SW Museum Development

SMALL GRANT BIG IMPROVEMENT
2019/20 APPLICATION GUDIANCE

The Small Grant Big Improvement Scheme is designed with the core principle that a small amount of money can make a big difference to museums. The scheme is provided by South West Museum Development using funds from Arts Council England and local authorities which financially contribute to South West Museum Development.

Scheme aims:

- For museums to develop or explore new ways of working to improve how they run
- To enhance what museums can offer their local community or audiences from further afield
- Support future proofing of museums so they can thrive now and in the years ahead

What projects are we looking for?

Projects must deliver against one for the three key areas of the museum Accreditation Standard in either *Organisational Health, Managing collections* or *Users and their experiences*.

Organisational Health	Managing Collections	Users and their experiences
Projects which support museums to:		
Undertake organisational development	Improve collections care and management	Grow or broaden their audiences
Improve a museums volunteer programme/ workforce	Improve the interpretation and or display of collections	Improve their engagement with their local community
Make savings or increase income	Develop collections skills within their museum	Use digital technology to engage with audiences
South West Museum Development is committed to supporting equality and diversity in the museum sector. We will prioritise applications under these strands that seek to improve the representation of their community within their museum and their museum's activities as part of their project. Examples include but are not limited to; • **Organisational health;** Volunteer recruitment campaigns to diversify your workforce; governance reviews which seek to improve the diversity of your organisation; developing and testing Equality Action Plans • **Managing collections:** Collection research projects with non-user groups to improve interpretation and increase community access; trialling new collections activities to improve access; • **Users and their experiences:** Co-production; outreach projects; use of (new) digital technologies to create multi-sensory experiences for visitors; access audits;		

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Small Grant
Big Improvement

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible?

- Museums that are [Accredited, provisionally Accredited or officially working towards Accreditation](#) excluding Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations or museum's in direct receipt of National Portfolio Organisation funding in the South West of England.
- Partnerships of three or more museums, where all applicants are museums that meet the above criteria. To be eligible for the partnership strand, museums must not be part of the same overall organisation e.g. local authority or Trust or based on the same site i.e. two or more Accredited collections/ museums within the same building.
- Only museums in local authority areas whose council financially supports the South West Museum Development Programme are eligible for this grant scheme as it is this additional investment that makes this grant scheme possible. To check if your museum resides in a local authority contributing area please see our **Are you eligible to apply** section on her Small Grant Big Improvement web page here: https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/projects-grants/small-grant-big-improvement/
- If your museum received SGBI funding or other grant funding from South West Museum Development previously, the museum must have completed and have met the conditions of the previous grant(s) to be eligible for further funding.
- Museums must have completed the 2017/18 South West Museum Development Annual Museum Survey return at the point of application or submit this return as part of your application https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/publications-resources/research-and-data/ (you can check by contacting us at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk).
- Please note successful applicants must also submit their 2018/19 return. Failure to submit the museum's return by the specified date may place the grant award payment at risk as this is a condition of grant.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: WHAT CAN I APPLY FOR?

Can I apply for funding under multiple strands?

- Museums will be asked to specify which strand they are applying under and can only apply for funding under one of the three strands. While there may be crossover in the delivery of project activity, applications should focus on the particular strand that they have chosen.

How much can I apply for?

- There are two types of grants available depending on the activity strand:

	Organisational health	**Managing collections**	**Users and their experiences**
up to £1,000	Available to support projects with a minimum of 25% match funding required.	Available to support projects with a minimum of 25% match funding required.	Available to support projects with a minimum of 25% match funding required.
Above £1000 and up to £7,000	Available to support partnership projects involving 3+ museums with a minimum of 25% match funding required.	Not available.	Available to support partnership projects involving 3+ museums with a minimum of 25% match funding required.

What are the grants available for?

- Funding is only available for projects and activity that commence after **01 June 2019** and are completed by the **31 January 2020**, giving museums a maximum of eight months to deliver their project.
- For partnership projects, grants may cover the cost of travel up to £200 per project. The cost of travel for staff or volunteers of individual museum applicants cannot be covered.

Can equipment be purchased as part of the project?

- The purchase of specific use equipment e.g. Till systems, certain software, visitor counters, data loggers for environmental readings etc., is eligible. However, generic use ICT equipment – in particular smartphones, tablets, cases and stands, is not eligible. If your project makes use of generic equipment (such as tablets or screens) but seeks to modify them in order to produce innovative or engaging experiences then this may be eligible, subject to a consultation with South West Museum Development. Please note that South West Museum Development runs a borrowing (loan) scheme with a limited number of tablets which can be borrowed for the duration of SGBI projects.
- Note if your museum is developing projects with tablets that aim to involve children, young people and vulnerable adults as volunteers or project participants, please think ahead about the provision of equipment for participants to use. It is good safeguarding practice to provide access to equipment, rather than expecting participants to use their own devices.
- Please contact museum.development@bristol.gov.uk if your proposed application deals with the purchase or borrowing (loan) of this type of equipment. We can discuss you project with you and advise as to whether it would be eligible to include equipment in the application.

