

# Researcher-Led Initiative Fund Application

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## About you

1	Application Lead Name:	NGender co-ordinators: [REDACTED]
2	Lead is:	Doctoral Researcher
3	E-mail address:	[REDACTED]
4	Telephone:	
5	School and Department:	[REDACTED] -- School of English (English Dept.); [REDACTED] -- School of History, Art History and Philosophy (History Dept.)

## About your application

6	Date of application:	12/11/2015
7	Other participating Schools and contacts:	
8	Title of activity:	NGender 2016
9	Type of activity (e.g. workshop, career development forum, networking event, seminar, conference, journal club etc.):	Activity 1: Feminist Film + Talk Series Activity 2: Conference
10	Proposed start date:	01/02/2016

## Section A: About the activity

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Please describe your proposed initiative (including aims and objectives; how the activity will be organised, who will be involved and how the initiative will be managed, the target audience and expected uptake, the training and development focus of the activity, and how the activity will be promoted):

NGender is a gender and sexuality research related initiative organised at the University of Sussex. The aim is to bring together postgraduate and early career scholars with gender or sexuality as a theme or focus of their research. In the past NGender has taken the form of a series of interactive panels and presentations. An important driving philosophy behind this has been to build a sense of community between faculty and students working on these topics, especially those not affiliated with traditional gender studies courses. Since gender and sexuality are inherently interdisciplinary areas of research, most scholars working on these issues have been, and remain, distributed throughout various departments and schools of the university. This can sometime feel isolating, and NGender aims to break this isolation by providing a space in which researchers can come together and share their work with other specialists, working towards greater university-wide collaboration and interdisciplinary research output. As NGender has evolved over the years it has reached out to other universities and organisations, facilitating connections between a wide variety of departments and disciplines.

For the NGender's seventh year, we will be hosting three events: a monthly non-academic reading group (no funding required), a feminist film/talk series, and the annual NGender conference. These activities will be organized by the NGender planning committee, headed by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (2nd year English) and [REDACTED] (2nd year History). We are currently in the process of planning our schedule for 2015/2016, selecting films and speakers for our feminist film/talk series, developing a budget and identifying and allocating tasks to the rest of the planning committee, which consists of Master's and PhD students in fields as diverse as

Gender Studies, History, English, and International Relations.

In reflecting on the successes and learning points from previous years of NGender, we have decided to:

- 1) Continue the annual conference;
- 2) Continue a reading group which focuses on mostly non-academic works, so as to attract students with heavy reading loads in their courses; and,
- 3) Host a new feminist film/talk series, aimed at attracting students interested in gender issues from a variety of disciplines

We are requesting funds for the annual conference and the feminist film/talk series only.

Event 1 (~20 participants per session; 4 sessions total): Feminist Film/Talk Series  
In previous years, NGender has attempted to host seminars for which attendance was a major issue. We believe that a multidisciplinary feminist film/talk series is an ideal forum for which to facilitate seminar-like discussion while attracting a wider audience. The feminist film/talk series will take place once a month, beginning in February 2016. Each session will feature a film focused on a feminist issue -- some potential titles include Moolaade (a documentary on female genital mutilation), Ukraine Is Not a Brothel (a documentary on feminist activist group Femen) and She's Beautiful When She's Angry (a documentary on the 1960s women's liberation movement). Each film will be followed by a short talk by a Sussex scholar in a related field to the film's subject matter, plus a roundtable discussion. The event will be promoted via NGender's social media pages, internal networks at Sussex, and posters.

Event 2 (~50 participants): Annual Conference

We propose holding the 3rd annual NGender conference in May 2015. The event will be an opportunity for postgraduate students (MA and PhD) and early career researchers from both Sussex and outside universities to present their work-in-progress on any topic related to

gender and/or sexuality, and to receive useful feedback from a supportive and interdisciplinary group of their peers. As with last year's conference, this year's conference aims to strike a balance between the traditional conference format and a more experimental, social form. The event will begin with an academic speed-dating round, where participants get to know about each other's research in a direct and fun manner, and will then be followed with panel sessions and a closing roundtable session. After dealing with practical tasks of organisation we will utilise our established internal and external networks to promote a call for papers.

13 Set out how the activity will address the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (refer to the guidance notes).

NGender 2016 aims to address all four sections of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework: A) Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities; B) Personal Effectiveness; C) Research Governance and Organization; and, D) Engagement, Influence and Impact.

**A) Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities**  
With both our feminist film/talk series and our annual conference, we aim to increase participants' subject knowledge of various issues regarding gender and sexuality (A1 -- Knowledge Base). Participants will expand beyond their personal understanding and research by coming into contact with issues covered in different disciplines. For example, an English PhD student analyzing poetic representations of gender can learn about Latin American women's reproduction rights from a Law PhD student. We also provide participants with the opportunity to practice creativity (A3). In writing and delivering papers at our conference, postgraduate students and early career researchers will develop their skills in argument construction. Moreover, with roundtable discussions and Q&A sessions built into both events, we hope to encourage participants to have inquiring minds.

