



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



## **Call for Expressions of Interest for Researcher Participation in an ICHR/AHRC workshop on Cultural Heritage and Rapid Urbanisation in India**

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

### **Introduction**

The ICHR is pleased to announce a call for researchers to attend a workshop on 'Cultural Heritage and Rapid Urbanisation in India'. Organised in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the event will bring together academic experts from both countries to explore how historical experiences of urbanisation can inform contemporary issues and challenges and examine the role that heritage can play in sustainable economic growth and social cohesion. The scale and speed of urbanisation in India has placed pressure on its rich and diverse cultural heritage as well as presenting opportunities for integrating the preservation of heritage into sustainable urban development. The workshop will also be an opportunity to develop existing and new cultural exchanges between the UK and India as the 'UK-India Year of Culture' takes place in 2017.

The event will convene approximately 40 experts from the UK and India and draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives including urban history, heritage, languages, the digital humanities and archaeology. It will build on a joint AHRC-ICHR workshop and small networking call held in 2015, which gave researchers from the UK and India the opportunity to build partnerships and networks addressing challenges related to urbanisation and cultural heritage in India. A report from the 2015 workshop can be found here: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/project-reports-and-reviews/cultural-heritage-and-rapid-urbanisation-in-india-report>. A key aim of the 2017 workshop is to

enable the development of longer term collaborative research projects that will address these challenges in greater depth. A funding call will be announced following the workshop inviting proposals for collaborative research projects involving researchers from the UK and India. Funding of up to £200K per project will be available from the AHRC with matched resources being provided by ICHR.

The workshop will be funded through the [Newton Fund](#) – a programme that aims to develop research and innovation partnerships that promote the economic development and social welfare of partner countries. It will take place over 2 days in Delhi India from 24<sup>th</sup>– 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

## **Context**

From 1991 to 2011, the urban population in India has increased from 100 million to 200 million. By 2041, 50-percent of India's population is expected to live in cities. On average, the population of India's six major metropolises nearly doubled between 1981 and 2001. The issue is not only limited to India; UN estimates say that by 2050, 70 per cent of the world's population will live in cities. This will bring with it significant challenges around how the urban environments, landscapes and spaces people use can be sustained, while respecting historical integrity.

This issue is of growing interest and importance in India, with Indian ministries and UK departments emphasising the need to place cultural heritage at the centre of dialogues surrounding the country's rapid, large-scale urbanisation.

The workshop will focus on the following thematic areas:

### **History of Urbanisation**

- The history of urbanisation through different periods of history.
- The social, economic and technological advances that have influenced the urbanisation process.
- The historical development of cities in the context of contemporary urban pressures. How the history of urbanisation from ancient and medieval modern times can inform current urban planning and sustainable development.
- Examining how modern cities have developed over time and how this can inform future strategies for heritage protection – are the paradigms of heritage protection in cities and surrounding rural areas that have served us well in the past equally fit to respond to the challenges of the future?
- How and why cities have responded over time in the ways that they have to the pressures on, and opportunities for, heritage as a result of urban change.

- The threat of urban change erasing the history of places and how this history can be preserved. How do changing historical geographies and patterns of land ownership affect understandings of heritage?
- Unpacking the complex layers of history within an urban environment over time and strategies for ensuring that the many pasts are better understood.
- The process of urbanisation of the historical urban centres such as Delhi, Patna, Varanasi, Ayodhya, Nasik, Madurai, Warangal, Kaveripatnam, Amravati and Thiruvananthapuram.

**Urbanisation and cultural heritage in the public sphere; conservation for sustainable urban development:**

- The re-use and regeneration of historic spaces. How to sustain urban environments and the places and spaces that people use, whilst respecting historical integrity and taking into account changing societal needs.
- How to manage the competing demands of economic growth through tourism and attracting visitors to cities with the needs of the existing and projected populations within cities.
- The impact of urbanisation and migration on intangible heritage and ways of life. Looking at the ways in which the city is experienced and the ways that intangible heritage, such as culture, values, beliefs, histories and languages are altered by urbanisation and migration. How the sharing and preservation of intangible heritage can play a role in improved social cohesion and welfare.
- The role of museums, libraries, galleries and other public spaces in the preservation of urban history. How new technologies, digital techniques and methodologies can help to better preserve cultural heritage and make it accessible to a wider public as well as marginalised societies. How community engagement with heritage can lead to more sustainable management of cultural heritage.

**Call for Expressions of Interest**

Expressions of interest to participate in the workshop are invited from India-based researchers who have done substantial work on the topics noted above. Indian applicants shall submit a 1000 word account of the proposed topic of their presentation along with their CVs.

Expressions of interest will be assessed by the ICHR, against the following criteria:

- Fit to call: the strength of the case made to attend the workshop and ability to support the realisation of its aims;
- Track record: a demonstrable history of research excellence appropriate to career stage;
- Development: the potential of the workshop to add value to the research of the applicant, including the benefits of engaging with a wider network of individuals and organisations from the UK and India, and the potential for those parties to benefit from the experience and perspectives of the applicant;
- Legacy: the ability of the applicant to perceive and articulate the longer-term potential benefits of the workshop, including to their own research, their discipline, and in terms of wider activity.

The ICHR will process the information you send for the purposes of workshop attendance only and the information you via email.

**Deadline for submission of EoI: 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2017**

**We will aim to inform applicants of outcomes by 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2017**

### **Costs covered**

The ICHR will provide you tickets, accommodation (to a maximum of 3 nights) and Taxi fare to & from the airport. Detailed information about logistics and procedures will follow upon acceptance.

### **Workshop format**

The exact format of the workshop will be determined through consultation between AHRC and ICHR. Initial context will be provided by a senior academic lead from the India and another from UK. In order to stimulate practical steps towards future intellectual collaboration, the majority of the workshop will focus on discussion and exploration of the key issues through a series of facilitated breakout sessions. The workshop will close with a plenary session featuring reports from the groups, a concluding address, and consideration of follow-up activity.

It is important to note that this workshop is not intended to be a stand-alone event, rather it is an opportunity to network, share experiences and begin discussions that will foster future collaborative activity and make cultural heritage integral to the urbanisation agenda in India. As above, it is anticipated that longer term, the workshop will enrich and bring new dimensions to other networks and forums working in this area and involving research collaboration between the UK and India.

The AHRC and ICHR intend to commission a report from the workshop, which will include recommendations for follow-up activity.

## **Contacts**

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