

SMALL GRANT: BIG IMPROVEMENT 2020/21 APPLICATION GUIDANCE

A small amount of grant money can make a big difference to museums. The **Small Grant: Big Improvement** Grant Scheme was created to serve this need by [South West Museum Development](#) using funds from [Arts Council England](#) and [local authorities](#) which financially contribute to South West Museum Development.

The Scheme aims to help museums to:

- Explore or develop new ways of working, to improve how they run
- Enhance what they offer their local community, or audiences from further afield
- Become more “future-proof” so that they can thrive now, and in the years ahead

Funding is available for two levels of grant: **All grants require a minimum of 25% match-funding.**

- Up to £1,000 for individual eligible museums
- From £1,000 - £7,000 for partnership projects involving 3 or more eligible museums. A local Museum Network (e.g. a county group) can also apply for a partnership grant, as long as it has officers elected by the membership and a bank account to administer the grant.

You **MUST** send your draft application to your Museum Development Officer by **Friday 10 April 2020**.

The deadline for applications is **12 Noon Friday 24 April 2020**

Projects must start after **Monday 25 May 2020** and finish by **Friday 29 January 2021**. This gives museums a maximum of nine months to deliver their project. Grant payments are made in arrears and only on receipt of evidence of expenditure. In certain circumstances, for partnership grants only, we may be able to pay 50% of the grant in advance. All claims must be received by **Friday 29 January 2021**.

What kind of projects are suitable?

- Projects must help museums to meet the standards required in one of the three sections of Museum Accreditation: **Organisational Health, Managing Collections, Users and Their Experiences**. Some examples are shown below for each section:

Organisational Health	Managing Collections	Users and Their Experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving a volunteer or workforce programme Making savings or increasing income Undertaking organisational development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving collections care or management Improving the display or interpretation of collections Developing collections skills in the museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing or widening the museum's audiences Improving the museum's engagement with the local community Using digital technology to engage with audiences

- South West Museum Development is committed to supporting equality and diversity in the museum sector. Projects which also seek to improve the representation of an equal and diverse community within the museum and its activities will be prioritised. Some examples are given below:

Organisational Health	Managing Collections	Users and Their Experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer recruitment campaigns to diversify the museum's workforce Governance reviews to improve the diversity of the organisation Developing and testing an Equality Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection research projects with non-user groups to improve interpretation and increase community access Trialling new collections activities to improve access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-production Outreach projects Using new digital technologies to create multi-sensory experiences for visitors Access audits

Is my museum eligible? Your museum must:

- Be in the South West of England
- Be [Accredited, provisionally Accredited or officially Working Towards Accreditation](#)
- NOT be an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation or be in direct receipt of National Portfolio Organisation funding.

Be in a local authority area whose council financially supports the South West Museum Development Programme, as it is this additional investment that makes this grant scheme

possible. To check if your museum is in a local authority contributing area please see:
<https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/our-funders/>

Please note the Local Authority investors shown are for the period 2019/20. Investors for the 2020/21 are currently being confirmed. To check if you're Local Authority has confirmed please contact us at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk

- Have already completed the 2018/19 South West Museum Development Annual Museum Survey return or submit the survey return as part of the application <https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/publications-resources/research-and-data/> (you can check whether you have completed this already by contacting us at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk). **Museums which are awarded a grant are also required to complete the 2019/20 South West Museum Development Annual Museum Survey. If a museum does not submit the 2019/20 annual return by the specified date the grant award may be withdrawn as this is a condition of grant.**
- If a museum has previously received SGBI funding or other grant funding from South West Museum Development, the museum must have completed the relevant project(s) and met the conditions of the previous grant(s) to be eligible for further funding.

Partnership applications:

- Partnerships of three or more museums may apply, provided all applicant museums meet the above criteria. To be eligible for partnership grants, the museums must not be part of the same overall organisation (e.g. local authority or trust) or based on the same site (e.g. two or more Accredited collections/museums within the same building). A museum network can also apply for a partnership grant.

Is my network eligible? Your network must:

- Be in the South West of England.
- Directly serve the needs of museum and heritage organisations e.g. a county museum group.
- Have officers elected by the membership.
- Hold its own bank account to administer the grant.

