



The Liminal Space



## **Guidance for applicants to join Mindsets + Missions for Museums and Science Centres of the Future**

### **Purpose and Context**

Mindsets + Missions is a new learning and grants programme, funded by UK Research and Innovation, which supports museums and science centres to engage underrepresented groups with knowledge, research, and innovation. Using the concept of “future citizens”, we will enable people who bring diverse and plural perspectives to engage with, influence and participate in the development of the knowledge, research and innovation that our future societies will be built on. The Mindsets + Missions approach is about exploring the missions that drive our work and the mindsets that help us to achieve our aims.

“Museums and science centres play an important role in inspiring the next generation of researchers and innovators, whether it’s future vaccine researchers or future historians. But we know that opportunities to engage with research and innovation through museums and science centres aren’t open to all.” Tom Saunders, head of public engagement, UKRI

This is a time-limited programme that presents an opportunity to innovate. By that we mean using approaches that combine experimentation with an element of ambition; work that is boundary pushing within its context; and created in a way that means you learn from the experience. The programme is also based on supporting a cohort of organisations and individuals, so we aim to stimulate collaboration and peer learning. And we will work across the cohort to understand lessons and methodologies that will benefit practitioners and policymakers across museums and science centres.

We are realistic about the challenges inherent to participating in the Mindsets + Missions programme, so we have created a pathway that clearly describes the time and headspace you will need to commit and the timescales on which we will operate. We will compensate participants for their time and commitment in the first

phase of Mindsets + Missions (see below) and then cohort organisations will have opportunity to apply for project grants in the second phase of the programme.

The programme builds on a rich foundation of research and experience: the Mindsets for Museums of the Future report; Science and Discovery Centre Futures: Missions and Opportunities report; the Bold Futures programme; Inspiring Science Fund; Museums Change Lives; Digital Innovation and Engagement grants and more.

Mindsets + Missions is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). It is a key part of UKRI's mission to break down the barriers between research, innovation and society. UKRI is providing a total of £750k for this programme, which is being delivered by a partnership of the Museums Association, The Liminal Space and the Association for Science and Discovery Centres.

## **Contact**

Please contact Craig Smith, the Mindsets + Missions project officer at the Museums Association for more information: [craig@museumsassociation.org](mailto:craig@museumsassociation.org), 020 7566 7827.

## How to get involved

### Phase One

Applications to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort are open until 19 December 2022. Successful applicants will join a learning programme taking place in spring 2023. The programme will include a series of seminars exploring future citizenship and our motivations to engage underrepresented groups (the missions) and approaches to improving engagement (the mindsets). You will also have opportunity for peer support and to debate your real-life opportunities through smaller learning sets based on interests in common, for example topics such as climate crisis, decolonisation, or wellbeing.

The learning programme is being designed in consultation with science centres and museums, so its exact shape is still to be determined. We envisage that you will need to commit around 15 hours of contact time in the period February-April 2023, alongside thinking and consultation time with colleagues, partner organisations and community groups. Most interaction will take place online, however we anticipate holding at least one element in person. We expect participants to retain travel funds from the payments detailed below as part of their commitment to the learning programme. However, where there are additional access needs or excessive travel costs (e.g. due to your location) you can access additional funds on a prioritised basis.

- Organisations will make an application to join based on their commitment to developing work that engages underrepresented audiences in research, inquiry, knowledge sharing and innovation; willingness to take part in evaluation and learning dissemination to benefit the museum and science centre sectors; and an expectation to involve colleagues, existing networks and community groups in their thinking. Organisations will receive a development grant of £2,000 to secure and support their commitment to the learning programme.
- Individuals will make an application to join based on their knowledge, experience or activism in topics of particular interest in this programme, such as climate crisis, decolonisation and wellbeing; or in the spheres of participation and inclusion and/or research and innovation. Individuals may be independent practitioners or researchers, and we seek people who can stimulate and catalyse the Mindsets + Missions cohort to foster innovation, collaboration and the development of ideas. Individuals will receive a stipend of £500 (inclusive of any applicable VAT) to support their time and commitment to the learning programme.

All applicants are asked to talk to the Mindsets + Missions project officer before applying, to support the strengths in your application and help ensure that the

programme is a good fit for you. This conversation can help in preparing you for the learning programme, for example in organisations it will be important to work out who is the best placed person to attend the learning programme. We will also aim to recruit a balanced cohort across museums and science centres, UK geography, the topics or themes that participants are interested in, and the stage of development of organisations (in terms of inclusive and research practice). This means that we aim to support organisations beyond those that UKRI support might usually reach and where participation in the Mindsets + Missions cohort can make the most difference.

A selection committee including independent museum and science centre representatives and UKRI will appoint around 30 organisations and 15 individuals to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort. You will be informed in w/c 16 January 2023 if you have been successful in your application.

