



WINTER NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 2023

Updates

➤ Energy Bill Relief Scheme

The good news is that, thanks in no small part to the effective lobbying from the sector, museums qualify as a high energy sector and are included among those industries eligible for the higher level of support once the current scheme comes to an end from April 2023.

However, it is still not clear how museums that sit within larger institutions (Councils or Universities) will be able to disaggregate their energy costs from those of the organisations in which they sit. It may also be that the energy-buying policies of host Universities mean that the price paid does not exceed the threshold at which the higher rate of relief kicks in

Details of the scheme:

As per the current scheme the government will provide a discount on gas and electricity unit prices. Eligible non-domestic consumers will now receive a per-unit discount to their energy bills during the 12-month period from April 2023 to March 2024, subject to a maximum discount. The relative discount will be applied if wholesale prices are above a certain price threshold. For most non-domestic energy users in Great Britain and Northern Ireland these maximum discounts have been set at:

- electricity - £19.61 per megawatt hour (MWh) with a price threshold of £302 per MWh.
- gas - £6.97 per MWh with a price threshold of £107 per MWh

The discount is calculated as the difference between the wholesale price associated with an energy contract and the price threshold. The discount is phased in when the contract's wholesale price exceeds the floor price, until the total discount per MWh reaches the maximum discount for that fuel. Customers do not need to apply for their discount. As with the current scheme, suppliers will automatically apply reductions to the bills of all eligible non-domestic customers.

Support at a higher level for which Museums are eligible:

Recognising that some non-domestic energy users in Great Britain and Northern Ireland are particularly vulnerable to high energy prices due to their energy intensive and trade exposure, (referred to as Energy and Trade Intensive Industries or ETIs), these sectors will

receive a higher level of support, subject to a maximum discount. The maximum discounts and price threshold for these sectors are:

- electricity - £89 per MWh with a price threshold of £185 per MWh
- gas - £40 per MWh with a price threshold of £99 per MWh

Museums and other eligible organisations will need to apply for the higher level of support. Once the mechanics of the scheme have been finalised we will let you know.

➤ **AHRC UKRI Meeting, December 2022**

UMG met with Christopher Smith, Allan Sudlow, and Jessica Corner to be introduced to Jessica as the new executive chair of Research England, to talk about the forthcoming review of HEMG funding and to continue conversations concerning the challenges which university museums have in gaining access to research funding thanks to restrictive eligibility criteria.

We once again made the point that the HEMG funding pot has remained at the same level for about 20 years while at the same time more has been distributed more widely across University Museums.

Looking back at REF2021 Christopher Smith provided a copy of the Technopolis Report [attached] which was an experimental look at what constituted successful outputs and what should be part of assessments.

AHRC will also be publishing a report on impact case studies and panel D of REF, focusing on the efficacious role of deep partnerships (e.g., exhibition funds, collaborative PhDs) over shallow ones. Of a piece with this is an inquiry into the underpinning funding review of REF. The two driving questions are what the great examples of impact case studies were and what we can learn from them in order to gauge what good vs bad practice looks like. A question that was raised was what does “impact” mean or look like for university museums, as this would shape the assessment of the work of university museums. This report will be circulated when it comes available.

Further to this meeting is a plan for members of UMG’s Executive Committee to meet regularly with Allan Sudlow to discuss areas of common interest between AHRC and university museums, including:

- REF impact case study analysis
- Technician Commitment/Professional Fellowships in GLAM
- Capabilities/Infrastructures/Services for research
- GLAM community driven research
- Public engagement
- Role and nature, opportunities and challenges of research in a UM context
- Museums and wellbeing

➤ **HEMG Review**

Although we believe the panel for the review has been appointed we still await the announcement of the panel and its terms of reference. We will circulate as soon as we receive this. Lexie Spittle who is co-ordinating the review for Research England is waiting for the recommended panel members to be approved by the Executive Chair, It is still hoped that the first meeting of the panel will take place in February. They are also planning to hold an online event shortly after the review is launched, so that they can talk through the criteria and answer any questions from possible applicants. The review is expected to be done by the summer.

We are in the process of collecting the returns from HEMG-funded museums with the ultimate goal of using the data in the returns for advocacy purposes. The advocacy document to be produced will then help address further questions which the aggregate numbers raise.

We are also conducting a study of REF Impact Case Studies to contribute to sector representation which corresponds to the HEMG review panel's focus on the research impact of university museums.

➤ **Refurbished website**

Just before Christmas, we completed the preliminary phase of a much-needed update of UMG's website. It had been ten years since the website was designed and so we are happy to reveal its new and improved design and content for 2023. 🎉

[University Museums Group – Representing the interests of university museums, galleries, and collections](#)

➤ **Membership Communications Notice**

Please note, for those who are members: correspondence, including remittance advice documents, and other membership related enquiries and documents should be sent to umg@glam.ox.ac.uk. We would greatly appreciate it if you could update your contact details for us as we attempt to improve the efficiency of our communications.

➤ **SAVE THE DATE: Manchester Conference, Wednesday 17th May**

Speakers and exact times for the conference will be announced soon, but we want to make everyone aware that we will have an in-person conference/network event in the soon-to-be reopened Manchester Museum on 17th May during ICOM's International Museums Week. The HEMG review panel will be invited along with AHRC and UKRI representatives, and Lexi Spittle will be in attendance and is prepared to answer any questions about the review from an RE perspective.

➤ **CALL FOR PAPERS: Manchester Conference: *Museums, Sustainability & Wellbeing***

Our theme for the conference is *Museums, Sustainability, & Wellbeing*, a theme shared by ICOM's International Museums Week and which speaks to the work Manchester Museum has been doing around social justice and sustainability. If you have a paper to contribute on

this theme or know of a speaker who would be well-suited to drive discussion on these topics, please get in touch by emailing umg@glam.ox.ac.uk .

➤ **VACANCY: Barber Health Coordinator, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts**

We're seeking an exceptional individual to join the team in this exciting and unique role.

[Barber Health](#) was initiated in early 2021 and places arts, health and wellbeing at the heart of the Barber's audience engagement, learning and outreach.

As we take the programme forward, we will be building on the action research, active facilitation and reflection of the last two years.

The role of Barber Health Coordinator is key to delivering this project successfully. The post-holder will be responsible for the administration, logistical planning, communication and delivery of Barber Health. Line managed by the Learning and Engagement Manager, they will work alongside colleagues from the Learning and Education team and across the Barber. To deliver Barber Health, it's essential the post-holder develops productive working relationships with participants, partners, stakeholders, and collaborators from across University of Birmingham, the health sector and local communities.

Read more about the role by downloading the full [job description](#).

Apply online [here](#).

Applications window closes: 1 March 2023, 11.59pm

