

Scottish Museums Council

Grant Application Help notes

2008 - 2009

SCOTTISH
MUSEUMS
COUNCIL



Section A

Box 1: If you are submitting more than 1 application you must prioritise your applications. We may use your priorities to award funding.

Box 2: Enter the advice record number you received after submitting you pre-application. This number is located at the top of the advice record sheet you received. If you have difficulty locating this number contact Beverley Davies, on 0131 550 4115 (main grant applications only).

Section B

Q1: Name of the organisation – The lead applicant must be a full member of SMC

Q2: Project title: If possible keep the title brief –this should reflect what the project is about.

Start dates and finish dates

Our grants are for expenditure within the financial year. Our financial year runs from 1st April to 31st March. Final claims to be sent to us by the end of February to ensure they are processed before the year end. Your project can run over more than one year although we cannot commit to funding beyond the year. You are welcome though, to apply again for subsequent stages. The exception is that occasionally we will fund a post that runs over more than one year, adopting a sliding scale of funding. In this case, when you apply you must show the estimated expenditure in each of the financial years (April to March) for which funding is sought.

Q3: Who will be the main contact for this project? This should be the person who has day to day responsibility for the project.

Q4: Are you working in partnership on this project? Please detail who your partners on this project will be, and the particular role of each partner. Further information and guidance on partnership and forum working is available in the form of an information sheet. If you are applying on behalf of a museum forum you must also include a copy of the forum's constitution for your application to be eligible.

For further information on partnership and forum working please click on the link below.

<http://www.scottishmuseums.org.uk/pdfs/partnerships1007.pdf>

Q5: Briefly describe your project.

Here we are looking for you to answer the following:

- What you want to do (what is the main aim of the project)?
- Who or what the project is for?
- What will the money be used for?
- How will SMC's grant be used for?
- What will the outcome(s) be?
- What will the long-term benefits be?

Q6: How does your project relate to SMC's strategic aims? (main grant applications only)

SMC's funding is provided by the executive to help the museums community work towards achieving mutually agreed aims. We need to ensure that your project is inline with these aims. We do not expect projects to relate to all of SMC's strategic aims but they must relate to at least one and they may relate to more than one. It is important that you tell us **how** the project links to the strategic aim not just that it does. You need only fill in the relevant boxes.

Q7: How does your project relate to your organisation's forward plan, collections management plan or education/learning and access plan?

Explain how your project helps to progress the objectives of the relevant plan and attach highlighted copies of the relevant pages/sections.

Q8: How does your project help you meet or improve on the requirements of the new accreditation scheme?

The overall aim of the Museum Accreditation Scheme is to identify a minimum level of standards to encourage improvement through planning.

We want to encourage all museums and galleries to achieve agreed minimum standards in **museum management, user services, visitor facilities** and **collection management**.

We do not expect projects to relate to all of the accreditation standards but they must relate to at least one and they may relate to more than one. It is important that you tell us **how** the project links to the standard not just that it does

Please refer to the example shown in the application and the MLA's new accreditation standard when completing the table.

The rest of this section is for main grants only.

Q9: How do you know that your project meets a need and that there is a demand for it?

Include any surveys you have carried out, for example, audience, environmental, conservation, security etc. Detail any research or feedback methods you have employed.

Q10: How will you ensure the project is of high quality?

List any examples of good practice, standards or quality assurance schemes that have informed your project or that you will use while you implement it and explain how you will use them.

Q11: Setting milestones will help the project manager and team to recognise progress. As well as being a practical markers they are a useful motivational tool. Examples of typical milestones include:

- Completion of a key tasks
- Completion of one of the project deliverables
- Completion of third party significant task e.g. work acceptance test
- Completion of third party activity e.g. delivery of equipment
- Completion of a significant stage of work
- Completion of a project stage to release further funding
- A financial review point
- A project audit point
- A quality audit
- A significant decision point

Q12: How will you keep track of your project?

Your milestones table or attached project plan will help you identify particular areas for monitoring. They also help us to identify when you may need further advice, financial draw downs, or even a motivational chat.

Q13: How will you know if your project has been successful?

Think about what you should include in your final evaluation now. Ensure that you are collecting useful monitoring information in support of your overall evaluation of the project. A project evaluation template is available by clicking through this link.

Q14: How will you let people know about your project?

Examples of ways of disseminating project findings could include:

- Research Summary Document
- Press Releases
- Media Coverage
- Flyers, Posters, and Brochures
- Letter of Thanks to Participants, Steering Groups etc
- Newsletters
- Events or Conferences
- Seminars

What is best practice?

There is no universally accepted definition of *best practice*. For grant application purposes we define best practice as *the processes, practices, or systems identified in organisations that perform exceptionally well and are widely recognised as improving an organisation's performance and efficiency in specific areas*.

Section C: Costs and matching funding:

Matching funding - The matching funding must be in cash. Unfortunately you cannot use *in kind* contributions as your matching funding. No more than 20 per cent of the matching funding should be from another central government source, such as Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Arts Council or Historic Scotland. You can match SMC grants with Local Authority and Scottish Higher Education Funding Council funds, Local Enterprise Companies and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Please phone the Assistant Director (Finance and Administration) if you require further clarification.

If contributions from other bodies are not assured at the time of application we will ask for confirmation of their contribution by a deadline date. The deadline will be shown in your award letter.

The **final signature** under the declaration must be from the person within your organisation who has the authority to plan for and prioritise all the applications from your organisation.

Examples of what will we not fund

- ongoing overheads that should be part of your day-to-day expenditure
- grants to meet statutory obligations
- purchase of land and buildings
- development of new museums
- purchase of objects or replicas for museum collections
- work funded through insurance claims
- projects on which work (other than preliminary design or development work) has already started or where goods have been ordered before the application is approved
- feasibility studies (studies with the purpose of exploring what schemes your organisation might undertake)
- SMC training courses unless part of a larger project.

What do I need to do to claim the grant?

- Grants are normally paid when you have completed all the work and paid all the bills. If you require interim payments, please contact Beverley Davies at SMC in advance to arrange this.
- Your letter of grant offer will include a date by which you must complete your project.
- You must fill out the completion certificate enclose copies of all invoices and send it with a report on the project.
- We may withhold part of the grant until we have approved your report.

What if I don't agree with a decision?

SMC undertakes to operate a fair and transparent process of grant assessment and administration. Decisions about individual awards are made on the basis of our published criteria, they are recorded, and the reasons for rejections are communicated to you. If you are unhappy with any aspect of our process you are encouraged to discuss this in the first instance with the appropriate member of staff. If it does not prove possible to resolve the matter at this level, you should state your concerns in writing to the Head of Corporate Services within three months of the decision concerned. As necessary, the matter will be referred to the Board of SMC.