

THIRD OPEN CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

# The Headley SEE Cultural Heritage Fund

2026

Supported by the Headley Trust UK

Administered by the Balkan Museum Network

# Today's session

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# 01

## About the Fund

Mission, values, and what we support

# About the Headley SEE Cultural Heritage Fund

The Fund supports innovative and impactful projects dedicated to the conservation and celebration of cultural heritage across South-eastern Europe.

This is the third call for applications. We build on two previous rounds of funding and have incorporated extensive feedback from our applicant community.

The Fund is designed to be accessible — to organisations of all sizes, including newly registered NGOs and first-time applicants.

2

Previous  
calls funded

11



Eligible  
countries

€69,000


Total fund  
this call

100%

Project costs  
covered



Implementing Organisation	Project Name	Project Duration
Karoussos Archives	The Spyronians Podcast Show	Sep 2024 – Sep 2025
Ambelli	Beezantium	Sep 2024 – July 2025
SKVER	Window to the Past: Industrial Heritage of Zaječar	Oct 2024 – Dec 2025
Museum of Contemporary Art – Skopje	MoCA-Skopje Masterpieces 4 All	Nov 2024 – Nov 2025
Kulturanova	Fostering Museum Engagement with Young Adults	Dec 2024 – May 2026



No.	Institution	Project
1	Museum of Literature BiH	Threading Words into Wearables A Capsule Collection Inspired by Bosnia-Herzegovina's Literary Heritage
2	Alzheimer Bulgaria Association	Heritage with Care – Cultural Memory for People with Dementia”
3	Neozoik	Let's Not Grind the Past
4	World Music Association Serbia	Mapping Living Human Treasures
5	House of Jevrem Grujic	Our Museum, Your Experience – Heritage REMIX
6	Culture Nook	Mobile Museum “the nook in motion
7	VAM	Večito
8	Jevto Dedijer Bileća	Virtual museum “On the Move”, Museum Bileca

# Areas of support

1

## Conservation & documentation

Heritage architecture, archaeology, artefacts

2

## Raising awareness

Protection, policy, public engagement

3

## Supporting heritage NGOs

Networks, training, innovation

4

## Training professionals

On-site courses, workshops, regional visits

5

## Engaging young people

Interpretation, accessibility, inclusion

6

## Community engagement

Heritage-driven community initiatives

✦ **Projects addressing gender equality, climate action, SDGs, accessibility, and marginalised communities will be viewed favourably.**

# 02

## What's new in 2026

Three key improvements based on applicant feedback

# Three improvements for 2026

*Based on feedback from 130 former applicants (34 responses, 26% response rate)*

01

## Two-stage evaluation

Round 1 assesses project quality for all applicants. Supporting documents are only requested from shortlisted applicants in Round 2. Less burden, better focus.

02

## Revised application format

The proposal is now an editable Word document. A short Google Form collects organisational basics. No more character-limited text boxes.

03

## Transparent scoring and feedback

Every applicant receives a scoring table after each stage, plus a brief committee comment on the main strength and main area for improvement.

# How the two-stage process works

## ROUND 1

### Project Quality

#### All applicants submit:

- Word proposal document (Sections A–H)
- Detailed budget (Excel template)
- Short Google Form (org profile, ~5 min)
- Signed Declaration of Honour

All applicants receive scored feedback  
with committee comments

≈ approx. top third shortlisted



## ROUND 2

### Organisational Capacity

#### Shortlisted applicants only:

- Balance sheets for two last years
- Articles of Association + Statutes
- Safeguarding Policy

Shortlisted applicants receive  
full feedback on all 10 criteria

→ Final selection and contracting

# 03

## Eligibility and grants

Who can apply, from where, and for how much

# Who can apply

## Organisation types

- Museums, galleries, libraries and archives (GLAM)
- Civil society organisations (associations and foundations)
- Cooperatives and other cultural heritage institutions
- University or research institutions
- Newly registered organisations are also eligible

## Partnership requirement

Every project must include at least one partner organisation. Partners may be from the same or a different eligible country. A Partnership Agreement is not required at application stage.

## Eligible countries (11)

Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria	Croatia
Greece	Kosovo
North Macedonia	Montenegro
Romania	Serbia
Slovenia	

# Size of grants

## SMALL PROJECT

# Up to €5,000

*Up to 12 months*

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Best for focused, single-country  
or small cross-border projects.  
Ideal for first-time applicants.

