

**AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership
Historic England CDP Priority Research Areas 2021**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE 5.00pm on FRIDAY 26th NOVEMBER 2021

Background

The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (HBMCE) was established by the National Heritage Act 1983, and until 31 March 2015 was known commonly as English Heritage.

On 1 April 2015 English Heritage separated into two organisations:

- Historic England, the public body that champions and protects England's historic environment
- The English Heritage Trust, a charity that, under license from HBMCE, looks after the National Heritage Collection consisting of 400 historic sites, such as Stonehenge and Dover Castle

Together, Historic England and English Heritage were recognised as an Independent Research Organisation in 2017.

HBMCE's Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) programme, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, will allow us to identify and co-supervise 2 collaborative PhD studentships commencing in 2022.

Call for Proposals

We are now issuing a Call for Proposals for co-supervised PhD studentship projects to commence in October 2022, based on one of the CDP Priority Research Areas identified below. These have been selected to align with the [Historic England Research Agenda](#) or the English Heritage Research Strategy 2020-2024.

Proposals for studentship projects should be made by a university based researcher in collaboration with a named member of staff from Historic England or English Heritage, who will act as the co-supervisor for the studentship. We **are not** looking for project ideas directly from potential students.

Studentship funding is available for four years, including support for career development opportunities (lasting three to six months) that are independent of the main research.

To submit a studentship project please carefully read the **Proposal Form and Guidance** which can be found on the [Historic England website](#). Completed forms must be submitted by the closing time/date of **5.00pm on Friday 26th November 2021**.

Priority Research Areas 2021

Priority Research Area 1 (Historic England)

Enabling Inclusion (#Diversify, #Value, #Inform)

Context and Further Details

Inclusion and equality are at the heart of a vision where England's heritage is for everyone, enabling the most diverse range of people to connect with, enjoy and benefit from the historic environment. Delivering historic environment advice, policies and projects that are inclusive, participatory and collaborative involves actively seeking new ways to engage with multiple audiences and plural pasts. Inclusive practice means working to ensure that no-one feels excluded. It also means addressing the balance of representation in our urban and rural historic environments.*

We want to explore how inclusive approaches and practices can enhance the value and benefit of the historic environment for the widest range of communities. For example, how can we better understand the diversity of attitudes towards heritage and place? What are the barriers to inclusive practice and the consequences when people feel excluded? Which processes will help us to invite the broadest perceptions of community value within our work? How can new approaches to interpretation, including digital technologies, be used to embrace multiple narratives within the historic environment and help arbitrate where tensions arise?

*As a priority, we invite research proposals that respond to improving heritage outcomes for people with Black, Asian or other Minority Ethnic Heritage; people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer +; young people under 25; people with disabilities; people who are disadvantaged by their social and/or economic background or circumstances, or by where they live.

Priority Research Area 2 (Historic England)

Climate Change: Risk, Mitigation and Adaptation (#Adapt, #Conserve)

Context and Further Details

The historic environment is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Changing environmental conditions affect historic landscapes, buildings and below ground archaeology. This can be directly, by the action of physical, biological and chemical processes, and indirectly through the human actions undertaken to mitigate them. The speed of climate change is a 'risk multiplier' - it exacerbates existing pressures for heritage assets, whilst also creating new challenges. Effective mitigation or adaptation requires foresight, knowledge, and reliable yet at times experimental approaches.

We need to increase our detailed understanding of the impacts of climate change on the historic environment in all its facets. We seek research that examines the interface between risk, threat, hazard and response. For example, how do we conceptualise risk within the historic environment, and how does that influence our reactions? In what ways might climate change mitigation and adaptation measures impact negatively upon the historic environment and how can this be addressed? In urgent circumstances, how can we better anticipate and respond to the potential loss of heritage assets - some of which, such as marine or below ground archaeology, may not yet have

been identified - and can the heritage sector work together to facilitate this?

In technical terms, how can knowledge of past environments, materials and eco-systems, along with new measures to adapt and reuse existing heritage buildings contribute to climate change solutions? We invite broad-ranging or site specific research proposals and encourage interdisciplinary perspectives (remaining within the remit of the AHRC).

Priority Research Area 3 (Historic England)

Heritage Crime (#Adapt, #Understand)

Context and Further Details

The impact of loss or damage to historic sites and buildings has far-reaching consequences over and above the financial cost of what has been stolen or damaged. ‘Heritage crime’ is any offence that harms the value of England’s heritage assets and their settings, for this and future generations. Examples include architectural theft, in particular the lead theft from church roofs, or unlawful metal detecting on scheduled monuments.