What can I apply for?

Can I apply for funding under multiple sections?

Museums will be asked to specify which section (Organisational Health, Managing Collections, Users and Their Experience) their project relates to. Projects should focus on one section, although there may be some activity which relates to the other sections.

What costs are eligible?

- Projects, purchases and activities must take place between Monday 25 May 2020 and finish by Friday 29 January 2021.
- For partnership projects, grants may cover the cost of travel up to £200 per project. Projects for individual museums cannot claim for the cost of travel for staff or volunteers.

Can the museum(s) buy equipment as part of the project?

- The purchase of equipment for specific uses as part of the project e.g. cash till systems, certain software, visitor counters, data loggers for environmental readings etc., is eligible.
- ICT equipment which is not specific to the project and could be used elsewhere in the museum(s) (in particular - smartphones, tablets, cases and stands) is NOT eligible. Please note that South West Museum Development runs a loan scheme with a limited number of tablets which can be borrowed for the duration of SGBI projects.

Note: if your museum is developing a project using tablets that aims 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.

- 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 contact museum.development@bristol.gov.uk if your proposed application deals with the purchase or loan of this type of equipment. We can discuss your 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 (except for a partnership project)
 - Attendance at training events or conferences
 - Training or consultancy services from South West Museum Development
 - Membership subscriptions
 - Venue hire or overheads relating to the applicant museum(s)
 - Charges for volunteers of the applicant museum(s)
 - Alcoholic drinks
 - Any expenditure for which the museum(s) cannot provide evidence (e.g. receipts)

How do I apply?

Please complete the application form on our website at <https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/grants-and-programmes/small-grant-big-improvement/>. This will guide you through the process and prompt you to provide the necessary information. Please read the guidance in each section.

Where can I get help with my application?

- You should discuss your proposed project with your Museum Development Officer (MDO). If you are not sure who your MDO is, please check the relevant section on our website: <https://southwestmuseums.org.uk/who-we-are/>
- For **Organisational Health** projects please contact your [local MDO](#).
- For **Managing Collections** projects please contact Conservation Development Officer Helena Jaeschke at Helena.jaeschke@exeter.gov.uk
- For **Users and Their Experiences** projects please contact Audiences & Insights Officer Rachel Miller at rachel.miller@bristol.gov.uk.
- If your project has a digital focus please contact our Digital Engagement Officer Rachel Cartwright Rachel.cartwright@bristol.gov.uk.
- **For application information or further information** please contact the SWMD Central team at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk

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

- You **MUST** send your draft application to your Museum Development Officer by **Friday 10 April 2020** at the latest, prior to the application deadline of **Friday 24 April 2020**. This is to enable your MDO to provide feedback on the application and to enable any revisions to be made prior to the final submission to the grant decision panel. **If you do not send your draft application to your Museum Development Officer, your application will not go forward.**
- If you are applying for a partnership grant then you **MUST** contact the SWMD Central team at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk by **Friday 10 April 2020**.

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 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 printed 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:
 - **Friday 10 April 2020** - Deadline for submitting completed draft application to your MDO.
 - **12 Noon Friday 24 April 2020** - Deadline for submitting final application (including Forward / Business Plan) to Museum Development central team.

How does the assessment process work?

How will my application be assessed?

The grant panel will assess applications against the following criteria:

1. **Need/Innovation** – Does the application respond to a need or an opportunity, or is this a new way of working for your organisation?
2. **Rationale** – Why is this project important for the museum now? Does it relate to your museum's Forward/ Business Plan?
3. **Quality of proposal** – Have all options been explored/ researched? What evidence is the project based on? Has the project been appropriately planned?
4. **Value for money** – Does the project represent good value for money? Are the costs appropriate to the scale and nature of the project?
5. **Capacity** – Who is involved in the project? How will the museum manage to deliver the project?
6. **Impact** – Are there clear, realistic and measurable outcomes so the impact of the project (and therefore the benefit 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?

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 **Friday 15 May 2020**
- The assessment panel's decision is final
- Feedback is always provided to museums whose applications are not successful.

What must I do if awarded a grant?

