



JPI CH Joint Call CULTURAL HERITAGE, SOCIETY AND ETHICS

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Cultural Heritage, Society and Ethics

LAUNCH DATE: 2023

BUDGET: €4.7M

FUNDING AWARDED: €3.6M

FUNDED PROJECTS: 6

PARTNERS INVOLVED: 67

FUNDING INSTITUTIONS & PARTNERS

The Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO), Belgium; Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MSMT), Czech Republic; French National Research Agency (ANR), France; Lietuvos mokslo taryba (LMT), Lithuania; The Research Council of Norway (RCN), Norway; Dutch Research Council (NWO), Netherlands; Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI), Spain; Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), United Kingdom.

This call for research proposals is grounded in a fundamental question: What is cultural heritage, how is it valued, and how does it relate to ethics—the foundational values that shape human societies across time? Cultural heritage is inseparable from the ethical frameworks through which communities interpret the world. Ethics, though often implicit, deeply influence how people perceive, preserve, use, and debate heritage. As societies grapple with accelerating human-induced environmental changes, democratic tensions, and shifting social cohesion, there is an urgent need to rethink the environmental, social, cultural, and economic significance attached to cultural heritage. This reassessment must take into account multivocality—diverse voices, interpretations, and experiences—and foreground ethical considerations in all aspects of heritage-related decision-making.

The call focuses on two major themes:

Cultural Heritage and economic development. This theme explores the tensions between how cultural heritage can contribute to the development of sustainable experience-based economies without being put at risk and, concomitantly, how the non-utilitarian value of cultural heritage can be promoted in the context of its growing commercialisation.

Cultural Heritage and sustainable strategies. This theme explores the relationship between cultural heritage, democratic values and politics in a historical perspective, with a particular emphasis on the proliferation of conflicting narratives resulting from the use and misuse of cultural heritage, and the contribution of cultural heritage to sustainable and ethical behaviours and policies.

Beyond these themes, the call aims to support high-quality, interdisciplinary, collaborative research that includes diverse stakeholders and promotes knowledge exchange. It aligns with the principles of DORA, emphasising assessment based on research quality rather than journal metrics. Funded projects have involved early-career researchers and produced outputs ranging from academic publications to exhibitions, digital resources, and policy recommendations. They demonstrated how their work contributed meaningfully to broader discussions on cultural heritage, ethics, sustainability, and social cohesion.

Learn more at <https://www.heritageresearch-hub.eu/call/cultural-heritage-society-and-ethics-joint-call/>

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Perverse Collections: Building Europe's Queer and Trans Archives

DURATION: 2023-06-01 - 2025-05-31

BUDGET: €709K

SUBJECT AREAS

Archives, Collections

“Transforming LGBTQ+ archiving through community-led models and critical heritage practice.”

INTRODUCTION

PERCOL asks how a critical and nuanced understanding of the evolution of Europe's LGBTQ+ archives can help scholars, queer and trans community members, and GLAM sector (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) workers to forge sustainable strategies for protecting LGBTQ+ history, and how this might transform heritage politics and policy more broadly. The project will map the growth of queer and trans archives from the 1970s to the present; comparatively explore their operations (such as collecting policies, state relations, staffing, audience engagement); and identify their creative, alternative models. Situated in a live political context with rising homophobic and transphobic discrimination in some European countries, PERCOL argues for the ethical significance of maintaining a transnational ecology of subaltern collections.

CONSORTIUM

UK University of St Andrews (Coord.)

NL University of Maastricht

ES University of Murcia

IMPACTS & RESULTS

- PERCOL will map the growth and spread of LGBTQ+ archives and collections across Europe since the birth of the modern gay rights movement in the 1970s.
- It will build comparative understanding of how queer and trans archives operate, their collecting policies, funding strategies, relationships to state support, staffing, management and audience engagement.
- It will situate individual archives in regional, national, and international contexts to reveal how LGBTQ+ collections thicken and complicate geopolitical narratives.
- It will propose future creative directions for queer and trans heritage institutions, ethically accommodating differing and often dissonant perspectives within the LGBTQ+ community.
- It will interrogate relationships between queer/trans archives, national legal frameworks toward LGBTQ+ people, and broader European ideals of tolerance, pluralism, and equality.
- It will identify relevance and lessons for other types of subaltern collections and for the cultural heritage sector as a whole.

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Learn more at heritageresearch-hub.eu/percol

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MailHoC: Museums and Industry: Long Histories of Collaboration

DURATION: 2023-22-05 - 2025-21-05

BUDGET: €601K

SUBJECT AREAS

Collections, Cultural Creative Industries, Education and Training, Heritage Management, History, Mediation - Education, Methods - Procedures, Policies, Research collaboration, Technologies - Scientific processes

“Exploring how museums and industry shaped STM heritage and ethical accountability.”