## LARGE PROJECT

# Up to €10,000

*Up to 18 months*

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For larger multi-country partnerships  
with regional scope and sector-  
wide ambitions.

**Key rules:** The Fund covers 100% of project costs including VAT. Co-funding is not required but may strengthen an application. Salaries of full-time public institution employees are not eligible. One organisation may lead only one funded project but may appear as partner in others.

# 04

## How to apply

Documents, steps, and what goes in each round

# Round 1 — what to submit

All applicants · No supporting documents required at this stage

1

## Project Proposal

Word document (.docx)

- Section A — Applicant information
- Section B — Project summary (title, tier, dates, budget)
- Section C — Challenge, objectives, methodology, timeline
- Section D — Partnership (roles, regional cooperation)

2

## Detailed Budget

Excel template (.xlsx)

- All cost categories itemised with unit costs
- Amounts must include VAT
- Automatic 7% operational cost check built in
- Co-funding column (optional)

3

## Organisational Profile & Declaration of Honor

Online Google Form (~5 minutes) and Word document

**Declaration of Honour:** Signed by legal representative — scan and submit as PDF

- Eligibility confirmation (registered, EUR bank account, project not started)
- Contact details
- Prior Headley applications and language needs
- Accessibility requirements

# Inside the Project Proposal (Word document)

A

## Applicant information

Legal name, org type, contact person, brief profile, prior applications

B

## Project summary

Title, tier, dates, location, areas of support, 100-word abstract

C

## Project description

Challenge + evidence, 2–4 objectives, methodology, timeline table, outcomes/indicators table

D

## Partnership

Partner roles, regional cooperation, prior relationship with partners

E

## Community engagement

Who benefits and how the community is actively involved in design and delivery

F

## Sustainability and impact

Post-project mechanisms, sector-wide replication, dissemination plan

G

## Risk assessment

Risk register table (risk, likelihood, impact, mitigation)

H

## Indicative budget

Summary by cost category — detailed Excel budget submitted separately

# Round 2 — shortlisted applicants only

*You will be notified by email with a 14-day submission window. No action needed until then.*

Required

## Articles of Association

Decision to register — in native language AND English

Required

## Statutes

In native language AND English

Required

## Two balance sheets

Most recent completed year + prior year. For new orgs: income/expenditure plan

Required

## Safeguarding Policy

In native language AND English. Template available at [headleyseefund.org](https://headleyseefund.org) — adapt to your organisation

Translation: Unofficial translations accepted. Machine-assisted translation is permitted if reviewed for accuracy before submission.

Optional

## Letters of support

From partners, community stakeholders, or co-funders

Optional

## Partnership Agreement

Recommended — defines roles and responsibilities

# 05

## Evaluation and feedback

How proposals are scored and what you will receive

# The 10 evaluation criteria

Each criterion scored 1–10 · Maximum 100 points

## ROUND 1 — Project quality (criteria 1–7). Max 70 points

- 1 Quality and clarity of the project idea
- 2 Identified challenge and evidence of community need
- 3 Methodology, activities, and realism of timeline
- 4 Partnership and regional cooperation
- 5 Community engagement and involvement of beneficiaries
- 6 Sustainability and potential sector-wide impact
- 7 Budget quality

## ROUND 2 — Capacity (criteria 8–10). Max 30 points

- 8 Organisational capacity, financial reporting capacity and track record
- 9 Contribution to the organisation's strategic direction
- 10 Evaluation plan and risk mitigation

Round 1 total: 60 points · Round 2 total: 40 points · Grand total: 100 points

# Scoring rubric — know what's expected

The call includes a full rubric for all 10 criteria. Below: three examples.

Criterion	Strong (8–10)	Adequate (4–7)	Weak (1–3)
<b>1. Project quality</b>	Clear heritage challenge; precise objectives; sector contribution articulated	Relates to Fund areas but challenge only broadly described	No clear challenge; objectives vague or undefined
<b>4. Partnership and collaboration</b>	Partners have distinct, complementary roles that strengthen the project. The partnership has a potential for long-term and strategic collaboration or explicitly contributes to knowledge exchange.	Partnership is present and roles are described, but complementarity is limited and the choice of partner is not justified.	No partners. Partnership appears nominal. Partners' roles are unclear or duplicative. No collaboration is evident.
<b>6. Sustainability</b>	Concrete post-project mechanisms; sector replication or advocacy articulated	Sustainability addressed in general terms; no specific mechanisms	No sustainability plan; outcomes end with project period

# Feedback for every applicant

In 2024 and 2025, applicants received no scoring or written explanation after rejection.

