



## **Collaborative Research Training Scheme – targeted call in Language skills training**

### **Specialist Awards (£10,000)**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Collaborative Research Training (CRT) scheme was developed as part of the AHRC's research training framework. It provides pump-priming funds to support institutions in establishing new, or enhancing existing, specialist research training provision for doctoral students in the arts and humanities, in collaboration with at least one other institution, or a museum, gallery, library or archive.
2. **This call of the Specialist awards route enables institutions to offer language training to groups of students in several institutions where it is not possible or cost-effective to provide the training to students in just one department or institution.** The expectation is that through this collaboration, an enhanced quality of language skills training and student experience can be provided.
3. It offers funds of up to **£10,000** for research training provision involving collaboration between at least two institutions or institutions and other organisations. A further **£1000** is available towards staff costs if institutions are able to provide sufficient justification that this will add value to the proposed training provision.
4. We recognise that language training of students will cover a very broad range of skills and development needs, from reading and writing skills to more specialist skills needed for in-depth archival study. We would also acknowledge that certain programmes may be considered both directly relevant to a research subject whilst at the same time providing students with skills that are transferable to careers outside of academia. Training provision including such activities as the exchange of knowledge, public engagement, interaction with professional bodies or practitioners, falls within the remit of this scheme.

#### **Aims of the scheme**

5. The scheme aims:
  - to support the provision of language skills training
  - to support higher education institutions and other organisations throughout the UK to establish new or enhance existing language skills training provision for doctoral students in the arts and humanities on a collaborative basis
  - to enable institutions to offer this training to groups of students in several institutions, where it is not possible or not cost-effective to provide the

training to students in a single department or institution, or where collaboration will provide a higher quality of provision and experience than a single institution could achieve.

- to encourage collaboration between institutions and museums, galleries, archives, libraries, institutions outside of the HE sector, professional bodies or any other organisation that has an interest in language skills training
- through such collaborations, to enhance the quality of training and student experience which can be provided in this area.

#### **Funding available**

6. In this category funding of up to £10,000 is available for specialist training in areas of language skills training:
  - training will typically involve collaboration on a local or regional scale
  - the collaboration should involve departments of at least two separate institutions, or a department within an institution and another organisation.
7. Applications in this category may also include requests for support for the collaborative development of high-quality software and/or training resources that can be delivered to students at their individual institutions.

#### **Language skills training– targeted call**

8. Recent studies and consultations in our community, such as the British Academy Study 'Language Matters', and the review commissioned by HEFCE of Modern Foreign Languages, have identified Language skills training as a major issue. The BA study concluded that UK researchers lacked essential foreign language skills, which limits the scope of research projects they can work on and their international competitiveness.
9. The AHRC considers that a targeted call in the Specialist Category of the Collaborative Research Training (CRT) scheme would be valuable in addressing training needs in this area. The call will welcome a variety of different approaches to language skills training, although programmes with an emphasis on skills in Modern Languages (encompassing Languages across the world) will be particularly welcomed. Programmes are likely to support students working in a variety of arts and humanities subjects, not just those working in Language or Area Studies. For example a programme may wish to support reading skills needed for history students' archival research.
10. The call aims to support a broad range of language skills training. Programmes could address training needs in the following, although please note this is not an exhaustive list:
  - Reading and listening skills
  - comprehension skills
  - speaking and writing skills
  - Advanced and specialist training for existing language students
11. This call will also support programmes of training for students who wish to improve their language skills as part of their career development.

Applications could involve collaborations between academic departments, and/or Language Centres. The AHRC wishes to encourage innovative approaches to this training issue, and also approaches that will lead to long-term networks of training provision. In planning the sustainability of programmes the AHRC would encourage applicants to consider development of materials, software, or online provision, providing students with a long-term training resource for the future.

If you have any queries about the potential eligibility of a proposed application, please contact the office (contact details at the end of this document).

12. If you are interested in applying to the scheme but would like information on existing student-led activities and programmes, then Vitae's Database of Practice may be a helpful resource for you. This is an on-line resource which includes over 600 examples of practice and initiatives run within the Higher Education sector that are contributing to the skills and career development of researchers. The database can be found at:  
<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/34837/Database-of-practice.html>

13. If you would like further information on the AHRC's research training framework and the skills training it expects its award holders to receive please see our website at:  
<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Pages/ResearchTrainingFramework.aspx>

This page also provides a link to the Research Councils' Joint Statement of Skills, which provides a useful guide to the generic and subject-specific skills postgraduate researchers should expect to develop during their studies.

