will be expected to dedicate full time hours to the placement.
- Applicants can apply for a Fellowship at more than one of the institutions in a single round, but dates and applications must be separate and distinct, must not overlap, and applications must not be interdependent.

- All placements must take place in one continuous block of time; Fellows are not permitted to have breaks of time between each month of the placement.
- Applicants can only hold an IPS fellowship at the same IPS institution once in each stage of their career i.e. once as a student and once as an ECR.
- Deferred entry applications are not permitted. If successful applicants are unable to undertake their IPS placement they would have to reapply the following year.

Host-Specific Eligibility

If a host has any individual requirements it will be listed in the bullet points below:

- NIHU: Applicants to National Institute of Japanese Literature (NIJL) and National Museum of Japanese History (NMJH) require applicants to speak and understand Japanese to an advanced level. For all other NIHU institutes, a knowledge of basic (conversational) Japanese is useful, but not compulsory.
- NIHU: ECR applicants are not required to hold or have held any AHRC funding.
- STA: ECR applicants are not required to hold or have held any AHRC funding.
- STA: Knowledge of basic (conversational) Mandarin is recommended for all applicants.
- Smithsonian: Applicants **must** select a contact at the Smithsonian Institutions who will act as an advisor should the application be successful. Please use this template in order to contact Smithsonian (contact information is listed in the final section of this document).
- Smithsonian: Applicants will also need to register on Smithsonian's online system called. SOLAA. Please do not start this process until prompted by the AHRC coordinator.

Additional Requirements of Applying

Before applying, candidates must ensure that their UK RO /supervisor/Head of Department/mentor will be content to release them for the placement should their application be successful.

Applicants **must** identify and research the institution's collections, fully familiarising themselves with the collections and how they are relevant to their own research. Please see the websites for each individual institution above as a starting point to investigate the collections. Following this, candidates are able to contact the relevant IPS institution in order to discuss their potential application and for information about the collections. For some placement institutions contact is mandatory, for others this is optional. A list explaining this can be found below. Any contact should be made as soon as possible before the AHRC application deadline; contact details can be found in section 7 below.

Placement Institution	Contact requirements
National Institutes for the Humanities	Applicants must contact NIHU
Shanghai Theatre Academy	Applicants must contact Shanghai Theatre Academy
Smithsonian Institution	Applicants must contact the Smithsonian

Guidance on Costs and Project Timescales

All IPS placements will be for three to six months, and the total awarded will be a £870 one-off stipend for travel and visa costs and a living stipend of £1200 for each month of the Fellowship. All costs will be paid directly to the submitting UK Research Organisation (RO) at 100% FEC. **It is a condition of the award that the RO pays funds to fellows in full, in advance of the placement.** This will allow flights and accommodation to be booked by the Fellow in advance of their placement. The RO will then recoup the funds when these are paid to them by AHRC.

IPS fellows will continue to receive any stipend/salary they receive as part of any current AHRC award funding. No additional time will be added to the AHRC award end date or submission date to compensate for time spent on their placement.

IPS fellowships cannot be extended or reduced, so careful consideration must be given to the time required to complete their proposed research. Applicants should discuss their work plan with their UK RO supervisor and the placement institution to ensure that their proposed research can be completed within a realistic timescale, and will appropriately feed into the applicant's current research or any AHRC parent project.

The number of Fellowships the AHRC expects to award at each host can be found in the table below, as well as the eligible time period for undertaking a placement:

Host	Expected Awards	Window for Fellowships to Take Place	Fellowship Duration
National Institutes for the Humanities	11	1st July 2018 – 30th June 2019	3-6 months
Shanghai Theatre Academy	4	1st Sept 2018 - 31st Dec 2018 OR 1st March 2019 - 30th June 2019	3 - 4 months
Smithsonian Institution	5	1st Oct 2018 – 30th Sept 2019	3-6 months

Application Process and Format

Applications should be completed and submitted using the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/) by **16:00 (GMT) on Wednesday 28th February 2018,** and will need to go through the approval process at the UK RO prior to this deadline. There is no cap on the numbers of applications that can be submitted by a UK RO.

Please note that we cannot accept applications directly from students: the application must come from the UK RO and be in the name of someone at the RO eligible to submit an application (for example a member of staff in the Research Office), please speak to your Research Office or Je-S administrators for guidance on who should submit your application (although you will need to complete elements of the application yourself). ECRs should submit their own application following the UK RO approval and submission process.

The International Placement Scheme has some specific requirements that should be followed when completing the application form in Je-S. How to complete the Je-S application form for IPS provides guidance on the information that needs supplied, including what to enter in the application form itself and which attachments are permitted.

