

# Review of HEFCE Museums, Galleries and Collections Fund 2016

## Background and terms of reference

### Background

1. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) currently provides funding to support museums, galleries and collections in the higher education (HE) sector, which we abbreviate to HEMG<sup>1</sup> throughout this document. Our funding is primarily intended to allow HEMGs to provide a service to the wider research community where there is significant cost beyond what is required to meet the needs of their own researchers and students. These HEMGs must provide a unique and significant contribution to research and scholarship to justify additional support.
2. We currently provide over £10 million to 31 HEMG across 18 higher education institutions (HEIs) that have research significance beyond their home institution<sup>2</sup>. The funding for individual HEMGs was agreed by the HEFCE Board in May 2010 on the basis of a formal review, chaired by Sir Muir Russell.

### Aims of the review

3. The aim of this review is to ensure that judgements on HEMG funding continue to be based on clear principles and evidence, making the allocation of this funding as transparent as possible.
4. The review will provide assurance and justification for the operation of HEMG funding, establishing that the fund continues to be fit-for-purpose, value for money and delivering concrete results. The review will set priorities and future funding levels from 2017-18 for five years, subject to available funding<sup>3</sup>.

### Terms of reference

5. HEFCE endorses the broad role that HEMGs play in the wider HE landscape and beyond, particularly in widening participation. However the review will consider which university HEMGs should be funded on the basis of the particular functions outlined in the requirements described here.

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<sup>1</sup> The HEMG fund is intended primarily to support university museums and galleries, but is available for significant and unique collections and archives held within universities, that are outside of a traditional museum or gallery structure.

<sup>2</sup> For a list of those funded in academic year 2016-17 please see:  
[www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/infrastructure/museums/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/infrastructure/museums/)

<sup>3</sup> Research funding allocations are confirmed annually in the Grant letter issued to HEFCE by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Future funding will be depending on outcomes of the next spending review.

6. Any HEI will need to meet the following gateway criteria to be considered for funding. The HEMG on which the submission is based must:
- a. be a 'university museum or gallery' and have a substantial and long-term financial commitment to maintaining a collection (criteria listed in guidance for submission document paragraph 12)
  - b. incur significant reach beyond the HEI's own researchers and students and as far as possible demonstrate the additional costs associated with this
  - c. make, or have the potential to make, a unique and significant contribution to research and scholarship in the HE sector
  - d. be operated in an efficient manner and demonstrate financial sustainability
  - e. where eligible, hold Arts Council Accreditation status, or provide confirmation that it is working towards Accreditation status.
7. The review will consider to what extent the HEMG meets core HEFCE policy aims, and promote excellence in research and scholarship that warrant additional HEFCE research funding. The review will consider submissions in the institution's own context, drawing on evidence of past performance, potential for future performance and plans to deliver outcomes in relation to the following quality criteria:
- a. how far the HEMG is providing a service to the wider research community at significant cost beyond that required to meet the needs of its own researchers and students (beyond the normal degree of reciprocity in sharing research resources), highlighting the value added by the collection
  - b. evidence that use of the HEMG has led to unique and significant contributions to research, scholarship and research impact in the UK and internationally
  - c. the extent to which the HEMG is considered to offer unique and significant value to undergraduate and postgraduate students and the wider community, including the HEMGs approach to public engagement
  - d. the innovative practice employed by the HEMG for external benefit and in support of the open research agenda
  - e. whether HEFCE HEMG funding is an appropriate proportion of the total cost of sustaining the museum or gallery, demonstrating additionality, and not core funding.
8. The review criteria will be considered in the context of a fixed funding environment; in other words the total amount of HEMG funding available is unlikely to be increased from current levels even if more HEMGs are funded.

## **Process for review**

9. Institutions which are currently funded and those applying for funding will be invited to provide a written submission for each HEMG that they wish to receive funding for.

10. Submissions should explain why the institution believes that its HEMG qualifies for HEFCE HEMG funding and at what level, with regard to the terms of reference. It should cite clear evidence for the nature and extent to which it satisfies the criteria in paragraph 6. All claims made should be substantiated with evidence. The review team may seek additional evidence to verify, validate or expand on the information provided.

11. The HEFCE Board will determine the precise method and level of funding to be allocated to the institutions identified in this review, informing allocations from academic year 2017-18 onwards, having regard to the advice from the review panel and overall funding priorities.