**B) Personal Effectiveness**  
NGender provides an excellent

opportunity for the members of its planning committee to increase their personal effectiveness. Not only will team members possess great responsibility in ensuring that the events run smoothly, but at the end of each event, team members will also practice self-reflection, ruminating over the event's successes and learning points (B1 -- Personal Qualities). Given our relatively tight timeline, team members will also need to practice good time management and prioritization skills (B2 -- Self-management). However, it's important to note that NGender will not only aid in its team members' personal effectiveness, but also its participants. People who come to speak at either the feminist film/talk series or the conference will be actively participating in their own professional and career development (B3), networking with like-minded scholars and building upon their academic CVs.

C) Research Governance and Organization  
NGender's team members will learn a lot about research governance and organization over the coming months. We need to carefully plan our project, taking into account potential problems and obstacles along the way in order to avoid problems on the actual event day(s) (C2 -- Research Management). Members will learn how to generate and successfully manage funds without overspending, along with how to book spaces, catering, and other required resources (C3 -- Finance, Funding and Resources).

D) Engagement, Influence and Impact  
Of all the sections in the Researcher Development Framework, Engagement, Influence and Impact poses as NGender's greatest goal. NGender is all about working with others (D1) -- meeting with people in different disciplines from your own and finding a common bond through a mutual interest in gender and sexuality. Team members need to collaborate efficiently to plan events, and it is up to Chelsea and Laura (the team leads) to act as leaders and delegate tasks to the team evenly. Yet, at the same time, we strive for NGender to be as egalitarian as possible-- we have a very diverse team this year, and we want to ensure that everyone feels like

their voice is being heard (D1 -- equality and diversity). In order to attract as many people as possible to NGender events, we will be taking advantage of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, blog), internal networks (mailing lists), external websites (UPenn's Call for Papers website), and print media, such as posters and pamphlets (D2 -- Communication and Dissemination). NGender strives for public engagement, and in reaching out to scholars outside of the Sussex community for our annual conference, we hope to do just that (D3 -- Engagement and Impact).

Describe how your initiative has broad appeal - e.g. to researchers in other Schools and departments; to a broad group of researchers in your School:

The feminist film/talk series has a broad appeal for a number of reasons. First, feminism has entered the public consciousness in an unprecedented way; as more and more famous figures identify themselves as feminist and lead feminist activist projects (Emma Watson's HeForShe Campaign comes to mind), people no longer need to be researching gender or sexuality to know about feminism or what it means to be a feminist. As a result, we believe that people who have a simple interest in feminism will want to come to these film screenings and talks. Second, we will be showing a diverse selection of films which should appeal to people from a wide range of disciplines, regardless of whether they have a primary interest in gender and/or sexuality. Third, postgraduate students doing gender and sexuality research can feel isolated within their own Schools and will be interested in meeting and talking with other like-minded researchers.

The conference will have an even broader appeal than the feminist film/talk series. We are hoping to attract postgraduate and early career researchers from a wide variety of disciplines from not only Sussex, but the wider academic community. The conference is open to researchers with a focus on gender and sexuality, regardless of School or discipline. Last year's conference saw researchers from fields as diverse as law, international relations, film and media studies come together to discuss their work; we intend this year's conference to have the same multidisciplinary appeal.

15 Set out the project outcomes and benefits (including learning outcomes, and how all those involved will benefit - including project team members):

The primary desired outcome of NGender 2016 is to bring together postgraduate scholars and early career researchers with an interest in gender and sexuality research, regardless of discipline or School. We hope that participants in both the film/talk series and the conference will learn about new aspects of gender and sexuality research, and perhaps be inspired to bring a more interdisciplinary approach to their own research as a result. Essentially, we want to build a community of gender and sexuality researchers at Sussex who can support one another and encourage each other to grow (through constructive feedback, networking, etc.).

The same can be said of the project's planning committee; NGender 2016 provides its team members an opportunity to work with other people in gender and sexuality studies and learn about the latest in gender and sexuality research outside of their own disciplines. It will also give project team members invaluable experience in event planning, teamwork, problem solving, leadership, and resourcefulness as they work together to ensure that the film/talk series and the conference run as smoothly as possible.

16 Describe how the success and impact of the activity will be evaluated:

If successful we will acknowledge the Doctoral School RLI fund in all materials and ensure due diligence in financial management.

We will primarily evaluate the success and impact of NGender 2016 via turnout numbers. We also plan to create a NGender Facebook page, which Sussex students will be invited to like for updates about our events throughout the year. The amount of likes our page receives will be another indicator of our impact. At the end of each of our activities, we will provide participants with feedback forms as a way of gauging what we did well and how we can do better.



