

AIM Pilgrim Trust Collection Care Grant (2023-2025) Applicant Guidance Notes

Who can apply for an AIM Pilgrim Trust Collection Care Grant?

The collection care grants were designed to help small and medium sized museums develop a more sustainable approach to the conservation and management of collections, through improvements to collections care. The grant enables museums to receive tailored, specialist advice about the care of collections, and/or to purchase equipment to implement that advice. Applications to this scheme often follow a Pilgrim Trust funded conservator led audit.

Eligibility Criteria

- Be an AIM member.
- Be a UK registered charity or,
- An organisation with exempt charitable status or,
- A recognised public body i.e., Local Authority Museum
- Be a small or medium museum.
- Have fewer than 50,000 visitors p.a.

How much funding can eligible museums apply for?

The maximum grant available is £10,000.

Can the grant be used as match funding?

Yes, bids may be made to part-fund larger schemes, but not if that scheme is already being funded by the Pilgrim Trust. A clear indication of who the additional funders are and when the funding will be in place will be required.

When is the grant paid?

Grants will be paid 50% on award and 50% on completion. To claim the final payment, grant recipients will need to send in their completed claim form, evidence of expenditure on the project and the relevant supporting documents. If you are VAT Registered, recoverable VAT should be deducted from any invoices before claiming.

What type of projects can the AIM Pilgrim Trust Collection Care grant fund?

Our priority is to fund projects supported by professional advice that deliver lasting improvements to collections care. Projects may include a combination of specialist advice and equipment purchase, that enable museums to improve collections care and become more sustainable. Examples of things we can consider support for include:

Professional Expertise

- Obtaining professional advice to compile conservation and implementation strategies
- Conservator led training for staff and/or volunteers
- Environmental surveys
- Development of emergency plans
- Development of collection management plans
- Collections audits for medium museums

Collections Care Improvements

- Environmental monitoring and control equipment
- Ultraviolet filters
- Integrated pest management
- Picture framing (Where this is required for conservation reasons)
- Storage containers, chests and packing materials
- Improvements to museum stores, especially to increase their capacity

Application Support

Applicants may wish to refer to the ‘*Success Guide on Collections Care*’ when considering the needs of their collection. <https://aim-museums.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Successful-Collection-Care-2017.pdf>.

The AIM programmes team are happy to advise on applications and encourage applicants to discuss projects with us before applying for grants via email or during a 1-2-1 session. Contact the AIM Grants Administrator Fiona Woolley on programmes@aim-museums.co.uk if you would like to discuss an application or access additional support.

You may find it helpful to talk to your local Museums Development Officer (MDO). The contact details for your regional office can be found here <https://mduk.org.uk/>. They have considerable experience with grant applications and may be able to help with finding a suitable conservator or suggest how you might strengthen your application.

Choosing a Conservator

If your project requires a conservator, they should be chosen from the list published on the AIM grants page or the ICON register www.conservationregister.com; unless there are exceptional circumstances where this is not possible.

Grant Process

- 1) The AIM Grants Administrator will acknowledge receipt of applications, check that the project is eligible and may contact you to request additional supporting documents if they are missing from your submission.
- 2) A committee of 4-6 AIM Trustees and independent experts, including conservators and representatives from the small/medium museum sector, will consider and score applications approximately 4 weeks after the closing date.
- 3) NEW Spring 2024 - A second stage of virtual interviews will be held one week after the first panel meeting, for invited collections care and remedial conservation applicants, so they can talk to the panel about their project.
- 4) In the case of two applications assessed to be of similar strength, priority will be given to museums that have not previously had a grant from the AIM Pilgrim Trust schemes.
- 5) Applicants will be told the outcome of their application 4-6 weeks after the closing date of the grant round.
- 6) Unsuccessful applicants will be given reasons for the bid failure and an indication as to whether they can resubmit the same bid for any subsequent round.
- 7) Successful applicants will receive an email with a letter attached detailing the award offer and grant conditions.
- 8) The applicant is responsible for completing the project as outlined in the application.
- 9) If the applicant finds that there is the need to alter aspects of the project, then they are required to contact AIM to discuss and agree amendments.
- 10) The applicant organisation will need to submit the claim form, supporting documents and evidence of expenditure to claim the final portion of the grant within 12 months of the award being made.
- 11) The final payment will be up to 50% of the grant award and is based upon the overall expenditure on the project.