We would encourage you to be aware of the revised **Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers** which was published in 2008. This sets out the expectations and responsibilities of researchers, their managers, employers and funders.

The Concordat consists of a set of key principles for the future support and management of research careers, and under each principle, an explanation of how it may be embedded into institutional practice:

<http://www.researchconcordat.ac.uk/>

## Applying to the scheme

### The collaboration and the institutions and organisations involved

14. All applications must involve departments from at least two Higher Education Institutions, or a HEI and another organisation, although we welcome and encourage larger collaborations.
15. A lead institution must be identified to coordinate the proposal and to act as the contact for correspondence. The lead institution must **either** be a Higher Education Institution directly funded by HEFCE, DEL, HEFCW or SHEFC **or** an AHRC recognised Independent Research Organisation (IRO). Where the application is led by an IRO, the proposed training scheme must include collaboration with at least one HEI based in the UK.

16. Any museums, galleries, libraries or archives can be involved as a collaborative partner, provided they are based in the UK and part of a bid led by an HEI or an IRO.
17. If the application is successful, the award will be made to the lead institution/IRO which will be responsible for transferring any funds to partner institutions/organisations. A lead institution/IRO may collaborate on other bids and there is no limit to the number of collaborations in which any department or institution may be involved.
18. Whilst an institution or IRO may lead on more than one proposal, provided these are for separate training programmes, we would not expect a head of department, or equivalent, to be leading on more than one proposal.
19. The AHRC recognises that given the distinctive nature of language skills training there may be potential for training collaborations outside the UK. In exceptional cases we will therefore consider collaborations with a higher education institution or organisation based outside of the UK. Where such collaboration is proposed, the lead applicant will need to state what additional benefits will be gained from the collaboration, and in particular to demonstrate clearly the benefits to UK doctoral students.
20. We welcome collaborations involving an institution or organisation outside the HE sector or outside the UK. However as the AHRC can make payments only to UK institutions or IROs, any proposed collaborative programmes such institutions or organisations should be led by a UK HEI or IRO.
21. Only one application should be submitted for each collaborative programme, we will not accept applications covering different aspects of a single programme or from different partners involved in the collaboration.

**Who should benefit from the collaborative research training programmes?**

22. As part of the application process, we request information on the number of arts and humanities doctoral students and AHRC award holders who are likely to benefit from the provision. We will take this information into account alongside the nature and quality of the provision and the costs sought when assessing the proposal.
23. The research training provided through this scheme should be open to all relevant arts and humanities doctoral students, but priority should be given to doctoral students funded by the AHRC. Whilst we would not discourage Master's-level students or students from other disciplines benefiting from the research training, priority must be given to doctoral students in the arts and humanities.
24. Where students other than arts and humanities doctoral students attend activities arising from AHRC-funded research training programmes, the costs arising from their attendance must be met by the institutions involved.
25. The training provision should be available, as appropriate, to UK and EU students both full-time and part-time.

## Application and assessment processes

26. Applications should be submitted by the lead institution or IRO. We require the original application form (i.e. with original signatures) and three photocopies. We will not accept any applications that arrive at the AHRC after 5:00pm on 9 July 2010, nor will we accept applications electronically or by fax.

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>9 July 2010</b>           | Closing date for receipt of applications |
| <b>early August 2010</b>     | Notification of outcome of applications  |
| <b>October/November 2010</b> | Start date of awards                     |

It is envisaged that between 5 – 10 awards will be made, depending on the quality of applications received and the amounts bid for by successful applicants.

### Assessment criteria

27. Applications in this category of the scheme will be assessed by the AHRC Executive.
28. Applications for specialist awards will be assessed according to the following criteria:
- whether the proposal meets the aims of the scheme (see paragraph 5)
    - in supporting the provision of training in the area of language skills training
    - in establishing new or enhancing existing training provision
    - in enabling institutions/organisations to offer this training to groups of students in several institutions/organisations
  - the quality of the proposed research training programme
  - the extent to which a case is made that a collaborative approach to the training is necessary, and provides more than one institution alone could offer to its research students
  - whether a realistic timetable, incorporating milestones, is presented which will achieve the programme's aims and objectives within the proposed timescale
  - evidence that the training will be delivered to a range of students (with priority given to AHRC-funded doctoral students, and extended to broader groups of doctoral students where appropriate), and that it can be delivered to groups of an appropriate size
  - evidence that effective plans are in place for publicising the training to the appropriate students
  - the extent to which the training programme will represent value for money
  - evidence that procedures are in place at the institutions or organisations involved in the bid for evaluating and ensuring the high quality of the training developed and delivered