## **Phase two**

Organisations in the Mindsets + Missions cohort will be eligible to apply for project grants of up to £75k over 12-15 months, at the end of phase one. We know that some organisations will come to Mindsets + Missions with clear ideas and strategic priorities for the projects they wish to undertake; while others will be earlier in their development. Our requirement is that you remain open to adapting and growing your thinking based on your experience of the learning programme; a spirit of collaboration; and involving your existing networks and community partners at an early stage of putting together your ideas.

Grant applications can be made by an individual organisation or by a partnership. Partnerships can include groups within and external to the Mindsets + Missions cohort. For example, you might apply to work with a community partner where it builds on your existing relationship and track record; or you might develop an idea with peers in the cohort that allows you to innovate beyond your business as usual.

All grant applications will be based on plans in three areas:

- Working with future citizens in a group that is underrepresented at your organisation(s). This outcome should be informed by evidence of who is underrepresented at your organisation (e.g. from local demographic data) and your track record or consultation on community engagement. We want to see that the community or group you wish to work with are interested in what you have to offer and are able to participate. While this fund is directed at innovation, we want to support equitable and long-term community relationships so we will assess how responsible your approach to community engagement is.
- Engaging with or producing research and innovation that is relevant to your underrepresented group(s). We imagine this will result in topics such as

climate crisis, health inequality, decolonisation and community wellbeing, but are not limiting the scope of what can be included here. We want to see a coherent link between the people you wish to work with and the research or topic you will explore.

- Building innovation and experimentation into your work. We want to support work that tests new approaches within the reality of your working contexts. You might bring in new catalysts, researchers and partners that challenge you to innovate and learn from the project; or you might push yourselves to take the next step in handing over power to your underrepresented groups to shape the project.

As the learning programme in phase one progresses, the Mindsets + Missions project officer will offer support to help develop project applications from cohort members. This coaching is designed to make the application process equitable across the range of organisations that will be involved in the Mindsets + Missions cohort; and to prepare the projects that are eventually funded for success. For example, the Mindsets + Missions project officer can help you to articulate outcomes for the project relating to each of the three priority areas above.

Application guidance, criteria and forms will be provided in full to cohort members at the start of the learning programme so that applicants can develop their ideas and perhaps discuss their thoughts in their learning sets. Project grant applications will be submitted by 26 April 2023.

### Phase three

Around nine grants will be awarded in June 2023. At this time we will reconvene the Mindsets + Missions cohort and invite this group to contribute to learning dissemination from the programme. While grantees are expected to join further cohort meetings (in June 2023, December 2023 and June 2024) as part of project monitoring and evaluation, it is voluntary for other cohort members who see a benefit for their own work. Project grants can run for any period up to August 2024.

### Key dates

Item	Date
Enquiries about applying to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort	November 2022
Deadline for applications from individuals and organisations to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort	19 December 2022
Appointments to the Mindsets + Missions cohort	w/c 16 January 2023
Mindsets + Missions learning programme	February-April 2023
Coaching to make project applications	March-April 2023
Deadline for project applications	26 April 2023

Project funding awarded and projects begin	June 2023
Participation in network meetings for cohort members (optional) and project grantees (required)	June 2023 December 2023 June 2024

## **Application criteria and eligibility**

Organisations and individuals have separate application criteria and forms to apply to join Mindsets + Missions. Around 30 organisations will be selected to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort, and around 15 individuals.

### **Organisations**

To apply to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort you must:

1. Identify and support the best placed person at your organisation to attend the Mindsets + Missions learning programme.
2. Commit to the time; and spirit of collaboration and innovation required to maximise the benefits of participation in the Mindsets + Missions cohort.
3. Participate in evaluation and/or learning dissemination for Mindsets + Missions.
4. Be a Museums Association institutional member, member of the ASDC National Network and/or a UK Accredited museum (or formally working towards this standard).

When assessing your application to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort, we will look for one or more of the following strengths:

5. Understanding of your current approach to research and innovation, for example the big topics that you engage in as part of your work, or how you include researchers.
6. Understanding of your current approach to inclusion and participation, for example how you know who is underrepresented in your organisation, or how you work in your current community relationships.
7. What you will gain from joining the Mindsets + Missions cohort for your organisation and the network of people who work with or for it.

### **Individuals**

To apply to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort you must:

1. Commit to the time; and spirit of collaboration and innovation required to maximise the benefits of participation in the Mindsets + Missions cohort.
2. Participate in evaluation and/or learning dissemination for Mindsets + Missions.
3. Be a catalyst: an independent practitioner, represent a collective, a freelancer or researcher with relevant knowledge, experience or activism to contribute to the Mindsets + Missions cohort.

We will assess your application to join the Mindsets + Missions cohort for one or more of the following strengths:

4. Understanding of your approach to fostering innovation, collaboration and the development of ideas, for example how you have worked on previous projects or in your own networks.

5. The relevance of your knowledge and experience to the Mindsets + Missions cohort, for example in topics such as climate change, wellbeing and decolonisation; or in the spheres of participation, inclusion, or research.
6. What you will gain from joining the Mindsets + Missions cohort and how you might share those benefits.