



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



Research Networks and Workshops – Nature of Creativity

February 2006

Introduction

The Research Networks and Workshops scheme is designed to encourage and enable the discussion and development of ideas by researchers and practitioners across a range of disciplines, either through establishing new research networks or by running a series of workshops, seminars or similar events. Apart from the inherent value in encouraging interaction of this kind, enabling people from a range of backgrounds to engage in intellectual exchange, the scheme is also intended to assist researchers in exploring jointly ideas which could subsequently translate into research projects or inform developments in policy and practice.

The Research Networks and Workshops scheme operates both in responsive and strategic mode. Under the strategic mode the AHRC uses the scheme to invite proposals in specific areas where it is keen to stimulate intellectual exchange and development. **It is in this context that proposals for research networks and workshops are invited in the field of the Nature of Creativity.**

The AHRC is co-funding the Nature of Creativity call with Arts Council England, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). By working together, we hope to encourage a truly collaborative approach which will draw upon a wide range of perspectives to address the Nature of Creativity in new and imaginative ways.

Nature of Creativity

Background

Research in the arts, humanities and social sciences has a huge contribution to make to many industries, often in varied and imaginative ways. The range of organisations and businesses which utilise this pool of research is also diverse, ranging from museums and galleries and public organisations to the creative industries and business in general. Reports and publications such as the recent Cox Review of Creativity in Business and the DTI's Economics Paper 15: "Creativity, Design and Performance" demonstrate that creativity and innovation are increasingly seen as the key drivers of progress and development across all of these organisations, and highlight the roles of business, research and government in supporting creativity and its application.

Creativity in relation to the arts and humanities has been depicted as an indefinable entity, but new thinking from within and beyond the disciplines of the arts, humanities and social sciences may provide models for managing and developing creativity. We wish to enhance understanding about the nature of creativity and its relationships with innovation, the creative process and how creativity might be developed, the conditions which underpin creativity, the circumstances that lead from creativity to innovation and the relationships connecting creativity, innovation and risk by enabling cross-disciplinary dialogue that draws together thinking from a wide range of perspectives. We hope to support discussion that will illuminate whether there is a distinction between creativity and innovation in the knowledge economy and innovation arising through research and development processes working within different methodological frameworks.

We wish to stimulate discussion, and potentially research, on the nature of creativity. Whilst applications must be relevant to the arts and humanities we would welcome and expect proposals to utilise expertise and experience across a range of disciplines, and particularly encourage applications which are also relevant to the social sciences. Please see "Who can apply?" for further eligibility detail. We anticipate that the resulting research or other outputs will be relevant beyond the immediate academic sphere, to the creative industries and wider non-academic audiences.

What will the research networks and workshops be expected to achieve?

This call is not prescriptive about the exact focus of the workshops or networks, but proposals should build upon existing knowledge to enhance our understanding of creativity and innovation with particular reference to arts and humanities or arts, humanities and social sciences. In addition to the aims for the general Research Networks and Workshops Scheme (please refer to paragraphs 16, 18 and 19 of the [AHRC](#)

[Research Funding Guide](#)), all applications for networks and workshops will need to demonstrate the degree to which they address one or more of the following:

- Support new collaborative relationships between academics and practitioners, drawing upon the experiences of businesses as appropriate, to develop research that will lead to advances in knowledge and understanding;
- Bring together individuals who have complementary expertise and whose skills, knowledge and expertise will be enhanced by the collaboration;
- Encourage universities to work with other relevant partners to identify and/or develop mutually agreed research projects or themes that capitalise on the resources and expertise of the participating individuals or organisations;
- Propose projects which seek to build upon the existing knowledge base around creativity and innovation;
- Enable existing collaborations to explore new areas or themes of common interest and identify new areas of research;
- Encourage collaborations which will develop practical solutions for increasing creativity and innovation in policy and practice and/or within industry.

Applicants will be asked to specify the intended outputs of the proposed networks or workshops in the application form.

What kind of work can be supported?

The following examples of workshop or network themes are provided as suggestions and are not intended as a prescriptive list:

- The nature of creativity;
- The differences between creativity and innovation and the relationship between the two;
- Different models of the creative process;
- The conditions which stifle or stimulate creativity;
- The circumstances that lead from creativity to innovation;
- The role of risk in creativity and innovation;
- The value of creativity to business, the economy and society;
- Changes in how society understands creativity and values innovation in a knowledge economy;
- The identification of new and innovative areas of research in this field or development of research questions;
- Research which would inform the role of business, research or government in cultivating creativity and innovation.

You should refer to paragraphs 84 and 85 of the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) on what costs the AHRC can support under a research networks and workshops award and what criteria will be taken into account when they are being assessed. The maximum award Workshops award will be £15,000 and the maximum Networks award will be £30,000. The budget for the Nature of Creativity theme is £200,000 and we expect to support a number of both networks and workshops in this area. We do not currently have plans for any future calls on this theme.

