

ICOM-IMREC

Targeted Research Call 2022

Public Funding and Museums

Research undertaken by ICOM between 2018 and 2021 reveals a consistent pattern of concern with declining public funding to museums¹. Funding has now been identified by ICOM as one of six priority areas which the museum sector is currently facing but the situation is complex and incomplete.

- The term ‘public funding’ has traditionally been associated with government grant-in-aid for on-going operational costs including salaries, programs, collection care, audience engagement and general maintenance.
- In many countries, government grant-in-aid has been steadily declining since the global financial crisis of 2008/9 but there is no overview of the extent to which this is a global trend, the degree to which it may be occurring and with what impact.
- In countries where government funding is in decline, new business models are emerging but, yet there is no systematic overview or critique of their long-term sustainability.

ICOM-IMREC is seeking well-developed proposals from interested research partners to explore and report on these questions:

- What does the term ‘public funding’ encompass and how is the term understood across the globe?
- Is declining public funding for museums a global phenomenon?
- Where declines in public funding are evident, to what extent are they occurring and with what impact?
- How are museums responding? Are sustainable new business models emerging?
- These questions should be explored with reference to each of the major regional areas (South America, North America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia) so that comparisons can be made.

Why we’re doing this

This targeted research call is a project of ICOM-IMREC, a partnership between the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and Shanghai University to create the International Museum Research and Exchange Centre (IMREC). Four cross-cutting

¹ Strategic Plan research 2018; Impact of Covid on Museums 2020, 2021; Strategic Planning Research 2021.

and interrelated objectives inform ICOM-IMREC's work:

- to address critical theoretical and practical issues that the international museum community is facing;
- to promote cross-geographical and interdisciplinary collaborations for scientific research on current and emerging issues commonly shared by the museum community;
- to stimulate a global think tank and an international network;
- to publish data analysis and research reports.

Total amount of funding available

The total amount of funding available for this research project is €70,000 to be paid in two equal instalments at the beginning and at the end of the project. The project budget must reflect:

- An amount not exceeding 15% max for administrative costs *if* a university is the lead partner.
- A maximum of 50% of the budget for staff recruitment.
- A minimum of 50% of the budget for research costs.

Criteria for proposals

ICOM-IMREC expects that:

- The consortium must be formed by research drawn equally from museums and universities. ICOM Committees can be part of the consortium as well, but they can't be the lead partner.
- At least one of the research partners in the consortium will be an ICOM institutional or individual member.
- The lead partner in the consortium (either a university or a museum) will show proof of its status as a legal entity capable of receiving financial resources, hiring, and managing staff and reporting spending against the budget.
- There will be evidence of cross-geographical and cross disciplinary collaboration. The consortium must reflect ICOM diversity (members must come from at least two different regions (LAC, EUR, ASPAC...))
- There will be demonstration of value for money in terms of research quality, outputs, dissemination of the findings and impact.
- The project will be feasible within the timeframe of 12 months.

What else we expect from you

- A description of how you propose to address the brief (5-10 pages, bibliography included);
- A description of the consortium (curricula vitae- 5 pages);
- A research plan with timeline;
- A description of the social impact of the research and proposals to disseminate the research results after completion (1 page); and

- A detailed budget.

How we will assess your proposal

There will be:

- Blind peer review for each proposal by two different academic peers (one from the ICOM-IMREC Academic and Programming Board (APB) and one from outside of the APB, chosen in accordance with the geographic origin of the proposal and its scientific content;
- Ranking according to the scientific evaluation criteria; and
- Final vote by the members of the ICOM-IMREC Academic and Programming Board.

How you apply

- Logon to the online application portal:
https://icom.formstack.com/forms/icom_imrec_call_projects

Deadline for applications

- 31st of October 2022.

Notification of decisions

- Applicants will be notified of the decision by December 2022.

If you have any questions

- Please contact training@icom.museum.