



Association of  
Independent  
Museums



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

# AIM HALLMARKS GRANTS

## GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS, OCTOBER 2021-2022

### 1. Introduction

The AIM Hallmarks Grants support Accredited Museums or museums Working Towards Accreditation in England. There is a total fund of £55,000 in 2020-2021. The grants are funded by Arts Council England, through AIM's National Portfolio Organisation funding.

This year grants of up to £10,000 will be available to support projects addressing AIM's new Tackling Inequality Hallmark.

The closing date for this round of Hallmarks grants will be 31 January 2022. Grants will be made by the end of February.

### 2. Who can apply?

To be eligible, organisations will have to be:

- In England as this grant programme is funded by Arts Council England
- Members of the Association of Independent Museums (applicants may join at the point of application). We expect you to remain a member of AIM for at least one year after your project is completed.
- Either Accredited Museums or formally Working Towards Accreditation.

The Hallmarks grants are usually very oversubscribed. As a result, we need to prioritise organisations that do not already receive National Portfolio Organisation funding from ACE.

We welcome applications from two or more museums working together. Both museums must meet the criteria above.

### 3. What can we fund?

We will fund projects that support our Tackling Inequality Hallmark.

Inequalities exist across society and can be perpetuated by organisations (often unconsciously or through lack of awareness) when they work in ways that disadvantage or discriminate against people in relation to the protected characteristics embodied in the Equality Act 2010. These include race, disability, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and marital status alongside socio-economic status.

Inequalities can be complex. People are often subject to multiple types of disadvantage or discrimination, for example a black woman who is also elderly, or a transgender person with a disability. This convergence of multiple and overlapping disadvantage or discrimination is often referred to as *intersectionality*. Organisations should understand this and take steps to create a fair and equitable working environment and museum experience for all.

## AIM Hallmark – Tackling Inequality

Definition: The organisation is inclusive and challenges prejudice, discrimination, and racism.

Description: The organisation recognises its responsibility to carry out its purpose for the benefit of all, striving to make a positive impact and represent all communities. It understands and takes action to challenge prejudice and inequality and create equality of opportunity for its workforce and its users. It acknowledges that the connections between our nation's history and heritage are an invaluable tool in the fight against discrimination.

Self-assessment questions:

Working through these questions may help you to identify priorities for action and inform your grant application.

- To what extent do we understand the inequalities in UK society and how our organisation can promote equity and inclusion? Can your organisation effect change in the museum sector?
- How effectively does our organisation listen to and act on a range of voices from diverse backgrounds – from Trustees, staff, volunteers, partners and visitors? Do you listen to under-represented audiences such as BAME communities and young people?
- How well do we create opportunities equally for, and understand and take care of, the needs of a diverse workforce of staff and volunteers? Can your organisation make changes to create a safe environment for a diverse workforce?
- To what extent do we develop and understand our collections, identify missing perspectives and histories and use them to encourage debate and discussion? Does your organisation research missing stories, particularly regarding restitution and contested provenance?
- To what extent do we ask questions and challenge practices that support inequality in all its forms? Do you look critically at your organisational culture?
- How well do we recognise that diversity is fundamental for the development, success and sustainability of our business?
- How does your organisation contribute to social justice, nationally or globally or to issues related to the wellbeing of our planet?

We wish to support organisations to contribute to positive change by committing to identifying and taking steps to address inequalities. This could be through organisational change; for example, widening their range of Trustees or developing an inclusive approach to understanding and acting on the needs of their workforce. Museums also have a unique opportunity to use and develop their collections to highlight discrimination, identify and address missing perspectives and encourage debate and discussion.

We know that this is a challenging area for museums and that many of our members are keen to embark on positive action. We are open to proposals that you feel address the needs of your organisation.