From 2026, every applicant receives structured feedback after each stage.

## After Round 1

*Sent to all applicants*

Scoring table: your score for each of the Round 1 criteria (7 out of 10)

Brief qualitative comment:

- Main strength of the proposal
- Main area for improvement

## After Round 2

*Shortlisted applicants only*

Full scoring table: all 10 criteria with scores and committee average

Final funding decision

**Goal: to make the application process a learning experience for every organisation, regardless of outcome.**

# 06

## Key dates

Deadlines and milestones for the third call

# 2026 call — key dates



**15 May**

## **Deadline for questions**

Email questions to Fund Coordinator by this date



**03 June**

## **Round 1 submission deadline**

Project Proposal (Word) + Budget (Excel) + Google Form



**Tbc.**

## **Round 1 results and feedback**

All applicants notified with scoring table and comments

# 07

## Questions & Answers

Frequently asked questions from previous calls

# FAQ — Eligibility

**Q Can a newly registered organisation apply?**

Yes. There is no minimum age for the organisation. However, newly registered organisations must demonstrate they have the capacity to manage the project and will need to provide an income/expenditure plan instead of two balance sheets at Round 2.

**Q Can we apply if we are from a country not listed as eligible?**

No. Only organisations registered in one of the 11 eligible countries can serve as lead applicant. An organisation from outside the list may participate as a partner but cannot lead the consortium.

**Q Can the lead organisation and the partner be from the same country?**

Yes. Partners do not have to be from different countries. Cross-border partnerships are encouraged but not required. What matters is that the partnership is genuine and adds value.

**Q Can an organisation submit more than one application?**

Yes, an organisation may submit more than one application as lead. However, only one project per lead organisation can be funded. The same organisation may appear as a partner in multiple applications.

**Q Are public institutions eligible — for example, a state museum?**

Yes. Museums, libraries, archives, and other public heritage institutions are eligible. However, the full salaries of their permanent employees are not an eligible cost — staff must contribute to the project within their existing working hours and have permission to work on the project..

# FAQ — Budget and costs

Q

## Does the project need co-funding?

No. The Fund covers 100% of eligible project costs. Co-funding is not required but will be viewed favourably by the Evaluation Committee.

Q

## What costs are eligible?

Staff (part-time and consultants), travel, accommodation, venue hire, publications, communication and dissemination, conservation materials and equipment, and operational costs (up to 7% of total budget). All costs must include VAT.

Q

## Can we pay consultants or freelancers?

Yes. Fees for consultants, experts, or natural persons under direct contract are eligible. Their role and time commitment must be justified in the budget narrative.

Q

## What is the 7% operational cost limit?

Operational costs (communication, office supplies, accounting) may not exceed 7% of the total budget. The Excel budget template includes an automatic check that will flag if this limit is exceeded.

# FAQ — Application process



## Do all consortium partners submit separately?

No. Only the lead organisation submits the application. The lead is responsible for the application and, if funded, for all financial and narrative reporting on behalf of the consortium.



## Can we submit in a language other than English?

No. The proposal must be submitted in English. For narrative sections where English is a significant barrier, you may submit your native language with an English summary — please indicate this in your covering email. At Round 2, supporting documents may be submitted in native language with an unofficial English translation.



## What if we cannot use Google Forms?

Contact the Fund Coordinator at [info@bmuseums.net](mailto:info@bmuseums.net). An alternative submission route will be arranged.



## Can we apply for a project that has already started?

No. The project must not have already started at the time of application. This is confirmed in the Declaration of Honour. Implementation must begin in 2026 after a grant agreement is signed.



## How will we know if we are shortlisted?

You will be notified by email after Round 1 results are communicated. All applicants — shortlisted or not — will receive their Round 1 scoring table and committee comments at the same time.

# Thank you

We look forward to reading your applications.

## Contact and resources

<b>Contact person:</b>	Aida Vežić
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@bmuseums.net">info@bmuseums.net</a> , <a href="mailto:aida.vezic@bmuseums.net">aida.vezic@bmuseums.net</a>
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://headleyseefund.org">headleyseefund.org</a>
<b>Funder:</b>	Headley Trust UK

All documents — call text, Word proposal template, Excel budget, and Declaration of Honour template — are available at [headleyseefund.org](http://headleyseefund.org)