Creative Informatics Small Research Grants

Uncovering stories of data in the creative industries

Is there a research project related to the creative sector you'd love to explore if you only had a bit of cash and support? Does it involve some kind of data?

Creative Informatics is launching an open competition for small research grants aimed at early career researchers, based at University of Edinburgh or Edinburgh Napier University, proposing projects or activities that explore innovative uses or applications of data in the creative and cultural sector.

Creative Informatics (https://creativeinformatics.org/) is an AHRC funded research and development programme based in Edinburgh, which aims to bring the city's world-class creative industries and tech sector together to explore the opportunities and challenges of data-driven innovation in the creative sector.

In this call, we invite proposals for funding of up to £5000 for small research projects that address any of the following broad themes or questions:

- What can data tell us about art, or art tell us about data?
- How can data be used to promote sustainable practices within the creative industries?
- Can data-driven innovation empower new business models, and new ways to pay for, value and sustain creative work?
- How can data-driven innovation promote the cultural, civic and social value of creative work?
- New tools and approaches to data-driven 'crafts-machine-ship'
- Data justice and ethical uses of data-driven technologies in the creative industries
- Supporting equality, inclusion and diversity in the creative and cultural sectors through applications of data
- Innovative uses of archives and data sets in the creative industries.
- New and inclusive audience experiences of creative work
- Futures of data-driven creative work and labour
- Platform and gig economies within the creative industries
- Supporting critical data literacy within the creative and cultural sectors

In light of the current **COVID-19 emergency**, we are expanding the scope of this call. We see a unique opportunity to consider how Creative Informatics research can, in a small way, support many of those in the creative industries who like many others facing considerable hardship as a result of the social distancing measures being adopted to

combat COVID-19. Indeed, this situation highlights the need to support the resilience of the Creative Industries in the longer term as well.

Therefore, as well as projects addressing the broader topics of Creative Informatics research raised above, we would encourage applicants to consider research projects related to the following topics:

- Supporting remote collaboration and performances of creative work
- New online business models for creative work
- Creative online audience collaborations
- Live-streaming economies
- Barriers and challenges to online creative work

Further ideas and inspiration could also be found in relation the recent UKRI 'Audiences of the Future' call: https://www.ukri.org/innovation/industrial-strategy-challenge-fund/audience-of-the-future/

This fund is supported by an AHRC Skills Development fund granted to Creative Informatics, and therefore we will prioritise applications from early-career researchers (including PhD students and PDRAs), which demonstrate opportunities for researcher development through the project.

To support dissemination of the research and developing a wider Creative Informatics research community, we will ask successful projects to provide a short report detailing their activities and outcomes, and invite all of the projects to take part in a Creative Informatics research symposium in Autumn 2020.

Eligible Costs and Support

Clearly, the landscape of what research we can safely and ethically do in the next six months, and indeed the value of that research, has changed quite rapidly as a result of COVID-19. As far as possible, we therefore ask applicants to be responsible and take into account the feasibility of any proposed research activities during this time. In particular, you should take note of limitations to travel, face-to-face contact, and any changes to your local university ethics policies. Clearly there is a great deal of uncertainty here, especially regarding how long current restrictions will last. In this case, we also ask you to consider in your application form any contingency plans for conducting your research under restricted circumstances.

For some initial examples of possible alternatives to face-to-face research please see:

- *https://twitter.com/DrAdamJowett/status/1240190672960991233*
- *https://docs.google.com/document/d/1clGjGABB2h2qbduTgfqribHmog9B6P0Nv MgVuiHZCl8/preview*

This funding is intended to cover the direct project costs of the proposal, and the costs should be clearly attributable to the project activities. Eligible costs may include:

- Staff costs (see below)
- Research assistance
- Developing pilot projects
- Art or research interventions
- Workshops, meetings, events or exhibitions
- Resources and materials including software licences to support your research
- Participant compensation
- External partners to support your research (e.g. transcription, design work, software development).
- Training or development necessary for the proposed project
- Travel / dissemination activities

Staff costs from University of Edinburgh, or Edinburgh Napier University should not include institutional overheads or indirect costs, or any element that should properly be ascribed to institutional overheads. You should liaise with your relevant research office to ensure staff time is appropriately costed.

In-kind contributions are not required for these proposals, however where additional support from other organisations is committed, please describe this in your application.

Application and Selection Process

The deadline for applications will be **5pm, Thursday April 16th**.

Applications should be sent to creativeinformatics@ed.ac.uk as a pdf, using the application form available on this page: https://creativeinformatics.org/showcase/apply-for-a-ci-small-research-grant

Applications will be reviewed and scored by an interdisciplinary panel of Creative Informatics researchers, supported by the wider Creative Informatics team. We aim to fund at least 5 projects. Applicants will be notified before the end of April.

Projects should be undertaken in May - October 2020.

This call is led by Creative Informatics' five post-doctoral researchers: Chris Elsden, Ingi Helgason, Susan Lechelt, Inge Panneels and Pip Thornton who can additionally provide support to successful projects to forge connections with academic and creative partners.

Applications will be judged by these researchers, along with support from professional and academic colleagues also working on the Creative Informatics project. We are looking for interdisciplinary research questions that are risky, challenge existing theoretical and methodological paradigms, and have the potential to contribute to the creative industries in Edinburgh. Applications should bear in mind ethical approaches to research, abiding by host university regulations and procedures, and Creative Informatics own ethical guidelines for funded projects available here: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3610104

Projects will be judged on:

- Clearly identified aims and objectives
- Novelty of the research questions and relevance of the project and relation to the Creative Informatics core research themes.
- Clear opportunities for early career researcher development and experience
- Clear definitions of how the research will engage and could benefit others in the creative sector.
- Appropriate budgeting for the activities described in the proposal
- In keeping with ethical guidelines for funded CI projects
- Feasibility under restricted circumstances related to COVID-19

Eligibility and Award Conditions

This call will open February 28th 2020 to early-career researchers at University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Napier University.

Specifically, principal applicants should:

- Be currently employed at Edinburgh or Napier University
- Be either: an Early Career Researcher as defined by the AHRC (https://ahrc.ukri.org/skills/earlycareerresearchers/definitionofeligibility/)
- Or a PhD student with the support of their supervisor.

We strongly welcome applications from PDRAs and PhD students with institutional support. We will prioritise projects which offer a strong development opportunity for the researchers involved.

Applicants should also notify and provide details of their relevant research office, and have applications signed off by an appropriate line manager or academic supervisor.

Funds should be spent by October 31st. In light of emergency circumstances, if necessary, we will review this date.

Successful projects will be asked to provide a brief report and documentation of their research project by December 1st, and to participate in a subsequent research event taking place in Edinburgh, or online, to disseminate their research.

For any queries or further information about this call, please contact Dr Chris Elsden: celsden@ed.ac.uk

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