Application Guide

You should read the general Research Networks and Workshops Scheme guide before applying. The following advice is in addition to the general Research Networks and Workshops Scheme guide.

Proposed networks or workshops should be interdisciplinary in nature, bringing together academics from a variety of institutions and disciplines. We expect that most proposals will bring together academics and practitioners and, where appropriate, businesses or other participants outside the sphere of academia. Full details of our subject area are available at http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/about/subject_coverage.asp. The AHRC hopes that potential research proposals will be one outcome from these workshops or networks. This scheme is being managed as part of the Research Networks and Workshops scheme but has been developed as part of the AHRC's Knowledge Transfer portfolio of schemes.

In addition to the aims for the general Research Networks and Workshops Scheme (please refer to paragraphs 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 of the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#)), all applications will need to demonstrate the degree to which they address one or more of the following:

- Support new collaborative relationships between academics, drawing upon the knowledge of practitioners or businesses as appropriate, to develop research that will lead to advances in knowledge and understanding;
- Bring together individuals who have complementary expertise and whose skills, knowledge and expertise will be enhanced by the collaboration;
- Encourage universities to work with other relevant partners to identify and/or develop mutually agreed research projects or themes that capitalise on the resources and expertise of the participating individuals or organisations;
- Propose projects which seek to build upon the existing knowledge base around creativity and innovation;
- Enable existing collaborations to explore new areas or themes of common interest and identify new areas of research;
- Encourage collaborations which will develop practical solutions for increasing creativity and innovation in policy and practice.

Who can apply?

Applications will need to be submitted by a principal applicant from any UK university (or organisation with AHRC Academic Analogue status or eligible to apply for ESRC funding). The principal applicant must be an employee of the university or organisation with research interests in the domain of the arts or humanities. The focus of the workshop or network activities must be relevant to the arts and humanities and we particularly welcome applications which are also relevant to the social sciences.. We encourage a wide variety of participants in the networks and workshops: particularly those in the area of the social sciences, artists and other practitioners and also those with interests beyond the immediate sphere of the arts, humanities and social sciences, such as those in science and technology. A letter signed by those involved (other than those from the applicant organisation) will need to be provided with the application stating that they have agreed to work together for the duration of the award, should their application be successful.

How to apply

In order to apply under strategic mode, the guidance notes for the scheme in responsive mode should be used along with the separate application form for this competition. **The following exceptions apply and refer to paragraphs in the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#).**

Funding Opportunities

The aims of the Research Networks and Workshops scheme relevant to this competition are given at paragraphs 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20. The underlined text in paragraph 20 does not apply to this scheme:

- The scheme is primarily aimed at stimulating intellectual exchange across and between disciplines. Whether you are applying for a workshops or a networks award, the participants must be drawn from a number of different higher education institutions, in order to achieve the kind of intellectual interaction and exchange envisaged.

Preparing an application

Paragraph 95 refers to guidance on how to complete a Je-S form. Je-S forms are not available for applications to the Research Networks and Workshops scheme. All applications should be submitted in signed paper copy.

Deadlines

Paragraph 134 does not apply for workshops in strategic mode. Unlike the scheme in responsive mode there are deadlines by which applications must be submitted under the

schemes in strategic mode. Applications for this call must be submitted by 6 April 2006. Applications received after this date will be returned to the applicant.

The earliest start date referred to in paragraph 136 does not apply. The earliest start date for successful Nature of Creativity networks and workshops is 1 September 2006.

Assessment Criteria

As applications will be submitted in strategic mode they will be assessed according to the aims of the general Research Networks and Workshops scheme in addition to one or more of the aims highlighted on page 4 of this document, hence, the following assessment criterion does not apply.

Paragraph 145 (first bullet point)

- the significance and importance of the thematic area to be explored

The underlined text in paragraph 145 (last bullet point) does not apply under the scheme in Strategic Mode:

- whether the proposal demonstrates an appropriate strategy for the dissemination of any outcomes, including the extent to which plans are in place to extend collaboration once the award has ended. (In the case of networks, priority will be given to proposals which can demonstrate that the network will have an impact beyond the life of the award.)

Assessment Process

The assessment process outlined at paragraphs 163 and 164 is not relevant for applications in strategic mode. All the documentation relating to the application will be forwarded to a specially convened panel. This panel will make the final decision on proposals to be funded, taking account of the available budget. Hence paragraphs 168, 170, 171 and 172 about selecting panels do not apply to this particular competition. Appendix 1 referred to in the text has therefore been removed from the form you are asked to complete.

Grading Scale

Due to the nature of the calls for applications made the under strategic mode, there will not be an opportunity for applicants to resubmit applications. The RS grade will not, therefore, apply to this competition.

Submitting an application

The earliest start date for awards made under this competition will be September 2006. All awards must begin within a year of the offer of funding.

Award Announcements

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application in July 2006.

Resubmission Policy

Paragraphs 179-188 do not apply for this competition. Due to the nature of the calls for applications made the under strategic mode, there will not be an opportunity for applicants to resubmit applications.

Contacting Us

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