## 4. Eligible costs

We can cover a wide range of direct project costs. As an example, your project could include:

- Professional fees
- Training costs
- Volunteer expenses
- Event costs (including room hire, refreshments and equipment)
- Small capital works (including purchase of equipment, development of digital resources)
- Interpretation and display costs
- Staff costs

## 5. Outcomes

Outcomes are changes, impacts or benefits that happen as a direct result of your project. You will need to identify three outcomes that meet the goal of the Tackling Inequality Hallmark:

*The organisation is inclusive and challenges prejudice, discrimination, and racism.*

## 6. Evaluation and reporting

We will ask you to complete a mid-term monitoring report form 6 months after the commencement of your project and a report on completion. We'll ask you to tell us how you met the outcomes identified in your application and provide feedback on how your project went, achievements and lessons learnt.

## 7. How much money can I apply for?

Grants of up to £10,000 are available.

There is no set requirement for a contribution from the applicant museum and we will fund up to 100% of project costs in principle. However, we will take value for money into account when assessing applications and the grants committee will look favourably on applications where the museum has taken steps to raise some match funding or commit some of its own resources.

These grants can be used to fund work which is part of a larger project or development, provided the work funded by the Hallmarks grant is recognisably separate and distinctive, and that it is clear that the funded work supports organisational development in line with the principles of the AIM Hallmarks. It is unlikely that applications which aim to satisfy the match funding requirement of another funder would meet the criteria for these grants.

These grants cannot be used to match fund other grants from Arts Council England or double fund ACE funded projects.

## 8. Promotion of your Hallmarks grant

All grant holders should acknowledge the support of AIM in any promotion for the project for the duration of the grant contract. E.g. on your website, in social media, newsletters, press releases etc.

Full guidelines and the correct logos will be supplied to successful projects.

Grant recipients will be asked to complete a short case study on completion of the project for publication in the AIM Bulletin and on the AIM website.

## 9. Application process

### Timetable

- Grant scheme opens – 1 November 2021
- Closing date for applications – 31 January 2022
- Grant panel meets and grants awarded – by end February 2022
- Notification of successful projects and formal offer letters – by end March 2022
- Projects to be completed with 12 months of formal offer letter – end March 2023

### How we assess your application

The grant committee will judge all applications against the following **five** criteria. Applicants should clearly state and demonstrate how they will meet four of these in the relevant sections in their applications:

1. **Link to AIM Tackling Inequality Hallmark:** how well does the project link to the Hallmark?
2. **Opportunity:** how well is the proposed work linked to the organisation's strategic priorities? Does the application show that the organisation has reviewed its strengths and challenges?
3. **Impact:** how will the work funded change the organisation at a strategic level? Is it clear that it represents a new way of working for that organisation?
4. **Value for money:** is the project realistically costed and does it represent good value for money?
5. **Quality and ability to deliver:** how strong is the proposal overall? How well does the application demonstrate that the project is well planned and that the organisation is well placed to deliver it?

## Supporting documents

- a completed application form
- the project budget
- current **museum budget**
- most recent **annual accounts and report**
- a minimum of one hi resolution **image**
- a link to your **museum website** or other **marketing materials**

Applications must be sent electronically to the AIM Grants Administrator, Fiona Woolley on [programmes@aim-museums.co.uk](mailto:programmes@aim-museums.co.uk).

## 10. Post Application process

If your application is successful, we will contact you within 6-8 weeks of the closing date. We will send you a formal grant offer letter with terms and conditions of the grant. You will need to sign this and return it to us with your bank details. When these have been returned the first payment can be made.

- Successful applicants will receive 80% of their grant immediately with the balance being paid on completion of the project.
- All projects must be completed and the final 20% claimed within 12 months of the date of the grant.
- Successful applicants will be required to complete an end of project report and a short case study. Full details will be given when an offer of funding is made.

If your application is not successful, we will give you feedback on the reason for this. You may be invited to resubmit your application in a further round.

## 11. Help with developing your project

Please talk to us while you are developing your project. We'll tell you whether your project is eligible and help you make your application as strong as possible. we also recommend discussing any ideas with your regional Museum Development team

Please contact the AIM programmes team on [programmes@aim-museums.co.uk](mailto:programmes@aim-museums.co.uk).