- The museum has until **Friday 22 May 2020** to decide whether to accept the grant
- The museum must start the project on or after **Monday 25 May 2020** and complete it by **Friday 29 January 2021**
- The museum must submit an interim report on the project by **Friday 16 October 2020**
- The museum must complete the **SWMD Annual Survey Return for 2019/20**
- The museum must submit the final report and all claims by **Friday 29 January 2021**

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 **Friday 29 January 2021**. 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. All claims for expenditure will be paid by **Friday 12 February 2021**.

What is the deadline for completing my project?

All project activity must be completed by **Friday 29 January 2021**. 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.

They should be sent as email attachments to museum.development@bristol.gov.uk or as printed 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. For partnership projects the VAT status of the Lead Applicant museum is used.

2020/21 SGBI Timeline

Monday 10 February 2020	Grant scheme opens for applications
Friday 10 April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <i>if applicable</i> • <i>(For partnership projects only)</i> Latest date by which you must have notified South West Museum Development of your intention to apply
12 Noon Friday 24 April 2020	Application deadline
Friday 15 May 2020	Notification of the outcome of your application
Friday 22 May 2020	Deadline for award acceptance for successful applicants
Monday 25 May 2020	Successful applicants may start their projects
Friday 16 October 2020	Interim project report to be received by your MDO
Friday 29 January 2021	Projects must be complete
Friday 29 January 2021	Project claims must be received
Friday 12 February 2021	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

Guidance to complete the Application Form

Question 1 What is your project name?

Your project name sums up the essence of your project.

Question 2 What category are you applying for: Organisation Health, Managing Collections, Users and Their Experiences? Are you applying as an individual museum or a partnership?

This will show the main focus of your project and determine 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 make sure you have described your project clearly.

Answering the following questions will help the assessors understand your proposed project:

- **What is your idea and why is it important?** There are many projects worthy of support, make sure you provide the assessors with sufficient detail to be able to understand your idea and why this particular project should be funded.
- **What you want to happen or learn because of your project?** Be clear about your objectives, what you hope to achieve by undertaking the project.
- **Who will benefit from your project?** Describe the people who will be take part – both from the point of the museum(s) and users if applicable.
- **What is new about this project for your museum(s)?** Not every project needs to be new, but telling us what's new will help us to 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 the project doesn't happen now?

Question 4 How will your project contribute to achieving your Forward 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. The assessment process will prioritise proposals that relate to clearly identified priorities within the Forward Plan or Business Plan of the museum(s).

- **What page or sections of your Forward Plan or Business Plan are relevant to your project?** Tell us where to find them and, if you need to explain how the project supports the Plan, do so here.

Question 5 Who is going to be involved?

Tell us who is involved. Answering the following 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 just say so.
- **How much time in hours you anticipate that they will spend on the project** Please provide us with an estimate, showing staff and volunteer time separately. This question will also be asked in the end of project case study as we will also calculate the value of the volunteer hours which contributed to the successful delivery of your project and our grant investment.
- **How they will manage this project alongside day to day operations and/or other projects** Explain how the project will fit alongside the everyday activities of the museum(s) and any other concurrent projects or activities. Projects can often have unexpected complications or take longer than planned so show how you plan to minimise the risk of delays to the project.

Question 6 What is going to happen and when?

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

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:

- **What will be better as a result of this project?** Tell us how this project is going to improve things and make them better for your museum.
- **How will you know the improvement has happened?** How are you planning on measuring the impact of the project?

Question 8 What will you purchase with the grant?

Please provide a breakdown and evidence of the costs for the various items you are seeking funding. If you have an estimate or quote for products or services, attach a copy to your application. If you do not, please show how you arrived at your estimated costs.

Question 9 Is the museum VAT registered?

Please ensure the costs quoted in Question 8 (above) exclude or include VAT as appropriate.

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

For partnership projects – the VAT status of the **Lead Applicant** museum is used. If a Museum Network is applying for a Partnership Grant, it must have its own bank account and declare its VAT status.

Question 10 Project funding summary

SGBI grant requests require a minimum of 25% match funding. The total project costs must equal the total funding from **all** sources including match funding. Please remember to include funding sources even if they are your own. If your match funding has not yet been secured, please explain when it will be secured.