- the extent to which there are clear plans for ensuring the sustainability of the training provision after the AHRC's funding ends, including any alternative means of resourcing that will be available

**AHRC monitoring**

29. Funds will be awarded on the basis of the information provided in the application form. The lead institution/IRO must be in a position to alert the Council to any significant deviation between the actual spend and the costs requested.
30. You will be required to submit a short report as well as a final expenditure statement at the end of the award. This will provide details on how the funds have been spent and the extent to which the original aims and objectives detailed in the application have been met.

## **Guidance notes on completing the application form**

1. The Head of Department or equivalent in the lead institution or Independent Research Organisation (IRO) should complete the form. It should be word-processed in at least 10pt font.
2. All sections of the form should be completed; we are unable to accept applications that are incomplete. Please ensure that you preserve the format of the application form and that the text boxes do not run onto subsequent pages. Small boxes may be completed by hand if you are unable to complete them electronically.
3. You may include additional pages in section 5 but please do not exceed the page or word limit. Please ensure that you include your name, title of provision, and page number on any additional pages.
4. Please staple the completed application form; do not bind the pages or use paper clips.

## **Section 1: Title of provision**

5. Please include a title for your training provision. The title will be used for publicity purposes if the award is successful so should be meaningful to a non-specialist audience.
6. Please include the proposed dates of the training provision.

## **Section 2: Details of the lead applicant**

7. We ask that you identify one institution/IRO, and an individual from that institution/IRO to lead the application. The collaborating organisations will need to decide which organisation is best placed to lead the bid, but should bear in mind the following:
  - all AHRC correspondence will be sent to the lead institution/IRO
  - if the bid is successful then the award payments will be made to the lead institution/IRO
  - the lead institution/IRO must be eligible to receive funding from the AHRC (i.e. be a UK HEI funded by one of the four UK Higher Education Funding Councils or an AHRC-recognised Independent Research Organisation)
  - the AHRC will monitor successful awards so the lead institution/IRO must be in a position to update the Council on progress with the project.
8. In some cases, the majority of the training provision may be delivered by an organisation that is not eligible to receive AHRC funding because it is not an HEI funded by one of the UK HEFCs or an IRO. In such cases you need to:
  - select a collaborating institution/IRO to lead the bid
  - make it clear under sections 5 and 7 how the training will be provided and how the funding will be allocated.

### **Section 3: Details of Institutions or organisations involved**

9. List institutions/departments or organisations involved in planning, developing and delivering the programme or resource, and describe their role and contribution to the overall programme.
10. For each of the institutions and organisations involved we ask you to describe briefly what provision is available currently and set out what difference the provision would make.
11. For each institution or organisation list their responsibilities for coordinating each stage of development, and what stage discussions with partner institutions/organisations have reached.

### **Section 4: List potential student participation**

12. List departments and institutions whose students will participate in the training your programme will provide (highlight whether they are expressions of interest or firm commitments).
13. For each institution, you should give an indication of the number of doctoral students likely to have access to the programme. We recognise that these will be indicative numbers only, so it would be helpful if you could say how the figure was reached - for example, it might be based on previous experience of running a similar training programme.
14. You should distinguish between the numbers of AHRC-supported students that will have access to the provision and students supported by other means.

### **Section 5: Case for Support**

15. You should use the space provided on the form and not more than 3 additional sides of A4 and a maximum of 2,000 words. We recommend that you structure your case for support under the following headings.

#### **Aims and objectives**

You should describe clearly how your proposed programme meets the aims of the scheme and articulate the objectives and what you hope to achieve within the period of the AHRC award and in the longer term.

#### **Programme Management**

You should give a full description of the programme of training you will be providing. You should indicate how the provision will be developed (for example, outline who will be involved and what each of their roles will be).

If you plan to run a training programme or series of events you should articulate;

- how often these events will run;
- where they will be held;
- their duration;
- what will be included;
- how you would decide on who should attend if you can only accommodate a limited number of students.

If you are requesting support to develop high-quality software then you should specify; what the software will be; who will be involved in the software's development; when, how and to whom it will be made available.