INTRODUCTION

From Libérons le Louvre to PAIN, the impacts of corporate funding on museums have become a source of considerable controversy. Taking a historical and international perspective, MailHoC examines the evolution of this relationship through the post-war period to the present day with a particular focus on museums of science and industry, institutions that have tended to depend on industrial funding. Through a series of public events and discussions, as well as seminars and training sessions, MailHoC has brought together, scholars, museums professionals and ethicists to develop and disseminate scholarly knowledge, as well as create bespoke resources for education and training.

CONSORTIUM

UK Science Museum Group (Coord.)

ES Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

FR Aix-Marseille Université

IMPACTS & RESULTS

- Museums and Patronage: the history, ethics, and funding of museums of science and industry, will be published late 2026
- We have successfully proposed an issue of the Museum History Journal
- Select practitioner interviews, reviews, and reports are uploaded on the repositories of the Science Museum and UAB
- We published a policy paper with the think tank Demos
- We have put on talks, debates and workshops at museums, schools, and universities in France, Norway, Spain, and the UK
- We briefed members of the UK's Department of Culture Media and Sport Select Committee at the Palace of Westminster
- We are developing a card-based discussion game for curators piloted at Ecsite
- We have developed a short discussion prompt film Perspectives on Patronage

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Learn more at heritageresearch-hub.eu/project/mailhoc

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ArchHeritage: Commodification, Identity, and Revitalisation in the Anthropocene

DURATION: 2023-05-01 - 2026-05-01

BUDGET: €171K

SUBJECT AREAS

Archaeology, Architecture, Archives, Book History, Built Heritage, Changing environments, Climate Change, Collections, Community involvement, Conservation, Cultural Landscapes, Digital Heritage, Digital storytelling, Ecology, Ethnology, Heritage Management, Heritage values - Identity, History, Humanities and social sciences, Immersive technologies, Intangible Heritage, Materials, Migration, Monuments - Sites, Museums, Objects, Other, Paintings - Painted surfaces, Popular culture, Research collaboration, Resilience, Restoration, Sculptures, Social dynamics, Sustainability, Tangible Heritage, Tourism

“Tracing Arctic treasures from market to meaning in Indigenous lives.”

INTRODUCTION

ArchHeritage is the UK part of a three-year international project under the Joint Project Initiative on Cultural Heritage, Society and Ethics. It explores the commodity chains of three iconic Arctic heritage artefacts: reindeer antler, the conical tent, and mammoth and walrus ivory, tracing how these objects have moved from pastoralist/hunting lifeways to global markets, tourism, and heritage industries. Fieldwork in Sápmi, Canada, and Greenland combines oral histories, interviews, and zooarchaeological analysis to follow both material and symbolic journeys of these artefacts. The project investigates how commercialisation interacts with Indigenous knowledge, ecological sustainability, cultural protection, and the ethics of turning living traditions into heritage commodities.

CONSORTIUM

NO The Arctic University of Norway (UiT)

NL Wereld Museum Amsterdam

NL Arctic Centre, Groningen

UK University of Aberdeen

IMPACTS & RESULTS

- ArchHeritage investigates transformations in the forms and uses of heritage artefacts, revealing how reindeer antler, conical tents, and ivory have been reinterpreted in global markets and tourism industries.
- It documents both ancient and contemporary trade and commodity chains, including harvesting, production, commercialisation, and consumption across national and international networks.
- It explores the gap between commercial value and non-utilitarian value such as skills, experience-based knowledge, community practices, and Indigenous meaning.
- It addresses ethical issues around heritage, including “heritage-isation” of Indigenous culture, the sustainability of craft production, and ecological impacts.
- It informs debates about tradition, cultural loss, cultural protection, revitalisation, and legislation regarding cultural artefacts.
- It privileges Indigenous voices through ethnographic fieldwork and oral histories to provide more balanced narratives and identities.
- It will contribute to policy discussions about the ethics of heritage and ethnic tourism in Arctic contexts.

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Learn more at heritageresearch-hub.eu/project/archeritage

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DECOPE: Destructive Exploitation and Care of Cultural Objects

DURATION: 2023-03-01 - 2025-04-01

BUDGET: €674K

SUBJECT AREAS

Archaeology, Architecture, Archives, Built Heritage, Collections, Conservation, Crime Narratives, Heritage Management, Heritage Values - Identity, Monuments - Sites, Museums.

“Exploring how heritage care and destruction intertwine in Ukraine’s crisis.”

INTRODUCTION

DECOPE investigates how the international heritage sector has mobilised in response to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In war, the values and meanings of cultural heritage are activated and aggravated in complex and conflicting ways. Heritage objects and sites become targets of willful or collateral destruction, commodities for extraction and consumption, and unifying, symbolic markers of cohesion and survival. The project assesses how interventions framed as protection, rescue and care reach local heritage communities, and how care is enacted by affected communities on the ground.

CONSORTIUM

NO Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (Coord.)