What costs are not eligible?

- Grants cannot include costs for the following either as part of the grant or as match funding: Building work, capital costs (e.g. boilers or ongoing costs relating to capital equipment.), costs for existing staff or to provide backfill for existing staff deployed to deliver the project, travel (unless a partnership project) attendance to training events or conferences, training or consultancy services from the South West Museum Development programme, membership subscriptions, venue hire or overheads relating to the applicant museum/s, charges for volunteers of the applicant museum, alcohol, or any expenditure that cannot be evidenced.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: GENERAL AND APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Are there any examples of the kinds of things that have been funded before?

- Yes. There have been over 130 projects funded through the Small Grants scheme. Case studies from all of these projects can be found online in our case studies section.
- A number of museums have agreed to share their applications as examples of high quality applications to help prospective applicants an indication of the level of information required by the decision panel. These can be found online on our Small Grant Big Improvement page.

Do I need to do anything before I submit my application?

- Your application will not be eligible for funding unless a completed draft application has been received and endorsed by your local MDO by **19 April 2019** at the latest prior to the application deadline of **3 May 2019**.
- This is to enable your MDO to provide feedback on the application and to enable any revisions to be made prior to the applications final submission to the grant decision panel.
- Your MDO will update the grant decision panel on any recommendations and their assessment will draw upon this information in its funding decisions.
- If your application relates to Digital, Audiences, Collections or Developing Volunteers you must also have submitted a draft of the application to the relevant thematic officer by **19 April 2019**. If you do not consult the thematic officer, your application will not go forward.
- If you are applying for a partnership grant then you must contact the Museum Development office at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk by **19 April 2019**.

Do I need to submit anything with my application?

- All applicants are required to submit their most up to date Forward / Business Plan. If your Action Plan is presented as a separate document this must also be submitted. This should be sent as an email attachment accompanying your completed application to museum.development@bristol.gov.uk or as a hard copy (see postal address below).

What is the deadline for submitting my application?

- There are two deadlines that applicants need to be aware of as follows:
    - **19 April 2019** – Final deadline for submitting completed draft application to your MDO.
    - **3 May 2019** - Deadline for submitting final application (including and Forward / Business Plan) to Museum Development central team.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: HOW DOES THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS WORK?

How will my application be assessed?

- The grant panel will assess applications against the following criteria:

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. **Need** – Does the application respond to a need or an opportunity? *Or is your project Innovative* – Is this a new way of working for your organisation?
2. **Rationale** – Does your project respond to your museum's Forward/ Business Plan? And why now?
3. **Quality of proposal** – Have all options been explored/ researched? Is the project been based on evidence? And has the project been appropriately planned?
4. **Value for money** – Does the project represent good value for money and or/ are the costs appropriate to the scale and nature of the project?
5. **Capacity** – Who is involved in the project and how will they manage delivery?
6. **Impact** – Are there clear, realistic and measurable outcomes so the impact of the funding can be measured? Or if the outcomes cannot be measured, how will the proposed project make a meaningful difference to the museum in the long term?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I HAVE SUBMITTED MY APPLICATION?

When will I hear the outcome of my application?

- The named contact on the application will be notified of the outcome of their application by **17 May 2019**.
- The assessment panel's decision is final and feedback is always provided to applicants whose applications are not successful.

When will my museum receive the grant payment?

- Grant payments will be made in arrears and only on receipt of evidence of expenditure by the **7 February 2020**. In certain circumstances, for partnership grants only, we may be able to pay 50% of the grant in advance. All grants are paid by BACS.

What is the deadline for completing my project?

- All project activity must be completed by **31 January 2020**. Grant claim forms, evidence of expenditure (invoices* etc.,) and supporting documentation (case study and images/ photos) must be submitted to the Museum Development central team by this date. This should be sent as email attachments to museum.development@bristol.gov.uk or as hard copies (see postal address below).

  *VAT registered museums should show all costs and claims exclusive of VAT. Those not registered for VAT should show all costs and claims inclusive of VAT.

Where can I get help with my application?

- You can contact your local MDO or speak with Roz Bonnet at roz.bonnet@bristol.gov.uk of the Museum Development central team for advice and guidance.
- For **Users and their experiences** projects please contact Audiences & Insights Officer Rachel Miller at rachel.miller@bristol.gov.uk . If your project also a digital focus please also include our Digital Engagement Officer at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk in your correspondence.
- For **Managing collections** projects please contact Conservation Development Officer Helena Jaeschke at Helena.jaeschke@exeter.gov.uk
- For **Organisational health** projects please contact your local MDO.
- **For application information or further information** please contact Roz Bonnet at roz.bonnet@bristol.gov.uk