Grant Scoring Criteria - Applications will be scored against the following criteria:

- 1) **Collection Significance.** Tell us why the collections are important to your museum and your area.
- 2) **Urgency.** What is the problem you are seeking to address? Why is it a priority to undertake the collections care project now?
- 3) **Condition.** Tell us about the current state of your collections. How do you look after your collection and what collections care issues are you already aware of.
- 4) **Improve.** How will the collection be preserved, maintained, and enhanced by the project?
- 5) **Impact.** What will the long-term impact of the collection care project be on your organisation?

How do I apply?

Email applications in PDF format to Fiona Woolley the AIM Grants Administrator. Please remember to include the supporting documents and submit to programmes@aim-museums.co.uk.

Application Deadlines (2023-2025)

The grant deadlines will be 5pm on the last Friday in March for the Spring round and 5pm on the last Friday in September for the Autumn round.

Supporting Documents

- 1) Governing Constitution/Mission Statement
- 2) Quotations and Proposals: where relevant we expect a conservator and/or professional to have assessed the subject of the application and provided a quotation with a summary of the work they will be doing.
- 3) Professional Expertise: CV/ link to their website to show that they are qualified and suitable to do the work.
- 4) High resolution photos of the proposed project that illustrate the scale of the conservation problem.
- 5) Organisation diagram, please indicate which posts, if any, are paid and the position of the project supervisor.
- 6) A copy of your most recent audited accounts, or a link to the charity commission website if they are available online.

Conditions of the Pilgrim Trust Collection Care Grant Award

- 1) The museum is responsible for maintaining equipment purchased through an AIM Pilgrim Trust Collections Care Grant.
- 2) The Pilgrim Trust has the right to reclaim the grant if equipment is disposed of within 5 years of purchase.
- 3) The grant should be acknowledged in an appropriate manner stating, "Supported by a grant from the AIM Pilgrim Trust Collections Care Scheme" and feature the AIM and Pilgrim Trust logo on associated labels and/or panels. Guidance on how to acknowledge AIM grants can be found on the AIM website; [Acknowledging AIM support - AIM - Association of Independent Museums \(aim-museums.co.uk\)](https://www.aim-museums.co.uk/acknowledging-aim-support)
- 4) The project should be completed within 12 months of the award being made, unless there are exceptional circumstances of which AIM staff have been made aware of which prevent this.
- 5) The museum must supply a brief report (max 400 words) which may be published online or in the AIM Bulletin, with any relevant photographs, within 1 month of completion of the project.
- 6) If requested, applicants should provide information to the scheme's external evaluator.
- 7) AIM works with 360Giving to share open data about Pilgrim Trust grant recipients and their projects.

Pilgrim Trust Grants Frequently Asked Questions - Is my project eligible for funding?

We have included the most frequent questions asked by applicants that may help you understand if your proposed project is eligible for funding. You can also look at the case studies section on the AIM website for past projects to inspire your own application.

The museum has received a Pilgrim Trust grant before.... can we apply again?

Yes, applicants may apply to the scheme more than once for different projects. The assessment panel like to see repeat applications from museums that build upon the recommendations of a conservator led audit.

Can our own museum staff costs be included in the project budget?

No, the grant scheme cannot be used to cover any of your own labour costs or backfill costs for staff to manage a project.

What are the professional expertise costs that can be included in the project budget?

Pilgrim Trust grants can be used to pay for the costs of an accredited conservator or specialist to work on the approved project. The specialists costs may include the conservators time and travel and/or purchase and installation of equipment and related supplies. i.e. An electrician to install a new environmental monitoring system.

Can the grant be used to fund collections digitisation?

Yes, but ONLY where it is to fund the digitisation of items that are being conserved.

Can I use the grant to cover small building works that lead to improvements in collections care?

No, we cannot support applications for in-situ building conservation or routine maintenance costs.

Can the AIM Pilgrim Trust Collections Care Grant be used to fund an object treatment proposal?

No, the grant cannot be used to support the sole cost of specific collections appraisals or individual treatment proposals.

Can I submit a project for new collections management software and IT equipment?

No, digitisation equipment, computer upgrades and collections management equipment are not eligible for funding under this scheme. The Pilgrim Trust work with the National Archives to fund a cataloguing grant. [Cataloguing grants - Archives sector \(nationalarchives.gov.uk\)](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/cataloguing-grants)