

MHRA RESEARCH ASSOCIATESHIPS

The Association intends to make up to three research awards of £23,000 for the academic session 2017–2018 (with a start date on or after 1st October 2017).

Purpose of Grant

The awards are designed to hasten the completion of research projects of special importance through the provision of part-time research assistance. An award will be made solely for the employment of a researcher, normally post-doctoral, to be selected and appointed by the project in consultation with the Association, and bearing the title of ‘MHRA Research Associate’. Since another important aim of the awards is to provide an interim academic position to early-career scholars who have not yet obtained a permanent academic post, the Research Associate will be formally attached to a host institution, allowing him or her to participate in the host institution’s research community. The MHRA Associateship may be supplemented by a limited amount of remunerated teaching in the host institution, or other approved work; where this is possible it will be viewed favourably. The final details of the contract will be agreed between the MHRA and the institution concerned.

Eligibility

The awards will not be made to assist individual researchers, but to established projects such as dictionaries, textual editions, bibliographies, or other major scholarly enterprises, within the field of medieval and modern European languages and literatures. The Modern Humanities Research Association exists to encourage and promote advanced study and research in the field of the medieval and modern European languages and literatures. English and the Slavonic languages are included in this definition. Applications from the field of history cannot be considered unless a convincing case is made that the project will serve scholars in English and/or the Modern Languages. Applications from the fields of library studies, education and pedagogical subjects, and the medical application of linguistics are excluded.

Applicants will be directors of established research projects in the Modern Humanities and will normally hold a permanent academic position at a university in the British Isles. It is not envisaged that the Associateships will be used as a pump-priming exercise, and applications will not be considered from the directors of projects which have not yet been established, nor from prospective Research Associates on their own behalf, nor from individual scholars seeking a personal research assistant. The awards will normally be for one year only, but applications will be considered from projects which have previously held an Associateship. Applications are also welcomed from those who have previously applied unsuccessfully for an MHRA Research Associateship, provided the conditions for eligibility continue to be met.

Application and Assessment Procedures

Applications for awards should be made by the director(s) or lead investigator(s) of a project that meets the criteria set out above. Applications should be sent electronically to the mailbox **funding@mhra.org.uk**, to arrive **not later than 28 February 2017**. Enquiries can also be sent to this email address, and Dr Chloe Paver, who administers the application process for the MHRA, is happy to answer questions on 01392 724338.

There is no special application form, but a full description of the project, and of the planned role of the Research Associate, should be supplied, and should respond to the criteria listed below. Please include the name and postal address of the director/lead investigator, if not evident from the letterhead. This address will be used to communicate the outcome. Please also include the name (and, if appropriate, institution) of the person who will line manage the Research Associate if this is someone other than the director/lead investigator (as may be the case with a large project). Please indicate any external funding already received and the likely availability of part-time teaching or other university work to the Research Associate.

It will help us if you use the following protocol for your filename: [Project Title] RA Application 2017.docx. Applicants should arrange for up to two independent referees to supply references in support of their projects, and for the references to be sent direct to the Research Grants Officer (Research Associates Scheme), at **funding@mhra.org.uk**, before

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the closing date.

In assessing applications the awarding committee will consider in particular the following criteria:

- The scholarly value of the project as a whole, measured in terms of: scope; intellectual rigour; and the extent and quality of the foundations it is likely to lay for future scholarship.
- In the case of editing projects, the quality of the editorial methods and systems.
- Strength of the references in supporting the above claims.
- A clear and detailed outline of the Research Associate's intended contribution to bringing the project, or one part or stage of the project, to fruition. While it is not necessary that the outcome of the Research Associate's work be published within the timeframe of the Associateship, there must be clear and realistic plans for its publication in due course.
- A clear indication of the skills that will be required of the Research Associateship and of the training available should the appointee need to acquire knowledge of specialist techniques or systems.
- Evidence of commitment to the Research Associate's career and personal development, which might include: mentoring; access to the institution's training courses; opportunities to engage with the research community, including opportunities to disseminate research and to publish under his/her own name.
- Evidence that the project has long-term funding in place to sustain it until its completion, or a realistic prospect of obtaining such funding.
- In the case of applications from projects previously successful in the award of an Associateship: evidence that the initial Associateship was appropriately and productively used; evidence that the project is progressing satisfactorily and that the new Associateship is required for a new phase of the project (and not, for instance, to make up for delays in the original scheme of work).

Appointment of an RA and Disbursement of Awards

Feedback is not a feature of the Research Associateships scheme, and the Association is, regretfully, unable to enter into correspondence regarding the decisions of the awarding committee. Please note that by applying to this scheme, applicants undertake to accept the terms under which applications are assessed.

The Association may require the directors of the successful project or projects to advertise for the Research Associate and to interview suitable applicants. A representative of the Association normally advises on the appointments process. Normally, the appointing university creates a half-time, 12-month post at an appropriate post-doctoral salary point. It is assumed that the whole sum awarded will be devoted to the Associateship, after allowance for salary overheads such as the employer's share of National Insurance contributions or the employer's share of USS contributions, and that the host institution will bear the cost of any further overheads which may be deemed necessary. As a charity, the MHRA is unable to make awards on the basis of Full Economic Costing. By accepting an Associateship, a successful applicant agrees to arrange for their institutional research finance office to invoice the Assistant Treasurer in October and April of the award year for half of the amount awarded. Contact details will be supplied in the letter of award.

In the event of the Research Associate being appointed to a full-time position, whether of an academic nature or otherwise, during the tenure of the Associateship, the Project Director undertakes forthwith to refund the Association in respect of the period from which the employment commences.

Further enquiries should be directed to the MHRA at the email given above.