

# Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre

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## The PEC's first research commissioning process

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In response to our [call for research proposals](#) that closed on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2019, the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) was delighted to receive 43 submissions. While 35 of these were submitted by university-based researchers, applications were also received from consultancies/research companies, innovation agencies and other bodies.

Our call indicated that we were particularly interested in studies addressing four themes:

1. Contributions, following the publication of The Augar Review of Post-18 Education, to understanding the value of creative post-18 education and the measurement of this value
2. Deepening understanding of how cultural institutions and the cultural sector contribute to the creative industries in their local areas, including to the growth of these local creative industries.
3. Deepening understanding of how freelancers and micro enterprises contribute to the UK's creative industries, and of the challenges that they face.
4. Developing an understanding of business models and business model innovation in the creative industries, relating for example to the creation and capturing of value within value networks.

In total, six of the submitted proposals related to the first theme, 15 to the second theme, 22 to the third theme and 19 to the fourth theme. Five proposals addressed other themes relevant to the creative industries, although three of these also addressed at least one of the four themes above. In total, 15 proposals addressed more than one theme.

After an initial screening for eligibility, which all proposals passed, the proposals were then assigned to reviewers and independently assessed by two research active

members of the PEC's Management Board. Each reviewer considered each of their allocated proposals in relation to five criteria:

- Fit with research needs related to policy and evidence for creative industries
- Policy relevance and potential for policy impact
- Research design and methods
- Strength of the research team and any partners
- Value for money

These grades were used to give each proposal an overall score, with the reviewer then providing a recommendation, ranging from 'shortlist', 'probably shortlist', 'possibly shortlist', 'fundable in principle', and 'not fundable' (under this call).

The reviewers considered that almost all of the proposals received were fundable in principle (under this call). However, we had received 43 proposals, and stated that we expected to fund four or five projects, and moreover the total amount of funding requested was £1.847 million, a sum more than nine times our indicative budget (£200,000). Unfortunately, we would not be able to fund more than a small number of the proposals received in response to our call.<sup>1</sup>

Our selection process thereafter focused on identifying the strongest proposals, rather than proposals that were in principle fundable. To select the strongest proposals we compiled the recommendations of the two independent reviewers. Proposals were carried forward if at least one of the reviewers had recommended that the proposal be shortlisted, or where both reviewers had recommended to 'probably shortlist'. Other proposals, that at least one reviewer had recommended to 'probably shortlist', were also reconsidered, and six proposals were ultimately assigned to a third independent reviewer (also from the PEC's Management Board) to evaluate.

These processes led to the selection of 16 of the 43 proposals for further discussion. These were discussed in a roundtable meeting involving five members of the PEC's Management Board, including the PEC's Director and the Research Director. Ultimately, after several hours of deliberation, the panel decided to fund six proposals under this call.

The PEC's Management Board recognises the high quality of the proposals received. We would like to thank all of the applicants for their submissions and interest in the creative industries, as well as providing policy and evidence to support these industries.

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<sup>1</sup> Applicants were invited to submit proposals requesting in the range of c.£30k-c.£60k. The actual amounts requested ranged from just under £28,000 to £60,000, with a mean of c.£43,000 and median of c.£42,000).