Our focus is crime and anti-social behaviour and the impact on scheduled monuments, listed buildings, protected wrecks or other designated sites, and the illicit removal and trade of objects or material removed from the historic environment. Heritage crime has a direct impact, such as a broken window or stolen artefact, and indirect impacts such as the sense of community loss or the economic loss of amenity value.

We are inviting research that helps us to minimise the effect of heritage crime, to plan effective prevention and enforcement measures and to enhance opportunities to investigate and identify offenders. For example, where are the different types of crime that affect the historic environment occurring and how often? How can new methodologies for studying crime and anti-social behaviour within historic urban, rural and marine environments be applied to heritage crime cases? And what new and innovative techniques and products for use on-site may help owners prevent crime and law enforcement professionals to investigate offences and to bring offenders to justice?

Priority Research Area 4 (English Heritage)

Conservation of Ruined Masonry: A Holistic Approach to the Management of Water in Ruined Structures to Reduce Deterioration

Context and Further Details

The increasing prevalence of extreme weather events, unsympathetic materials used in the Ministry of Works era, inappropriate repair nowadays; these and other factors are all contributing to decay of ruinous structures. But how extensive is the problem, and is it accelerating? Can digital survey techniques can be used to identify and anticipate deterioration? And how can we slow down deterioration and extend the life span of these vital parts of our heritage?

This research will look at the different methods and materials which have been and are currently deployed to consolidate and repair ruins. It will consider the role of wall-head cappings and water-

shedding faces in managing moisture ingress and egress, and explore how they can be optimised to protect both the masonry facings and the core (which in many cases includes earthen mortar) and thus increase longevity of these ruined structures. As well as considering materials used in the past, we want to explore the potential for modern materials and novel approaches to improve moisture management. The research will also take into account the changing environmental context of ruins as a result of climate change.

English Heritage is well placed to support this research; our large estate includes a variety of ruined structures and offers a unique opportunity to carry out investigative work to better understand deterioration and condition and to monitor and evaluate the effect of different treatments of wall heads and surfaces. The anticipated outcomes are a greater understanding of causes and rates of decay of ruinous masonry and the development of sustainable methodologies for their protection, including a palette of materials and methods appropriate for use in different settings. As well as benefitting all the agencies that have responsibility for part of the National Collection, this research will also be of use to other organisations that have ruinous structures amongst their assets.

Priority Research Area 5 (English Heritage)

Managing Armageddon: Responding to the Threat of the Bomb

Context and Further Details

Across its national portfolio, English Heritage holds significant assemblages of artefacts and archive relating to the detection and analysis of nuclear conflict, communication of real time information and ongoing logistical and administrative co-ordination of a post-strike environment. These collections relate to a variety of sites at different levels of, and with different functions within, the country's civil defence strategy (including a Regional Seat of Government and a Royal Observer Corps Bunker), as well as reflecting wider civil defence planning.

We are interested in research projects that would use this unexplored body of material, alongside the assemblage of related material within the broader museum sector, to look at the national response to the threat of nuclear war through the systems developed to detect, mitigate and manage a nuclear strike. Themes that could be explored include:

- The processes that linked multiple institutions across a national geography.
- The relative roles of technology, communications and people in facilitating the response.
- The development of, and changes in, the mechanisms of response over time.

This research would be an opportunity to scope the extent of our national collection, but not specifically to form a detailed catalogue of the EH collections. Impact will be gained through a greater understanding of significances within the collection; which will inform future display, conservation, and retention strategies. The research could take an interdisciplinary approach but should have material culture as a central aspect.

Priority Research Area 6 (English Heritage)

Female Creative Practice in the English Country House c.1750-1900

Context and Further Details

Country houses have long been recognised as important sites of amateur artistic production – particularly among the women who lived in them. Such production flourished in the later Georgian and Victorian periods, and the commercial sector developed to support it, providing instruction manuals, materials, and tutors.

The properties managed by English Heritage are no exception, and works of art produced particularly by wives and daughters can be found at many of our houses with existing collections. At properties which have become ruinous and no longer hold collections, there are still examples of female creative practice to be explored, and opportunities to trace objects and artworks in other repositories, relating to those sites.

Non-professional female creative practice is a major part of our cultural heritage and national story, however it is rarely addressed by research into English Heritage properties and collections. Key research questions might include, but are not limited to:

- What kinds of work did these women produce? What genres and media did they work in?
- Why did these women produce such work? Was creative practice intended to express wealth and leisure? To what extent can these objects be connected to individual artistic interests and capacities?
- What did these women do with such work? Was it intended for display, whether in their own home or elsewhere?

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