

Call for Research Proposals

Issued: Monday 24th May 2021

Expressions of Interest (Stage 1), Deadline: Friday 18th June 2021

Full proposals (Stage 2), Deadline: Friday 23rd July 2021

The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) provides independent research and policy recommendations for the UK's creative industries. Our core programme is focused on five key areas: Creative Clusters and Innovation; Skills, Talent and Diversity; Intellectual Property, Business Models, Access to Finance and Content Regulation; Arts, Culture and Public Service Broadcasting; and International Competitiveness.

Following a successful first Call, we are pleased to announce this second Call for research proposals. We are seeking to fund studies that complement the ongoing work of the PEC and which contribute in a timely fashion to understanding the creative industries in the UK. We are particularly interested in commissioning work that places a strong emphasis on at least one of: (1) identifying and responding to **evidence gaps**; (2) delivering new **policy developments**; and (3) considering the importance of **industry practice**.

Themes

The PEC has agreed the following overarching theme and associated sub-themes, which applicants are encouraged to address:

Overarching theme: Recovery and Advancement of the Creative Industries

Sub-theme 1: Creative Industries and Climate Change

This sub-theme speaks to the UK hosting the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), in November 2021. We are particularly interested in analysis of initiatives that explore ways in which research, development, innovation, and collaboration are being fostered and implemented within and across the creative industries, as a tool to help the sector contribute towards the UK's ambitious goal of cutting emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.

Sub-theme 2: Post-Brexit Opportunities and Challenges

This sub-theme invites consideration of immigration, Brexit-related relocations, and international trade opportunities and costs, including foreign investment. We are particularly interested in analysis of how effective the post-Brexit immigration system is proving for the creative industries, with clear recommendations as to how it might be improved, if relevant.

Sub-theme 3: Digital Opportunities and Business Model Innovation

This sub-theme has a strong focus on business location and the 'levelling up' agenda. We are particularly interested in how creative industry firms and organisations can, and do, utilise digital and modern communications technologies to enhance and reconfigure their business models, especially to overcome or reduce barriers related to being in disadvantaged places, such as regions far from London, or small towns and rural areas, thereby contributing to 'levelling up'.

While these sub-themes identify PEC priorities, the Call is **open**, and applicants may identify other areas that they consider to be ripe for studies which respond to the needs of the creative industries.

Overall, the PEC is receptive to **translation studies** which draw on existing research and connects this to the development of timely insights across policy, evidence, and industry practice. Translation studies have the advantage that the need for further original research may be low or negligible and may therefore constitute exceptional value for money.

It is intended that all the commissioned research will complement the PEC's existing portfolio and applicants are encouraged to contact either Bruce Tether (PEC Research Director, bruce.tether@manchester.ac.uk) or Hasan Bakhshi (PEC Director, hasan.bakhshi@nesta.org.uk) if in any doubt about the fit of their proposal.

Selection process

This Call comprises two stages. The first stage, which lasts for four weeks from Monday 24th May, invites expressions of interest. The second stage, which lasts for four weeks from Monday 28th June, invites selected expressions of interest to be developed into full proposals. It is anticipated that many expressions of interest will not be invited to be developed into full proposals, and there is no guarantee that those invited to develop full proposals will be funded.

In the first stage, the expressions of interest will be assessed according to: fit with the stated theme and sub-themes; the degree to which the proposals respond to the needs of the creative industries; the potential impact of the research across policy, evidence, and industry practice (all as understood by the management board of the PEC). **The deadline for this stage is Friday 18th June.**

In the second stage, the full proposals will be assessed according to: the overall quality of the research and other activities proposed, including specific intended policy impact of the proposed deliverables; the contribution to evidence-based knowledge; and value for money. **The deadline for this stage is Friday 23rd July.**

Expressions of interest received during the first stage will be evaluated by a panel of reviewers of senior PEC researchers in the week commencing 21st June. The most promising proposals will be invited to take part in the second stage. We will not be able to provide individual feedback as to why any particular EOI was not invited to be developed into a full proposal. The PEC reserves the right to provide guidance on how any EOIs invited to be developed into full proposals might be oriented to align

more closely with our interests and needs. Attending to such guidance does not guarantee success, however.

Full proposals received during the second stage will be evaluated by the same panel in the week commencing 26th July. The highest graded proposals will be taken through to contract.

The PEC does not have a set number of studies it intends to commission, and selections will be determined according to the criteria listed above.

We anticipate that this Call will be oversubscribed - our first Call elicited 43 proposals, of which we funded 6. We are particularly keen to ensure both high quality activities and value for money. As an indicative maximum, proposals costing over £50,000 are very unlikely to be supported. At the lower end, smaller proposals, based perhaps on translating existing research into relevant, evidence-based insights for policy makers and/or practitioners, are welcome. There is no minimum value, however the PEC's capacity to manage external research projects is limited, so we are unlikely to support a large number of smaller proposals.

Summary timeline

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| Mon 24 th May – Fri 18 th June | Stage 1: Call open for expressions of interest |
| Mon 21 st June – Fri 25 th June | Review week 1: Initial decisions |
| Mon 28 th June – Fri 23 rd July | Stage 2: Selected proposals taken to full bid |
| Mon 26 th July – Fri 30 th July | Review week 2: Final decisions |
| Mon 2 nd August | Contracting begins |

Eligibility

This Call is not restricted to universities or Independent Research Organisations. Applicants should be based in the UK and can come from research/consultancy companies as well as academic institutions.

How to apply

- Download the [Application Forms](#)
- Download the [Guidance for Applicants](#)

Completed forms should be submitted by email to Tom at tom.cahill-jones@nesta.org.uk by 23:59 on Friday 18th June. Applications received beyond that time and date will not be evaluated.

Contact

For more details or questions, please email Tom Cahill-Jones, the PEC's Partnerships Manager, at tom.cahill-jones@nesta.org.uk .

We look forward to receiving your proposal.