Guidelines for Applicants

PAUL MELLON CENTRE
for Studies in British Art

Introduction

Our funding programme supports scholarship, academic research and the dissemination of knowledge in the fields of British art and architectural history, and of British visual culture understood more broadly, from the medieval period to the present day. There are funding opportunities designed for academics, scholars, authors, postgraduate students and independent researchers as well as some designed for institutions, organisations and publishers. Each of our funding opportunities have individual eligibility requirements – please check these carefully before applying.

International Applicants

All of our funding opportunities, apart from the MA/MPhil Studentship and Doctoral Scholarship, are open to international applicants.

Our Junior Fellowships are only eligible to individuals based outside of the UK.

Topics

The Paul Mellon Centre is an educational charity that champions new ways of understanding British art history and culture. Through all areas of our work, including our grants and fellowships programme, we promote activities that enhance and expand knowledge of British art and architecture. As an institution, we pledge ourselves to ensuring that the histories of British art will be made more relevant to a broader range of people in the future. The inclusion of voices, narratives and experiences that have been marginalised or excluded in the past will have a transformational impact on the future of the Centre and upon British art studies.

Applications to the grants and fellowships programme will be assessed according to their academic relevance in the broader context of British art studies, their rigour, originality and contribution to scholarship.

All supported topics must have a clear art-historical perspective, including those that focus on recent or contemporary artistic practice. All applications must demonstrate that British art, architecture or visual culture provides a substantial focus for their project.

We do not offer fellowships and grants in the fields of archaeology, the current practice of architecture or the performing arts. If you are unsure whether you are eligible, then please contact the Grants & Fellowships Manager at grants@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk to discuss further.

Assessment

All applications are initially checked to ensure they meet the required funding rubric. If your application does not demonstrate that your project has a clear art-historical perspective, or that British art, architecture or visual culture provides a substantial focus for the project, then you will be informed and your application withdrawn.

All accepted applications will then be evaluated by our Advisory Council made up of twelve distinguished art history and architecture specialists. For the current membership of the Advisory Council see here. These meetings generally take place in March (for the spring round) and in November (for the autumn round). Applicants are informed of the outcome shortly after the meetings take place.

Timings

Applications for spring funding opportunities (all Fellowships, Research Support Grants and Event Support Grants) open mid-November and close on 31 January.

Applications for autumn funding opportunities (all grants categories) open early-August and close on 30 September.

The deadline for referees to submit their references is 10 February for the spring round and 10 October for the autumn round. Referee details need to be provided when the application is submitted.

Guidance for Content

Project Outline

This space is for you to detail the project for which you are seeking funding.

Headings or chapter breakdowns (if applicable) can be helpful in spacing out the information clearly.

Ensure to demonstrate how your project fits into our funding priorities of supporting British art and architectural history, projects are assessed on their originality, academic rigour and contribution to the field.

Timeline

The timeline should be as complete as possible and detail the activity that will be accomplished using Paul Mellon Centre funding (eg. if applying for a Research Support Grant then you should detail the archives and sites you hope to visit).

Budget

The budget needs to be as thorough as possible, if exact costs aren't known then please provide estimates. Ensure that you account for all of the requested funding. If the project is part of a larger project then you can include costs for that as well but highlight which elements are to be supported from Paul Mellon Centre funding.

The online system does not allow for a table or spreadsheet, please list costs under headings.

CV

Ensure that you provide an abbreviated professional CV, if you are limited for space then it is best to highlight your academic achievements (eg. publications, conference papers etc.)

References

All Fellowship applications, Curatorial Research Grant, Collaborative Project Grant and Digital Project Grant applications require the details of two referees. All other grant categories require one referee. The Event Support Grant does not require a referee.

For individuals, referees should have first-hand knowledge of the applicant's academic career and the subject area for which funding is being sought. The Advisory Council would like to be informed of the originality of the subject matter and the applicant's suitability to pursue such research.

For institutions, referees ideally should have specialist knowledge of the proposed topic and subject matter and/or have first-hand knowledge of the nominated research curator's academic career. We do not accept references from individuals who are directly involved in the project or individuals who are affiliated with the institution (employee, trustee etc.) unless it is a large institution, such as a university, and the individual is not personally associated with the project.

Once you have submitted the details of your referee(s) they will be emailed by our online system and invited to submit the reference online. We do not accept references in any other format.

We do our best to ensure all references are received in time but also ask that all applicants discuss the reference and deadline with their chosen referee prior to applying.

Guidance for Applying via the Online Grants System

All applications must be submitted via our online grants system:
https://paulmelloncentre.grantplatform.com

To start, please register via the home screen. Your email address is how you will receive all communications relating to your application, so please ensure it is correct.

Once you have registered and logged in you can access the applications section by clicking this icon on the top left-hand side:

The Applications heading will be how you access any completed or "in progress" applications. The Tasks heading will include any post-application tasks if you have been successful (e.g. the form to enter payment details).

Click "Start Application" when you're ready to begin.

Select the relevant category of funding you're applying for under the "Opportunity" drop down menu to bring up the relevant form.

Ensure that you fill out all the sections that are required. You will be alerted if there is anything you've missed.

You can save your application and come back to it at any point up until the closing date – just click "Save + Close".

Once you click "Submit Application" you will be unable to make any changes, so ensure everything is correct.

Your referee will be notified that they need to provide a reference once you have submitted your application. They will receive an email from us with instructions.

You will receive an email confirming application submission; if you do not receive this then please contact us.

Contact

If you have any questions about any aspect of our funding programme, including eligibility, topics, application formatting or the online grants system, then please contact the Grants & Fellowships Manager:

grants@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk

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