### **Timetable and targets**

What is the timetable for the proposed programme? Give an idea of the timescale (for example, whether the provision will be made available as a single package or phased in, or available through a series of events). Indicate how long it will take to establish the provision or particular units. Indicate specific targets for the programme, preferably including milestones (targets will depend on whether this is a new or existing programme, but they should be relevant, achievable and measurable, for example, they could be set in terms of numbers of students trained.)

You should mention any foreseeable barriers to developing the provision or making it accessible. For example, in the case of a specialist resource, will this be unavailable for part of the year because it has already been committed elsewhere or because access requires technical assistance? Do you foresee any problems in attracting the appropriate students to the training programme? Please say how any barriers identified will be overcome.

### **Added Value**

You should describe in what ways the programme will provide language skills training opportunities that would not otherwise be available to research students in the field. Illustrate with specific examples where possible (such as feedback on current provision, or requests you may have had from institutions for additional provision of the type being requested). What are the intended benefits to students?

You need to distinguish between enhancing existing provision and establishing new provision. If you intend to establish new provision you will need to explain why there is now the need for this programme of training. If it is an existing provision, please describe how your programme will provide added value, and why AHRC funding is now needed in this area.

### **Publicity**

You should set out your plans for making the programme available to the widest possible audience, for example describing the planned marketing or publicity strategies. Do these already exist? If not, how will they be developed and on what timescale? If the programme will be at a fixed location, how will you ensure equitable access for all eligible students? Assuming the access is limited; you should say how access to the programme would be decided.

### **Contribution and Enhancement**

You should demonstrate that this programme will provide training over and above that already available within the collaborating institutions. For example, collaborative training could enable each institution to provide language skills training for a group of students that they would otherwise be unable to offer; it could provide higher quality training than any participating institution could achieve on its own; or it could provide a group of students with practical experience of working on a resource within a museum, gallery, library or archive.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

You should outline the quality assurance procedures you will put in place to ensure that high quality training is developed and delivered through your proposed programme. (We would expect this to involve some form of formal

reporting to a Research Degrees Committee or similar at the lead institution, and some form of financial monitoring.) You should also describe any plans for evaluating the programme. One such method could be in the form of gaining feedback from all participants on their involvement in your programme.

### **Dissemination**

In the process of developing the training provision, we would encourage applicants to consider how materials or resources from the training might be made available to the wider arts and humanities postgraduate community. If you are planning to disseminate these materials, please give details of these plans saying how they will be disseminated and your target audience.

If such dissemination involves the use of a website or other electronic formats, please describe how its quality, accuracy and sustainability will be maintained throughout the course of the provision, and beyond if appropriate. This may involve working with the IT department or equivalent at the lead institution/IRO.

## **Section 6: Budget**

16. Please specify the costs for each award year under each of the headings provided. Clearly, not all bids will require costs under all headings. If you are not requesting costs under a particular heading, please write 'NA' (Not Applicable) in the 'costs' column. If costs are requested for only one year, please write 'NA' in all boxes under the appropriate year.

17. For awards that are two years in duration you should **not** build in an inflation factor as we will add this based on government forecasts.

18. Institutions will be expected to contribute to the costs through, for example, space and generic equipment and other resources. The AHRC will not request detailed information about the institution's contribution to such costs. Costs that are **not eligible** are therefore:

- costs of hiring or refurbishing rooms within participating higher education institutions or internal space charges
- costs for generic equipment which could reasonably be expected to be provided by the collaborating institutions.
- Please provide a **clear and detailed** breakdown of how costs will be allocated and what added value the AHRC funding will provide. If the project is likely to cost in excess of £10,000 please state what other funding has been appropriated or sought. The AHRC reserves the right to remove costs that are considered to be unreasonable or ineligible.

19. We will provide costs only under the headings specified below:

### *Travel and subsistence*

This should include all funds that are allocated towards the costs of travel, accommodation and subsistence for both participants and delegates. Food and refreshments provided at events should also be included here. Where possible, you should give an indication of the number of courses you plan to run, the possible locations, duration, and numbers attending each course, so that you can give a rough estimate of the travel and accommodation costs. We would expect you to use the most economical means available, for example, using university accommodation.

Costs for travel and accommodation can be estimated but any funds that are not spent as outlined in the original proposal will be reclaimed at the end of the award.

Subsistence rates should be recorded as a flat rate, per person, per day e.g. 3 people for 2 days @ £20 per day = £120.00

#### *Equipment*

Any specialist equipment required to complete the initiative should be included here. Please note the above exception regarding generic equipment which could reasonably be expected to be provided by the collaborating institutions.