Assessment Process and Criteria

Unless otherwise stated, the assessment process and criteria detailed in the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) will apply. The Call timetable is below:

Activity	Date
Call re-open for submissions on Je-S	1st February 2018
Deadline for submissions	4pm 28th February 2018
Office checks	28th February – 5th March 2018
Peer Review	5th March- 30th March 2018
Moderating meetings dates	30th March 2018- 30th April 2018
Funding decisions to be issued (Outcome Letters)	Mid-End of May 2018
Official Outcome Documents	End of May – End of June (if no changes to placement dates)
Start date of awards	Varies dependent on Placement Institution
End date of awards	Varies dependent on Placement Institution

During the assessment process the following criteria will be considered:

- the extent to which the proposed research fits the collections identified in the application;
- the extent to which the fellowship and collections to be consulted would 'add value' to their research (especially if the collections are unique or rare); applicants may suggest how their fellowship may be of value to the IPS institution;
- the extent to which the fellowship would be an effective use of the applicant's time - applicants may include a timetable;
- the extent to which the application identifies personal development opportunities through networking with other research scholars. This might include the presentation of on-going work or immediate or longer term collaborative opportunities;
- if the intended research is to be practice-led, the applicant's own practice must be an integral part of the application and the creative/performative aspects of the research must be made explicit. The applicant must explain how practice is an integral part of the project and not just the outcome;
- where appropriate, the applicant must demonstrate that they have the necessary expertise required to undertake the proposed research, for example, language proficiency if the applicant wishes to research works written/spoken in a language other than English.

Applications will be peer reviewed by relevant experts at the placement institution and then moderated by AHRC. Details of the grading scale used for IPS can be found on our website [here](#).

Outcomes

Funding decisions will be communicated to the persons who were selected as 'grant holders' on the application form, where the applicant is a student this email should be forwarded to them without delay.

The email will provide successful applicants with further information about their placement and will ask successful applicants to confirm their start and end dates of their placement. Applicants will have **10 working days** to confirm this. Failure to do so will result in AHRC using the dates originally selected in the application. Beyond this, applicants will be required to contact the host institution directly to discuss any changes before contacting AHRC to process the changes.

Around 30 days from the first successful notification the UK RO will receive an official offer letter from the AHRC confirming the dates and funding amount, this should be made available to the student or ECR. Finally you will receive documentation from your placement institution; further details of this will be provided if your application is successful.

General Information, Scheme Requirements & Post Award Reporting

If successful, IPS Fellows are responsible for booking travel and accommodation (including any travel insurance) and securing appropriate visa arrangements themselves. Local accommodation is available close to each host institution, further information regarding accommodation options will be provided if you are successful.

The offer letter issued by AHRC and the paperwork from individual placement institutions will be enough to secure your visa, and your UK RO may be able to assist you in making a visa application. Applicants are advised to start the visa application process as early as possible.

On completion of the IPS fellowship, the AHRC will contact applicants asking them to submit feedback on their placement. AHRC may also contact Fellows in the future to understand more about the impact the award has had on their career.

IPS Fellows do not need to submit receipts for living expenses, visas or flight costs following the end of the award. If there has been any underspend on the travel and visa costs this money can be transferred to spend on living costs without any requirement for permission from AHRC. However if IPS Fellows do not spend all of the funds allotted to them from the award (e.g. if the Fellow does not stay for the whole award period) the RO should return any unspent funds at reconciliation (applicants should discuss this process with their RO directly).

All recipients of Research Council funding are required to enter the details of their outputs and impacts through the researchfish® system. Students are only required to enter details in researchfish® from the third year of their PhD onwards; Early Career Researchers are required to enter details from the first year of their main research grant. Invitation emails will be sent to award holders at the point at which they are required to start using researchfish®. More details regarding researchfish® are available on the RCUK website here: www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/researchoutcomes.

For further information on supporting training awards please see the RCUK Training Grant Guide, RCUK Training grant Terms and Conditions and the Funding for Research Training page.

Contact Information

Please contact AHRC enquiries if you have any queries (available Monday to Friday 8:30-5:00):
Email: enquiries@ahrc.ac.uk or phone: 01793 416060

For queries on creating Je-S accounts and completing and submitting the Je-S application form please initially refer to the Completing the Je-S Application Form guidance, should you require further assistance please contact the Je-S Helpdesk on 01793 444164 or jeshelp@rcuk.ac.uk who are available 9-5 Monday to Friday.

Contacts for each Host Institution

Please find a list of appropriate contacts at each placement institution below, who can be contacted to discuss the application:

National Institutes for the Humanities	Please see separate table below; NIHU has many different institutes with separate contacts
Shanghai Theatre Academy	Anne ZONG Yu, Assistant Director, STA International Cooperation Office, annezong@139.com or annezong@hotmail.com, 0086-21-62486050.
Smithsonian Institution	From this page please select a name by clicking into the 2017 SORS PDF and searching for the appropriate individual. If successful, the selected individual will act as advisor during the applicant's time at Smithsonian. As such applicants **must** include the name and department of their advisor when submitting their application form to AHRC. When contacting the Smithsonian please use this template

NIHU Institutes	Contact department and email
Research Institute for Humanity and Nature	International Affairs Subsection kokusai@chikyu.ac.jp
International Research Centre for Japanese Studies	koryu@nichibun.ac.jp International Projects Unit
National Museum of Ethnology	kokkyo@idc.minpaku.ac.jp International Cooperation Unit
National Museum of Japanese History	Department kokusai-e@ml.rekihaku.ac.jp International Exchange Section
National Institute of Japanese Literature	study-ml@nijl.ac.jp Research Support Unit, Administration Department
National Institute for Japanese Language & Linguistics	kenkyu-shien@ninjal.ac.jp Research Promotion Division