17	Provide an indicative budget, including a breakdown of costs e.g. external speakers; facilitators; travel; catering; support materials.	
17.1	1	
17.1.a	Item	Catering -- Conference:
17.1.b	£	
17.2	2	
17.2.a	Item	Lunch (50 people x £7pp)
17.2.b	£	£350
17.3	3	
17.3.a	Item	Tea & Coffee (50 people x £1.70pp) + cookies (50 people x £1.25pp)
17.3.b	£	£147.50
17.4	4	
17.4.a	Item	IDS bar drinks reception (50 people x 1 £4 drinks voucher pp approx)
17.4.b	£	£200
17.5	5	
17.5.a	Item	
17.5.b	£	
17.6	6	
17.6.a	Item	Other Costs -- Conference and Film/Talk Series
17.6.b	£	
17.7	7	
17.7.a	Item	Posters & Programmes
17.7.b	£	£85
17.8	8	
17.8.a	Item	Film Rentals/Purchases
17.8.b	£	£40
17.9	9	
17.9.a	Item	External Speakers
17.9.b	£	£175
17.10	10	
17.10.a	Item	

18	Total cost of initiative (£):	£997.50
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19	Total amount requested from the RLI fund (£):	£1000
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20	Outline any other funds or resources committed to the activity by your School and elsewhere. Please indicate the type of commitment (e.g. funding, expertise, catering, physical space etc.):	
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RLI would be our sole source of funding, but we will be looking to our respective Schools for physical space allotments (the School of English has been particularly generous thus far; all of our committee meetings have taken place there). In terms of expertise, last year's NGender team has been extremely helpful in guiding and mentoring us; they have provided us with a number of documents, including timelines and mailing lists, to ensure that this year's events run smoothly. They are also available for any further questions/advice we may require.

We have been advised by [REDACTED] HAHP co-ordinator to replace the post-conference wine reception that is usually held, and to use IDS bar as an event venue instead. This means there are no issues with setting out/serving/clearing up and no need to budget for serving staff. The school raises a Purchase Order on Ngender's behalf, and each guest will get a drinks voucher which they exchange for a drink. Each drink is then charged to the correct budget code, so only exactly what has been spent will be charged.

21 Include a timeline for the activity (including project start and end date, and key milestones):

NGender 2016 (February-May 2016)

Feminist Film + Talk Series (Monthly sessions from mid-February to early May)

-November 2015 -- select films, find/invite suitable Sussex scholars to give short talks and lead roundtable discussions on the films in question

-December 2015 -- book a suitable room for each session

-Early Feb. 2016 -- begin promotion on social media, through internal networks/posters

Conference (mid- or late May)

-December 2015 -- write up a draft of the CFP.

- Jan. 2016 -- circulate CFP via social media, internal and external networks; search for and secure a keynote speaker; book a suitable room for conference to take place and make arrangements with IDS bar to use as venue.

-Mar. 2016 -- deadline for submissions, committee selects successful submissions and confirms participation from speakers

-April to mid-May 2016 -- arrange for catering; send out schedule to participants; promote the conference via social media, internal networks, posters; print off programs to hand out to participants on the day of; ask for speakers to send any applicable audio-visual materials that we can sync up for the conference day

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## Section C: Supporting statement

22 Please paste a supporting statement from your Director of Doctoral Studies below:

NGender is an interdisciplinary collective, in past years it's leading organisational team has remained within MFM and sociology departments. It's very exciting this year that [REDACTED] in History and [REDACTED] in English have taken over the reins and hope to include more cross-discipline PG students in NGender's activities.

They are planning two activities which would benefit from funding: a third annual conference (with an external CFP to other institutions as well as Sussex and Brighton community) and a Film + Talk series on the theme of 'feminist resistance'.

The events tie into exciting scholarship being undertaken by faculty and postgraduate students within HAHP and encompasses a broader remit through co-organisation English. NGender is by definition an interdisciplinary group of scholars and will also appeal to scholarship being done elsewhere in the university such as MFM and Sociology.

These would be fantastic events for HAHP and English to host and follows on from the success of an established NGender annual conference and recent symposiums and conferences organised by PhDs in History and Art History. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have been in contact with the individuals involved in these earlier events and will draw on their expertise in organising these events at Sussex.

The events will engage directly with the RDF Vitae wheel in domain D and domain A. The intention is to bring together early career researchers and PhDs in the field elsewhere in the UK and at Sussex and provide opportunities for presenting research. The event will be publicised through social media.

[REDACTED] has also been in contact with [REDACTED] to discuss the organisation and costs of running these sorts of events in HAHP. Therefore, I would anticipate that this would be a well-run event as well as a welcome contribution to research culture in HAHP.