

Advocating for History in UK higher education

Call for Expressions of Interest in a Research Consultancy

History UK is seeking to commission a research study on undergraduate History provision that will help support its mission as an independent body monitoring and promoting History in UK higher education. News of staff cuts and course closures at a number of universities have contributed to a fear that History is under threat, particularly in post-92 universities. Yet there is little publicly available or accessible data that can provide a more detailed picture for History and support History UK's and staffs' advocacy for the subject. With this research study, History UK wants to build an evidence base relating to current trends and future directions of History provision. This will inform the development of a toolkit for historians, providing accessible guidance on what kinds of data is available, where to find it, and ways of using it.

History UK invites Expressions of Interest (Eols) in this research consultancy by Friday 30 July 2021.

Terms of Reference

The objectives of this research consultancy are to:

- Scope the availability, accessibility, and uses of relevant quantitative and qualitative data relating to History provision in UK higher education over the last five years.
- Collate and analyse quantitative data on History and History joint-honours degree programmes.
- Provide guidance on how History staff can be enabled to understand, use and respond to this data.

We envisage that the research consultancy will involve desk-based research, including analysis of HESA data, though we are willing to consider other / additional approaches. The research itself should be organised around four provisional research questions:

1. What are the regional, national, and UK-wide trends in recruitment for History and History joint-honours degree programmes in UK Higher Education?
2. What does graduate outcomes and employability data reveal about different types of History graduates, and what are its limitations?
3. What arguments are being made for the feasibility of History provision in UK Higher Education at university and national levels, and what evidence is being used?
4. How can History staff use data to advocate for History in their own universities, as well as among History's different stakeholders?

The research questions will be finalised in consultation with the research consultant, and we will welcome suggestions for changes that will make the findings more useful for History staff.

The expected outputs and deliverables are:

1. Executive summary (2 pages maximum).
2. A report presenting the findings of the research and recommendations.
3. An appendix including all data and sources used.
4. Presentation to the History UK Steering Committee highlighting key findings (online).

Timeframe and budget:

- The deadline for EoIs is Friday 30 July 2021.
- The precise timetable will be negotiated with the research consultant, but we anticipate outputs 1-3 being delivered by Friday 5 November 2021.
- The presentation to the History UK Steering Committee will be arranged at a mutually convenient time, likely mid-November 2021.
- The maximum budget for this project is likely to be £8000.

Eligibility:

- The research consultant should have relevant expertise in the analysis of higher education data, as well as a familiarity with higher education policy.
- There is no requirement for a background in History, though an understanding of the context of History and/or the humanities in higher education may be an advantage.
- The research consultant may be employed at a higher education institution, but they must be able to work as an independent consultant.
- The research consultant should have the right to work in the UK.

The Expression of Interest should include:

- Personal statement and up-to-date CV.
- A short statement describing the proposed approach and timeframe for the research.
- Budget for completed delivery of all stated outputs and deliverables, including salary, data access charges, and any VAT (if applicable).

Any enquiries and EoIs should be emailed to HistoryUK2020@gmail.com by Friday 30 July 2021.

Further information about History UK can be found at www.history-uk.ac.uk.