

Historic Environment Fund RESEARCH STREAM

Application guidance: September 2016

Historic Environment Division



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DIVISION'S AIM

To support and sustain vibrant communities and a strong economy through realising the significant, ongoing value of our historic environment.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT FUND

The Historic Environment Fund has been set up by the Department to stimulate action across the historic environment in support of this aim. It is divided into four streams: Heritage Research; Heritage Regeneration; Heritage Repair; and Heritage Revival.

HERITAGE RESEARCH

This part of the Fund is focused upon developing and increased understanding of our shared historic environment, to develop increased ways to protect it from harm and to enrich skills and expertise to care for it.

WHAT DO WE FUND?

Following consideration of responses to the consultation on the historic environment fund, many of which argued that the allocation of funding should be based upon the priorities of a clear research strategy, this part of the fund is not open to applications during the current financial year.

Instead, a research strategy will be developed in discussion with stakeholders, in advance of a call for applications in the 2017/18 financial year.

WHY DO WE FUND IT?

Knowledge is key to ensuring that we make the right decisions in regard to the protection and conservation of our historic environment. This underpins the work of the Department. Funding from the Department can encourage such work, increase the understanding of owners and communities and contribute to the development innovative ways to collate and share this knowledge.

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The Historic Environment Division (HED) within the Department for Communities (DfC) is responsible for the recording, conservation and protection of the built heritage in Northern Ireland. The statutory authority to provide funding for listed buildings and scheduled monuments is detailed in Sections 199 and 225 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 and Articles 19, 21, 23 and 24 of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

Taken together this allows a wide range of potential avenues to support the Historic Environment¹. The Historic Environment Fund (HEF) aims to utilise all of these routes to help realise the full potential of our built heritage which has a key contribution to make to society. This can be summarised as follows:

Our historic monuments and buildings, designed landscapes, and archaeological heritage improve our attractiveness as a destination and provide a powerful sense of connection between people and place, which in turn supports our confidence, capability and wellbeing as individuals and as a society. Our historic environment is also a vital and non-renewable component of our economy which has scope to tackle poverty, create jobs, and encourage community enterprise. In 2012 it was shown to generate an estimated £532 million annually, and create and sustain around 10,000 jobs.² Compared to our neighbours, this sector was also shown to have significant capacity for growth.

It clearly, therefore, has the potential to contribute to many of the objectives of the Northern Ireland Executive's draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-2021. To realise this potential, the Fund has been divided into four streams:

Heritage Research: Increasing understanding of our shared resource and facilitating excellence.

Heritage Regeneration: Strengthening and improving the physical environment and fostering the positive identity of places among local communities, supporting third sector capacity and regeneration initiatives.

Heritage Repairs: Encouraging sustainability and the preservation of the historic environment.

Heritage Revival: Promoting the social value of our historic environment and the innate contribution this can make to wellbeing and sustainable employment.

This booklet contains guidance relating to potential Heritage Research projects.

¹ The Historic Environment is that part of our environment which has been affected by the action of man. The term highlights the wider context in which heritage assets are located and which can be relevant to their appropriate management.

² Study of the Economic Value of Northern Ireland's Historic Environment, DOE, June 2012, p40

Conservation Principles and Values

Underpinning the HEF is a framework, in line with UK and international best practice, for the sustainable management of the historic environment. The six identified principles are as follows:

Principle 1:

The historic environment is a shared resource and we have a shared responsibility to pass it on to the next generation in good condition.

Principle 2:

Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the Historic Environment.

Principle 3:

Understanding the significance of places is vital.

Principle 4:

Significant places should be managed to sustain their values.*

Principle 5:

Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.

Principle 6:

Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.

*Values

A range of *heritage values*, arranged in four groups, have been identified. These are:

- **Evidential value:** the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- **Historical value:** the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative.
- **Aesthetic value:** the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- **Communal value:** the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The Historic Environment Fund Research Stream

The Historic Environment Research Stream is focused upon is focused upon developing and increased understanding of our shared historic environment, to develop increased ways to protect it from harm and to enrich skills and expertise to care for it.

In 2016/17 the Department will not open this part of the fund to applications

This is because, following consideration of responses to the consultation on the historic environment fund, many of which argued that the allocation of funding should be based upon the priorities of a clear research strategy, we have decided to develop such a strategy in advance of seeking applications.

A research strategy will be developed in discussion with stakeholders during the 2016/17 financial year.

Following conclusion of the public consultation it is intended that, subject to this strategic review, the following areas of work will be supported via this Stream:

Historic Environment Research Support.

A funding programme for research proposals. Working with our partners in District Councils, industry and the construction sector we intend to work to develop a framework for research and development funding from 2017,

Publications Fund.

A small funding programme to support publications on the historic environment which help to support the Division's aims.

University Fund

An occasional scholarship programme to assist with research in the historic environment.

Post – excavation Fund

A funding programme to enable the creation of completed archaeological archives.

Incubation- Innovation Fund,

A funding programme for innovative and creative approaches to unlocking and realising the significant ongoing value of our historic environment.

Archaeological Investigation Funding

A funding programme for archaeological investigations. This stream will consider a range of proposals for investigation ranging from survey to excavation. Research-based proposals are welcome; so too are applications from non-profit making bodies and individuals who find themselves having to fund archaeological investigations in order to comply with conditions or other requirements within the development planning process.

Conservation Plans Seed Funding

In recognition of the importance of conservation planning as key to ensuring long term benefits for public investment, HED intends to introduce a small funding scheme to assist with the preparation of conservation plans. Any award will be commensurate with the complexity of the heritage asset.

Research and Capacity Building/ Training and Capacity Building.

This route will seek to realise the potential for transfer of specialist knowledge and procedures in planning matters and the partnering of communities with third level archaeology and architecture departments and between HED, partner organisations and councils.

Historic Environment Fund Evaluation Criteria

Proposals across all streams of the HEF are marked against standard criteria. The weighting given to each varies between funding routes. Applicants will be expected to address their scheme's contribution to:

- **Conservation and enhancement of the historic environment**
- **Economic impact - contribution to tourism and to supporting communities**
- **Economic impact - supporting the construction and associated industries**
- **Social benefits – creating broader and deeper understanding of our heritage**
- **Social benefits – enhancing public engagement with the historic environment**

These are the key measures against which the priorities and outcomes of funding will be assessed.



DfC

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