UK University of Stirling

ES Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

IMPACTS & RESULTS

- Contributes to effective, competent, targeted support for cultural heritage practitioners and lay communities caring for heritage amid conflict.
- Cooperates with policy-makers, civil servants, heritage professionals, NGOs, and heritage activists in Ukraine to understand challenges in division of labour, resource distribution, priority setting, and communication.
- Increases due diligence by art market stakeholders and strengthens regulators’ capacity to prove negligence or intentional criminality, enhancing protection against illicit trading and trafficking.
- Fosters more equitable cooperation between local and non-local heritage actors and more effective care in areas of ongoing conflict.
- Aids preparedness of “peaceful neighbours” in understanding their roles and responsibilities as “rescuers” versus “appropriators” of heritage from warzones.
- Supports projects and activities of protection, rescue, and broader care of heritage in Ukraine, involving professionals, activists and lay communities.

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Learn more at heritageresearch-hub.eu/project/decope

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HerInDep: Heritage in Depopulated European Areas

DURATION: 2023-04-01 - 2026-03-31

BUDGET: €436K

SUBJECT AREAS

Community involvement, Digital Heritage, Ethnology, Heritage Management, Intangible Heritage, Rural Heritage, Sustainability, Sustainable development, Tangible Heritage

“Amplifying local voices in Europe’s shrinking peripheries through heritage and participation.”

INTRODUCTION

HerInDep addresses the decline of European peripheral regions, where depopulation leads to loss of intangible culture, abandonment of buildings and landscapes, and weakening of community identity. Coordinated by Charles University in Prague, the project explores how fragile local communities resist the consequences of demographic change. It investigates how individuals and groups remember the past—balancing remembrance and oblivion—and how those memories influence present-day values. The project examines how policies, regulations, and economic constraints shape what depopulated communities do, how they repurpose abandoned heritage, and what potential emerges when heritage is valued locally.

CONSORTIUM

CZ Charles University in Prague (Coord.)

LT Kaunas University of Technology

UK University of the Highlands and Islands

IMPACTS & RESULTS

- Encourages behaviour change among local, regional, and national stakeholders to consider depopulation threats to cultural heritage.
- Advocates that policies be territorially specific and include communication with local actors in depopulated areas.
- Promotes that local voices guide cultural policies affecting abandoned heritage, landscapes, and communities.
- Fosters involvement of academics and community partners to ensure societal relevance for depopulated regions.
- Raises awareness of the importance of intangible heritage—traditions, memories, practices—in maintaining community identity.
- Facilitates exploration of how repurposing abandoned buildings and landscapes can bring new meaning and uses.
- Highlights the complexity of remembering: empowering communities to reconcile past oblivion with present agency.
- Informs regulations and economic resource allocation that affect depopulated peripheries.
- Strengthens capacity of local actors to engage with heritage in ways responsive to demographic and social change.

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Learn more at heritageresearch-hub.eu/project/herindep

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CUMET: Cultural Heritage in the Metropolitan Peripheries

DURATION: 2023-06-01 - 2026-05-31

BUDGET: €676K

SUBJECT AREAS

Heritage values - Identity, Humanities and social sciences,
Intangible Heritage, Monuments - Sites, Pedagogy,
Research collaboration, Tangible Heritage, Urban Heritage

“Unearthing heritage in the margins: peripheries shaping inclusive metropolises.”

INTRODUCTION

CUMET investigates the diverse cultural heritage of the peripheries of three European metropolises – Paris, Madrid and Edinburgh – exploring its capacity to contribute positively to contemporary metropolization. The project uses an interdisciplinary and intersectoral comparative methodology to analyse both opportunities and risks for cultural heritage in metropolitan outskirts. CUMET examines how peripheries, often seen as the city's backyards, become theatres of change through new uses of public space, creation of landmarks, heritage symbols, and intangible expressions. It addresses how heritage in these zones is reconfigured amid social, spatial and functional transformations.

Book: Garcia Hernandez, M., Gravari-Barbas M., (2025), Cultural Heritage on the Urban Peripheries: Towards New Research Paradigms. Routledge.

CONSORTIUM

FR Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne
(Coord.)

ES Universidad Complutense de Madrid

UK University of Edinburgh

IMPACTS & RESULTS

- CUMET highlights the importance of peripheral heritage for local authorities, inhabitants, heritage institutions, private sector, in fostering identity, place-making, tourism and social cohesion.
- It surfaces the risks posed by densification, infrastructure expansion, and real-estate pressures to destroy heritage in periphery zones.
- The project reveals opportunities for reconverting peripheral heritage assets – factories, warehouses, transport infrastructure, housing – into cultural, leisure, commercial or tourism uses.
- It brings visibility to intangible heritage of working-class and migrant communities in dynamic processes of protest, negotiation, and cultural expression.
- It informs policy by showing how metropolitan growth both threatens and offers potential to peripheral heritage.
- It emphasizes need for protection of architecture typologies from 19th-20th centuries and non-monumental heritage as part of metropolitan identity.
- The Heritage Observatory of the urban PERipheries (HOPE), tracking changes in the heritage of selected peripheral neighbourhoods over the years in the context of contemporary metropolitan pressures.

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Learn more at heritageresearch-hub.eu/project/cumet

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