



**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 6 October 2023

**Subject:** Arts and Humanities Research Council Collaborative Doctoral Partnership programme

**Report by:** Stephen Baily, Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Wards affected:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Cabinet Member on the recent successful bid to the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Collaborative Doctoral Programme.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 That work to submit the bid and accept the grant be noted**

**2.2 That officers continue work to commence the project and to identify potential projects and Higher Education partners**

**2.3 That an annual update report on the project is brought to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**

**3. Background**

3.1 Portsmouth City Council has been awarded nine PhD studentships by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), as part of the Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) programme Round 4.

3.2 Our bid was supported by the University of Portsmouth and we wish to recognise support that we have received in particular from Professor James Ryan, the Head of the School of Area Studies, History, Politics and Literature.



- 3.3 CDP4 has 15 grant holders - British Museum, National Gallery and the Bowes Museum, the REACH consortium (British Film Institute, Royal Museums Greenwich, Historic Royal Palaces, National Portrait Gallery, National Trust), V&A Museum, Imperial War Museum, Science Museums Group, Tate, University of Cambridge museums and East Anglia Museums, British Library, The National Archives, National Museums Wales, National Museums of Northern Ireland, Historic England and English Heritage, the Museum of the Home and Portsmouth City Council. PCC and the University of Cambridge and East Anglia consortium are the only non-national level organisations to be awarded CDP4 studentships.
- 3.4 Feedback from peer reviewers as part of the application process suggested that they liked the Imagine Portsmouth vision, our place-based approach and thought that our culture and heritage assets provided a sound basis for collaborative research and addressing social and economic challenges in the city.
- 3.5 We are inviting expressions of interest from potential academic co-supervisors in the following areas:
- How effective can museum and gallery collections be used in art-based therapies?
  - How can geology and archaeology collections in regional museums inspire and inform?
  - How do objects embody meanings for war veterans and their families?
  - Public libraries: Contested space or space for contestation?
  - Portsmouth Central Library: Architect's folly or Brutalist masterpiece?
  - The past, present and future of birthplace museums, focusing on the Charles Dickens' Birthplace Museum.
  - How can collecting objects from the present and recent past contribute to how museums engage with their communities?
  - How can city museums best capture, preserve and display ephemeral popular cultural events and counter-cultural scenes such as those in Portsmouth in the 1970s and 80s?
- 3.6 In July the University of Portsmouth hosted a 'sandpit' event with colleagues from PCC Museums and Libraries and Archives. The deadline for expressions of interest from Higher Education Institutions is 29 September 2023.
- 3.7 Proposals will be assessed by a panel that will be chaired by JD Hill, the Head of Research at the British Museum and Chair of the CDP Cohort Development Group. The panel will also include representatives from Portsmouth City Council, the University of Portsmouth, a representative from another non-Portsmouth Higher Education Institution and a community representative. The panel will select three projects each year based on a criteria that we submitted to AHRC as part of the bid.
- 3.8 The selected projects will be submitted to AHRC and will then be advertised to potential students. Students will be recruited by the Higher Education Institution, with PCC represented on the interview panel. Students will start in cohorts of three, with the first students commencing in October 2024, and further cohorts of three



students starting in October 2025 and October 2026 respectively. Studentships will last for four years to allow for extra workplace experiences compared to standard PhD programmes. The final students should submit complete their projects in 2029/30.

- 3.9 The studentships are fully funded. Tuition fees will be paid in full to the relevant Higher Education Institution and students receive a stipend - for the 2022/23 academic year this was £17,000 per student per year. AHRC also make a CDA payment of £600 per annum per student and a £750 per annum Research Training Support Grant. These grants are held by the HEI and can be used to pay for travel related to research and activities such as attending conferences. Portsmouth City Council will not receive any funding directly, but the total investment from AHRC in tuition fees and stipends amounts to over £800,000 over the six years of the programme.
- 3.10 As part of our application we submitted an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan, which included commitments such as including a community representative on selection panels. PCC will also be required to submit an annual report to AHRC on our project's achievements and outcomes.
- 3.11 Each student will have a supervisor from PCC and the higher education partner. The academic co-supervisor will oversee the academic process, while the PCC co-supervisor will support access to PCC collections and resources. Providing adequate supervision will be factored into wider service provision and workplanning for the course of the programme.
- 3.12 PCC has joined the Cohort Development Group, which co-ordinates much of the CDP programme's business. The CDG organises development events for partner organisations and students and liaises with AHRC. It is also an important opportunity to network with peers at a wide range of national institutions.
- 3.13 The project will be managed by Cathy Hakes, Head of Museums. An annual update report will be brought to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development to outline progress delivering the project.
- 3.14 PCC will provide a training grant for each student from the existing cash limits of the relevant service. This will support students to access relevant training, such as events or conferences, or travel related to their projects.
- 3.15 PCC will sign collaboration agreements with Higher Education Institutions with which co-supervise PhD projects. These will cover aspects such as the Intellectual Property and GDPR considerations of research and outputs.

#### **4. Reasons for recommendations**



- 4.1 As the only local authority taking part in this round of the programme we anticipate that our involvement will be viewed as learning for widening the impact of academic research and collaboration between local government and higher education.
- 4.2 CDP4 will enable us as an organisation to develop our expertise around carrying out and supervising research, and our experience of collaboration with academics. We see this as supporting the development of a research culture within PCC.
- 4.3 The CDP programme is an opportunity to further support Portsmouth City Council's relationship with the University of Portsmouth and to support its aspirations to develop as a civic university.
- 4.4 The programme will also support our wider aspirations in developing a Heritage Strategy for the city. Students will have the opportunity to contribute to ongoing programmes such as Heritage Open Days and the Portsmouth Papers.
- 4.5 There will also be benefits for the community. Students will be encouraged to take part in the University of Portsmouth's Brilliant Club programme, which organises student visits schools to talk about studying at university. We are conscious that some wards in the city have very low levels of engagement with higher education and we see CDP4 as an opportunity to address perceptions of higher education.
- 4.6 We anticipate that the funding will develop confidence with other key culture and heritage funders and sector bodies such as the Arts Council, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England, and will raise our profile nationally within the culture and heritage sectors.

## **5. Integrated impact assessment**

- 5.1 Integrated Impact Assessment attached at appendix 1

## **6. Legal implications**

- 6.1 In the course of the implementation of the project, Legal Services can advise and assist as necessary in relation to the terms of the AHRC grant, any required collaboration agreements with academic institutions or otherwise as required.

## **7. Director of Finance's comments**

- 7.1 Portsmouth City Council has been awarded nine PhD studentships by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Students will start in cohorts of three starting in October 2024, 2025 and 2026 respectively and will last for 4 years. The studentships are fully funded through the grant, however PCC will provide a training grant for each student at a cost of £500 per annum to help support students to access relevant training, events, conferences or travel in relation to their projects.



The grant will be met from existing budgets. Depending on the projects this will be met from either the Museums service or library service.

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Signed by:  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Integrated Impact Assessment

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

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Signed by:  
**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**