#### *Consumables*

Examples of items to be included under this heading are; stationary, conference packs, name badges etc. Publicity costs **should not** be included here.

#### *Other Costs*

All other costs should be included here. Examples of costs that could be considered as 'other' are; one-off technical training costs for the lead or named collaborating students; publicity costs; costs of bought in services such as web design.

**External trainer or consultant** – funding for this will be provided only in exceptional cases, for example, where the expertise available within the collaborating institutions and organisations does not include a highly specialised but crucial area. You will need to state their role and the period of time their services will be required.

#### *Staff costs*

**Academic costs:** an additional £1,000 over the £10,000 limit may be included as a contribution towards the cost of the time spent by the lead applicant in establishing and managing the programme. **Please explain how this cost will add value to the proposed training programme. We reserve the right to remove this cost if it is not adequately justified.** You should also briefly describe how in practice your institution will enable you to devote the time requested to the programme. Any postgraduate training to be provided by academic staff from any of the collaborating institutions may not be included in the proposal.

**Administrative, secretarial or technical support:** we will pay for the costs on a per hour basis of administrative, secretarial or technical support. The nature of the support they will provide, the need for it, the cost per hour, and the number of hours they will be required will need to be specified. Please note that we will not provide replacement teaching costs for academics to work on this programme. Please separate these costs from the academic costs, although they need to be included in the same section.

Actual expenditure must be reported to the AHRC through a final expenditure statement at the end of the award and reconciled against the original costs as outlined within the proposal. It is recommended that any costs included within the proposal are as accurate as possible as there is no scope for supplementation

of the award once it has been made. Please note that there is also no scope for increasing the total by any inflationary sum.

### **Section 7: Justification of costs**

20. Please make a case for the resources requested under section 6. Use the space provided on the form; **do not** continue onto additional sheets. You should address the points below. If more than one year's funding is being requested then you should ensure you justify the costs for both years.

Please Note: While we appreciate that some unforeseen changes may arise, any substantial changes will need to be cleared in advance with the AHRC. The AHRC reserves the right to reclaim any unspent funds.

21. Take each heading from the budget section and explain why the resources requested are necessary. Take care to distinguish between setting up and running costs, bearing in mind that this scheme is intended primarily to provide pump-priming support. Ensure you provide a breakdown of costs and explain how you came to these figures.
22. If you are applying for costs for an external trainer or consultant you should explain why this expertise is not available from the collaborating institutions or organisations.
23. If funds will be divided between two or more institutions and organisations, please detail the costs to each institution/organisation under each budget heading. The information you provide should be in line with that provided under Section 6. You should also explain how the institutional transfer of funds will be organised; we do not need details, but we do need reassurance that funds will be allocated to the collaborating institutions/organisations as specified in the application.
24. If there will be additional funding from the institution(s) or other bodies, please provide details. We expect the institutions to contribute to the costs through staff time, space, generic equipment etc. You do not need to provide details of this provision but you may do so if you think this will help in support of your case. We are looking for the AHRC-funded provision to give added value so you may wish to give an indication of 'background' support as a way of making the case for added value. We would be interested in details of support from other bodies, for example, support from industry. We do not need full details just an indication of any financial or other support provided.

#### **Sustainability of the provision**

25. What plans, if any, are there to continue provision beyond the period of the AHRC award and how will this be financed? The AHRC funding is for a maximum of two years only; please say whether you intend to continue the provision when the AHRC funding comes to an end. If so, please say either how the provision will continue to be financed, or the plans you have for seeking additional funding to ensure sustainability.

### **Section 8: Subject area**

26. Please indicate the subject area(s) in which your application falls.

## Section 9: Institution's authorisation

27. Someone with the appropriate authority within the lead institution or IRO (e.g. the Head of the Research or Finance Office) should authorise the application by signing the form and stamping it with the institution's or IRO's stamp.
28. In signing the form, the institution or IRO agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the scheme and to inform the AHRC of any changes. Where the application has specified a transfer of funds to another institution or organisation, the lead institution or IRO agrees to transfer funds, as specified.
29. Please send the completed application form with original signatures, plus three copies, to the AHRC to arrive by **17:00 on 9 July 2010**. Please mark **FAO Lou Matter**. We cannot accept applications sent by fax or e-mail, nor can we accept late, incomplete or unauthorised applications. Applications should be sent to the AHRC, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, SWINDON, SN2 1FL. Contact details for general enquiries are as follows:

You are welcome to contact us if you have any queries about your proposal.  
Please contact:

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