Thursday 28 February 2019	Grant scheme opens for applications
Friday 19 April 2019	• Latest date by which you must have shared a draft application with your MDO • Latest date by which you must have received feedback from the relevant thematic officer *if applicable* • *For partnership projects only* date by which you must have notified South West Museum Development of your intention to apply
Friday 3 May 2019	Application deadline
Friday 17 May 2019	Notification of the outcome of your application
Friday 31 May 2019	Deadline for award acceptance for successful applicants
Monday 3 June 2019	Projects may commence for successful applicants
Date TBC, September 2019	Deadline for museums 2018/19 annual return
Monday 30 September 2019	Interim project report to be received by South West Museum Development
Friday 31 January 2020	Projects must be complete
Friday 7 February 2020	Project claims must be received
Friday 1 March 2020	Project claims to be paid

Contact and further information

South West Museum Development
Bristol Museum & Art Gallery
Queen's Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1RL

Tel: 0117 922 24653
E-mail: museum.development@bristol.gov.uk

APPLICATION FORM GUIDANCE

Question 1 **What is your project name?**
Your project name tells us about your project and others too when used as a case study,

Question 2 **What category are you applying for? Organisation health, Managing Collections, Users and their experiences**
This will determine how much funding you will be eligible to apply for and how the potential impact of your project will be assessed.

Question 3 **What is your project?**
This question helps us understand what your project is, what you are trying to achieve and the importance of your project. Consider asking someone not involved in the project to review this section, this will help ensure your project is conveyed clearly.

The following prompt questions will help the assessors understand your proposed project:
- **Your idea and why it's important?** There are lots of projects worthy of support, make sure you provide us with sufficient detail for the assessors to be able to understand your idea and why this particular project should be funded.
- **How it will support your museum(s) to achieve the priorities within your Forward or Business Plan?** The reason for focusing the grant application around a Forward/ Business Plan is to ensure that the money is targeted at your organisation's priorities.
- **What you want to happen or learn because of your project?** Be clear about your objectives or what you hope to achieve by undertaking the project.
- **Who will benefit from your project?** Describe what people are engaged – both from the point of the museum and its users if applicable.
- **What is new about this project for your museum(s)?** Not every project needs to be new, but telling us whats new helps us understand what's different from your museum's core activity.
- **Why is it important to carry out this project now?** Why does your project need to happen now; what will happen if it doesn't happen now?

Question 4 **Who is going to be involved?**
Tell us who is involved.

The following prompt questions will help the assessors understand your organisation's capacity to deliver the project:
- **The staff and / or volunteers who will work on the project** Please tell us which staff and how many volunteers will be involved. Not all projects involve volunteers; if this is the case for your project simply state this.
- **How much time in hours you anticipate that they will spend on the project** Please provide us with an estimate, splitting staff and volunteer time. This question will also be asked in the end of project case study so please try to be as accurate as possible and explain your calculations.
- **How they will manage this project alongside day to day operations and / or other projects** Explain how the project will fit alongside the museum's/s day to day operations and any other concurrent projects or activities – projects can often have unexpected complications or take longer than planned – assessors will look for plans to minimise the risk of delays to the project.

Question 5 **What is going to happen and when?**

Tell us when the project will start and finish along with any key milestones. Milestones can be approximate but help us to understand how the project should progress.

Question 6 **What makes your project special?**
We receive more applications than we can fund, telling us about what makes your project special for your museum and / or for your community will help us understand why it should be funded.

The following prompt questions will help the assessors understand why we should fund your project over another application:

- **Why we should fund your project** What makes your project unique and/ or tell us why it's important.
- **Why its good value for money** Explain how the project represents value for money in terms of the costs being appropriate to the activity that will take place or how the funding will help deliver a good return on investment.

Question 7 **How will your museum(s) improve because of this project?**
Think Small Grant, Big Improvement; we want to know what will be different or what your museum will learn by the time you have finished your project as a result of this investment.

The following prompt questions will help the assessors understand what impact the project will have on your museum and / or audiences:

- **Where you are now and where you hope to be at the end of the project** Tell us where you are now; if you have evidence to support this, tell us what this is and the end result you want to achieve.
- **Why it will be an improvement** *or if you are testing a new approach***, what you hope to learn** Explain what's improved and or/ how if the project supports new ways of working for your museum or represents a particular innovate approach that your museum wants to know more about.
- **How will you know the improvement has happened i.e. what will be better as a result?** How are you planning on measuring the impact of the project?

Question 8 **Your project should contribute to achieving your forward plan.**
What page or sections of your Forward/ Business Plan(s) are relevant to your project? Tell us where to find them and if a qualifying explanation is needed, please explain here. The assessment process will prioritise proposals that relate to clearly identified priorities within the museum's(s) Forward/ Business Plan(s).

Question 9 **What will you purchase with the grant?**
Please provide a breakdown and evidence of the costs for the various items you are seeking funding.

Question 10 **Is the museum VAT registered?**
Please ensure the costs quoted in Question 9 exclude or include VAT as appropriate.

Question 11 **Project funding summary.**
The total project costs should equal the total funding from all sources including match funding. Please remember to include funding sources even if they are your own. SGBI grant requests require

a minimum of 25% match funding. Ideally your match funding will be secure, however if it is not, please ensure you explain when the match funding will be secured.