



SHAPE Involve and Engage award scheme

Frequently asked questions

What do you mean by public engagement and co-production?

The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) defines public engagement as ‘...the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.’

A co-produced event, project or activity deliberately places the researcher, partner and audience/public on an equal footing, with an active and considered role in the project throughout each stage, from design to delivery. You can find out more about public engagement and co-production through the [National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement website](#).

How many projects will you be funding and how much is available per project?

The Academy is able to fund around ten projects with up to £8000 under this scheme. However, we may be able to support more expensive proposals or more than ten projects if some proposals are below this maximum.

If my proposal is successful, can I make changes to my project plans at a later date?

Yes, successful applicants are encouraged to continue to develop their proposals with their project partner through the planning process. The Academy will host a workshop where successful applicants can support each other to troubleshoot delivery questions and push forward innovative thinking. Project teams will be expected to inform the Academy of significant changes to their projects.

I have not received British Academy funding in the past, can I still apply?

Yes, the call is open to any researcher at postdoctoral level or higher with a primary research focus in the humanities or social sciences. Please refer to the [guidance for applicants](#) for the full list of eligibility criteria.

I currently hold another British Academy award, can I still apply?

Yes, current award holders are eligible to apply, with two exceptions. If you will hold a Mid-Career Fellowship or Wolfson Fellowship which will be active between October 2023 and October 2024 you are not eligible to apply, because these awards include support for public engagement and your engagement activities should be delivered using the funding from your existing award.

I'm not sure I can apply this year, will the scheme be running next year?

This is a pilot scheme with funding available for 2023-24 only in the first instance, though we hope to continue the scheme into the future subject to evaluation and funding availability.

Can I run my public engagement activity outside of the UK?

No, all public engagement activity must take place in the UK with a UK-based cultural partner.

What types of partners can I include in my project?

You should form a partnership with a gallery, library, archive, or museum (GLAM organisation) as your primary partner. This includes heritage centres and museums of science and industry. You may also choose to include civil society organisations such as a local charity or social enterprise, community groups, or an arts practitioner as well. You can contact the British Academy Events Team to discuss your proposed partner if you are unsure.

We also welcome applications which are led by a researcher at a GLAM organisation, as long as you meet the qualifying criteria, but you should still form a partnership with a university.

I don't have a cultural partner, can the British Academy help me find one?

No, the Academy is not able to help applicants form partnerships. [NESTA](#) and the [NCCPE](#) have advice articles about how to make partnerships, including with GLAM organisations, and you could also reach out to public engagement and comms staff within your organisation for assistance.

My research doesn't lend itself to an interactive event. Should I still apply?

We appreciate that not all research easily lends itself to public engagement activity but this call is focused on imaginative approaches with co-production at its heart so we would encourage you to think outside the box and explore creative approaches to communicate your research. We do not expect all proposals to take the form of an event, for example you might consider a co-produced output created by your audience, such as a piece of art or installation.

When should my project take place?

Your activities should take place between October 2023 and October 2024, with the evaluation of your project completed by 30 November 2024.

Can I deliver my project online?

Yes, you can deliver your project online or in person. There are benefits to each option for delivery and you should consider which will offer the best means through which to engage your target audience and achieve your aims.

How can I make sure my project or activities are accessible? Can the Academy offer advice?

You should discuss accessibility as you develop your project with your partner, your home organisation support staff, and your venue contact (if different to your partner). The Academy is also happy to offer applicants advice on how to ensure their projects are accessible. You can also find lots of resources online about making events accessible.

My project involves working with a vulnerable group. What safeguarding measures do I need to put in place?

All research and activities funded by the Academy should comply with our [Code of Practice](#). Wherever necessary, appropriate consent should be obtained from or on behalf of participants or others affected by the research. Applicants should indicate whether their proposed research raises any special ethical issues, and whether their application has been approved by their institution's Research Ethics Committee or other relevant authority. Independent researchers without access to formal ethical scrutiny and approval should briefly describe any special ethical issues, and explain how they will be addressed.

You should ensure all contributors are up to date with safeguarding requirements, for example a current DBS certificate or safeguarding training, if working with children, young people or vulnerable people.

My idea is going to cost more than the funding on offer, should I still apply?

Yes. The Academy will only fund up to £8000 per project in the first instance. However, depending on the proposals received, the Academy may be able to support more expensive proposals or more than 10 projects if other successful projects are under this £8000 maximum.

What should I do if I have a query about the application process?

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the Events Team:

Email: events@thebritishacademy.ac.uk

Phone: +44 (0)20 7969 5340

For technical questions about Flexi-Grant, you can also contact:

grants@thebritishacademy.ac.uk

If I am not successful, can the selection panel offer feedback?

Regrettably we are not able to offer feedback on unsuccessful applications, and the Academy is unable to enter into correspondence regarding the decisions of the selection panel.