

Media, Arts and Humanities

Guidelines on eligible uses of the internal MAH Research Budget

General Principles:

- i. The awarding of funds from the internal research budget is part of the remit of the Media, Arts and Humanities Research Portfolio and applications will be considered and approved throughout the academic year, usually by the Chair of the Committee (Associate Dean for Research) and Research Portfolio team.
- ii. The purpose of the research budget is to fund key research activities that support the Faculty's research, knowledge exchange and impact strategies and contribute to faculty members' personal research plans.
- iii. The total amount in the Research budget in a given year will vary according to overall Faculty budgeting, and this will in turn influence any 'caps' on the total amount of funding which can be applied for by individuals in a given year. Applications which exceed the cap will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may exceptionally be funded in full if there is a clear benefit to MAH's research strategy and environment. The Faculty may also need to put restrictions on eligible use of funds in a given year depending on budget constraints, e.g. restricting funds for overseas travel, and/or only funding activities deemed to be business critical.
- iv. Faculty are expected to use their [incentive fund](#) (if they have one) to support individual research activities, before applying to the general Research Fund. ****Please note that incentive funds in MAH are currently frozen until further notice****
- v. Where there are limited funds, priority will be given to early career researchers, those who do not have incentive funds to draw on, those with relevant EDI characteristics, and those who have not been awarded funding already this year.
- vi. The Research Portfolio will consider the potential outcome(s) of the proposed research activity when approving funding requests and applicants are expected to provide details about this in their application for funds. Outcomes can include: publications, exhibitions, performances, impact case study material, practice-based projects, knowledge exchange, networking, conference organisation and external grant applications.

Eligible expenses (individual research activities):

(devised in accordance with the University's [financial regulations](#) on expenses. Please refer to these regulations if you need more detail on what is an eligible expense).

- i. **Conference fees** (including renewal of membership to societies where this is part of the conference fee package). Note: the applicant must be presenting a paper or contributing to a

round-table or workshop at the conference in question. Funding cannot normally be given for attendance only.

- ii. **Travel** to and from the conference. In line with Sussex's Sustainability Strategy, faculty are encouraged to use public transport wherever possible before considering use of car or air travel. If air travel is the only way to get to the conference, faculty are expected to use [Key Travel](#) for their flight bookings, unless an alternative travel provider can provide better value for money (we recommend getting a quote from Key Travel to compare costs).
- iii. **Overnight accommodation** at the conference location where applicable. Accommodation will usually only be provided for the night before or after the presentation of the paper, but exceptions may be given for conferences overseas. As a guide the amount the University will fund is £100 for standard locations and £200 for high cost locations, such as major cities, depending on the typical cost of 3-star accommodation.
- iv. **Subsistence costs**, i.e. meals purchased during the course of the research activity, if it takes place away from the individual's normal place of work. There are no permitted round sum or per diem allowances so all subsistence claims must be accompanied by a receipt. MAH will normally fund subsistence up to a limit of £30 a day.
- v. **Library/archive visits or research fieldtrips**. Travel, accommodation and subsistence claims are eligible for funding (as with conference attendance).
- vi. **Attendance/participation at performances or film screenings**. Travel, accommodation and subsistence claims are eligible for funding (as with conference attendance).
- vii. **Copyright costs for publications** (e.g. for images and illustrations) where these are not covered by the publisher. Payments for **Open Access** rights on publications may be funded by the [Library](#).
- viii. **Indexing or translation costs for publications** where it is not possible for the author to complete these.
- ix. **Production and screening costs** for practice-based outputs (but see note on equipment purchases below)
- x. **Computing or IT costs** that relate exclusively to research and which cannot be covered by MAH's Resources Committee (which may fund equipment if it will be widely used by staff and/or students).
- xi. **Research assistant payments** where the employment of a fixed term research assistant is essential to the delivery of a project or research output. This must be arranged via the MAH Research Office **before** the work commences and hourly pay rates must be in line with approved [University rates for casual pay](#).
- xii. **Consultancy fees** where the use of a consultant is deemed essential to the research project or activity in question.

Not eligible for expense claims: (other than in exceptional circumstances):

- Medical and immunisation costs for travel abroad
- Childcare or dependent care costs, except where this relates to the University's [carer support policy](#).
- Travel Insurance (this is available for free from the University's [insurance office](#))
- IT/Audio/Recording equipment *unless* the equipment is for a specific research project. Requests for equipment which will benefit the wider Faculty and will be used on an ongoing/regular basis should be directed in the first instance to the MAH Resource Committee (mah-src@sussex.ac.uk).

- Publicity trips for books or other publications (where the sole or main purpose of the trip is publicity). The Research Office may be able to provide some administrative support in arranging book launches on campus.
- Subscriptions to journals or magazines
- Membership of societies unless this cost is part of a conference registration fee/a condition of abstract submission.

Eligible expenses (Research Centre, Groups and Seminar Series activities):

- Event organisation costs** including venue booking fees where relevant, catering and refreshments (please use [University Catering](#) for events held on campus), publicity or merchandise for large events (most of the time, publicity of events can be arranged in-house) and casual paid staff if the event requires, for example, student helpers.
- Guest speaker expenses and fees**, which can include hotel accommodation for visiting speakers (booked through the MAH Reception Team), visitors' travel expenses (claimed via an [expense claim form](#)) and fees for speakers/artists/practitioners who are freelance. The standard fee is £200. Please see the [Policy on Guest Speaker Payments](#) for more information.
- Post event hospitality** i.e. taking a visiting speaker or contributor to dinner. In line with the University [financial guidelines](#), the ratio of staff to guests should not exceed 2:1 (or 3:1 if University facilities are being used) and meal costs should not exceed £50 pp for dinner or £30 pp for lunch. A moderate amount of alcohol can be included in these costs.
- Casual Payments** for, e.g., research assistants or student helpers for events, where the Research Centre or Group has a particular project, conference or large event that requires the skills of additional fixed-term staff. Pay rates should correspond to [University casual pay rates](#) and casual workers must be set up by the MAH Research Office in advance of the work starting.

Updated January 2025